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# Zain Innovation Center to boost youth entrepreneurship, startups

## Bader Al-Kharafi: Innovative ideas key to future progress



KUWAIT: Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi speaks during the opening of the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) on Sunday at the group's headquarters.

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announced the opening of its Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in Kuwait. Located within the Zain Head Offices, ZINC Kuwait falls within the company's youth empowerment initiative led by Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Al-Kharafi. The co-working hub is the first of its kind in Kuwait provided by a corporate entity and aims to bolster youth entrepreneurship and the country's startup ecosystem.

The inauguration ceremony of ZINC took place on Sunday and saw the attendance of Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan, Bader Al-Kharafi and other Zain senior management and successful personalities from the Kuwait and regional digital ecosystem.

ZINC Kuwait is set to encourage young minds to think and act creatively outside of the norm in an open, supportive environment. The design of the hub utilizes light and is deliberately modern and sleek, with the view to creating the right atmosphere for entrepreneurs to generate new ideas and develop them into viable opportunities. Apart from the inspiring co-working hub facilities, ZINC will provide aspiring entrepreneurs and startups access to experts in various fields

and advice from mentors from the region and across the globe, including from Zain senior personnel and associated technology partners.

Bader Al-Kharafi commented: "The generation of successful innovative ideas is likely to become one of the greatest differentiators between societies that progress into the future. We are well-aware that there is a strong local entrepreneurial culture that is just waiting to be tapped into and we are excited to be fostering and unlocking opportunities for young Kuwaiti professionals." Kharafi called on startups to be patient and determined, so that their ideas turn into reality.

Roudhan said the ambitions of young Kuwaitis have evolved, aspiring towards being innovative entrepreneurs, adding the state supports and encourages business accelerators and incubators. "We have clear instructions from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah to wholeheartedly support the country's youth in their business aspirations," he said. (See Page 17)

### News in brief

#### Grace period for absconders

KUWAIT: The manpower authority and the interior ministry's residency directorate have agreed to allow residency violators reported absconding in the period from Jan 3, 2016 until April 22, 2018 to legalize their status or depart the country without paying any fines. Residency Affairs Director Maj Gen Talal Maarafi said all transactions of those reported absconding after April 22, 2018 will be rejected. He added some exemptions would be made for citizens' spouses and children, as well as foreign founding partners of companies. - A Saleh (See Page 5)

#### Kuwait hails ties with Manila

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti assistant foreign minister at the foreign minister's office Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah yesterday met visiting former Philippine minister of information and senator Francisco Tatad. During the meeting with Tatad, who is a writer with the Manila Times newspaper, Sheikh Ahmad lauded Kuwaiti-Philippine relations as "firm, historical and close". He said Kuwait looks forward to promoting bilateral cooperation and developing friendly relations for broader prospects in all fields. — KUNA

#### Marine drills to be held

KUWAIT: The defense ministry announced yesterday that the naval forces will carry out a drill with live ammunition today and tomorrow from 7 am till 6 pm (local time). The ministry said in a statement that the exercise will be held in the naval shooting range 16.5 nautical miles off East Ras Al-Julaia all the way to Qarouh island, and six miles east of Ras Al-Zour till Umm Al-Maradem island. It advised sea-goers to stay away from the zone during the drill. — KUNA

#### Afghan gunships killed 107

KABUL: Rockets and heavy machines guns fired from Afghan government helicopters killed and wounded at least 107 boys and men attending a religious ceremony near the northern city of Kunduz last month, according to a United Nations report yesterday. Last month, villagers in Dasht-i Archi district of Kunduz said dozens of people including many children had been killed in an attack on a religious ceremony, prompting the UN to launch an investigation. It said as many as 12 rockets may have been fired at the meeting, held in a field about the size of a football pitch, which was adjacent to a madrassa. — Reuters

#### Saudi fugitive killed

RIYADH: A Saudi national wanted for his alleged role in an April attack that left four policemen dead has been killed in a security operation, the Saudi interior ministry said yesterday. Khaled Al-Shehri had refused to surrender to security forces who had raided his family home on Saturday in the southern province of Asir, state-run Saudi Press Agency quoted a ministry official as saying. He threatened the police with a knife and was shot dead, the ministry source added. — AFP

## Hezbollah hails 'great victory'; Amir applauds orderly voting

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah claimed victory yesterday after elections it said legitimized its military branch, leaving Saudi-backed Prime Minister Saad Hariri as the main loser. The two main protagonists of the country's first legislative polls in almost a decade did not wait for official results to comment on the implications of a vote which was also marked by low turnout. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah called the vote "a great political and moral victory for the resistance option that pro-

pects the sovereignty of the country".

The Iran-backed Shiite movement and its allies look set to secure a parliament bloc large enough to thwart attempts for it to disarm, a longstanding demand of its political enemies. "The make-up of the new legislative chamber represents a guarantee and a great strength to protect this strategic choice and to protect the golden equation - the army, the people and the resistance," Nasrallah said.

The man who has led calls internally for Hezbollah to lay down its arms is Hariri, whose Sunni-dominated Future Movement - less dominant since it lost Saudi Arabia's lavish support - lost a third of its seats. Hariri told reporters his party had won 21 seats, a drop from the 33 it controlled in the outgoing legislature. "We were betting on a better result," the premier said.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday

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BATROUN, Lebanon: Free Patriotic Movement supporters celebrate the party's results in the parliamentary elections early yesterday in this coastal town. — AFP

## US Embassy signs go up in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM: US Embassy road signs went up in Jerusalem yesterday ahead of next week's opening of the mission in accordance with President Donald Trump's recognition of the city as Israel's capital. Trump says he is making good on US legislation and presidential pledges dating back decades. Other world powers have not done so, sidestepping one of the thorniest disputes between Israel and the Palestinians, who want their own state with East Jerusalem as the capital.

Workmen installed the black-and-white signs, in English, Hebrew and Arabic, along roads leading to a US

consulate building in south Jerusalem that will be remodelled as the embassy when it is formally relocated from Tel Aviv on May 14. "This is not a dream. It is reality. I am proud and moved to have hung this morning the first new signs that were prepared for the US Embassy," Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat wrote on Twitter.

Israel captured East Jerusalem from Jordanian control in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it in a move not recognised internationally. The last round of peace talks on a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip collapsed in 2014. "This (embassy) move is not only illegal but will also thwart the achievement of a just and lasting peace between two sovereign and democratic states on the 1967 borders, Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security," Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said in a statement.

Trump will not attend the opening. The US delegation will include Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump and his son-in-law, Jared

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JERUSALEM: A new road sign indicating the way to the new US Embassy is seen yesterday. — AFP

## Palestinians slam Gulf presence in Israel cycle race

RAMALLAH: Palestinians have expressed outrage at teams from the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for taking part in the opening legs of the Giro d'Italia cycling race in Israel over the weekend, which they say undermined Arab solidarity with their cause. The presence of the Gulf states' teams in the top cycling race - which has now moved on to its home territory in Italy - broke a boycott of Israel in place since the start of the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948. "It's a mistake," Abdullah Al-Shayji, a professor at Kuwait University, wrote on his Twitter account about the Gulf teams racing in Israel. "Normalization with the occupation entity should be rejected, no matter what form it takes."

In an unusually barbed statement to a fellow Arab country, the Palestinian Olympic Committee said their participation was "a stab in the back to the great sacrifices made by the Palestinian people ... and a free service for the occupation". UAE officials did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment and Bahrain's ministry of information referred questions to the team itself. Neither of the teams immediately responded to emailed inquiries.

None of the cyclists in either of the 8-men teams - Bahrain-Merida and UAE Team Emirates - appeared to be Bahraini or Emirati citizens and were almost all European, according to profiles on the event's official website. However, in an important break with traditional Arab protocols on events in Israel, the riders wore jerseys emblazoned with national colors and brand names of sponsors, state-owned Emirates Airlines and the Bahrain Petroleum Company, the official Twitter accounts for the team websites showed.

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## Local

# Amir receives credentials of new ambassadors to Kuwait

## Sheikh Sabah meets Kuwaiti prize for excellence and creativity winners



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the outgoing Bahraini Ambassador to Kuwait Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Khalifa.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the new ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait. — KUNA photos

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir then attended a ceremony for receiving the credentials of new ambassadors from Swiss Confederation, Kyrgyzstan, Laos and Saudi Arabia to the State of Kuwait.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Acting Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir's Office Chief Ahmad Al-Fahad, Amiri Protocols Chief and Acting Amiri Diwan Undersecretary Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran and Amiri Guard Chief Brig. Fahad Al-Zeid. Afterwards, His Highness the Amir hosted outgoing Bahraini Ambassador to Kuwait Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Khalifa; who also met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday.

His Highness the Amir also met Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Nasser Al-Jabri and the winners of the third version of the Kuwaiti prize for excellence and creativity. Also among His Highness the Amir's audiences were Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheed, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Jamal Jaafar and the company's team of firefighters who have recently hit a new record in an international firefighting championship in New Zealand.

His Highness the Amir then hosted Kuwaiti inventor Adel Al-Wasees, who has recently won four international patents, in addition to a gold medal in an international invention and technology exhibition recently hosted by Malaysia. Mohammad Burabea, who has lately obtained the first position in an international jet-ski event for three times and popped his way into Guinness World Records, and Dr Ahmad Humoud Salman on the occasion of winning a world award in heart diseases, in addition to several other Kuwaiti winners of Arab and world prizes in different fields. His Highness the Amir hailed the Kuwaiti figures for obtaining these awards and wished them more success and progress. Acting Minister of Amiri Diwan



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Kuwaiti jet-ski champion Mohammad Burabea (left).

Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah was present.

In other news, His Highness the Crown Prince yesterday received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, Finance Minister Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf, Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan, Minister of Health Dr Bassel Al-Sabah, Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi, Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi, Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Adel Al-Kharafi and Chief of the National Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. His Highness also hosted Kuwait's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Mansour Al-Otaibi, and Kuwait's Ambassador to Morocco Abdulatif Al-Yahia.

Separately, His Highness the Amir sent a congratulatory cable yesterday to Russian President Vladimir Putin over swearing-in for a new term. In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished him good health and more developed historic and firm relations between both friendly countries. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh and His Highness the Prime Minister sent the Russian president two cables of similar sentiments. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the new ambassador of the Swiss Confederation to Kuwait.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the new ambassador of Laos to Kuwait.



### Amir sends congratulations to Putin on inauguration

Representative at the United Nations Mansour Al-Otaibi, and Kuwait's Ambassador to Morocco Abdulatif Al-Yahia.

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## Kuwaiti-Turkish relationship cemented with cooperation

**ANKARA:** Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim is scheduled to pay an official visit to the State of Kuwait today on a mission destined to fortify further the decades' old excellent bonds between the two states. These distinctive relations have been based on mutual friendship, bolstered with cooperation at the political, economic and cultural levels. Premier Yildirim is coming to Kuwait at an invitation by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who visited Turkey in September. His mission had peaked with inking six treaties and memos of cooperation in diverse fields. Moreover, a simultaneous joint economic forum was hosted by Istanbul, attended by leading representatives of the two countries' private sectors.

Kuwaiti-Turkish relations have recently taken strides upward; largely due to the two states' common views regarding various issues, thus the relationship has developed to the level of a partnership, based on mutual respect and interests. The two countries, peoples of which are mostly Muslims, with close geographical locations, have employed the cultural and historic bonds to bolster the friendship. The Kuwaiti-Turkish relations date back to 1969 when they inked a treaty for establishing diplomatic relations, followed with opening embassies in the two countries in 1970; which also witnessed the inking of an accord for land transport cooperation for passengers and cargo.

In 1975, the two sides inked a cultural agreement and another for cooperation in aerial services in 1977. Moreover, they signed a cooperation agreement in the economic, industrial and technical sectors in 1982, a mail accord in 1986 and another for encouraging and protecting investments in 1988.

Following the liberation, the relations noticeably took further steps upward following a visit by the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Ankara in

November 1991, during which he expressed gratitude to Turkey's solidarity with Kuwait against the aggressors and its legitimate rights.

Since early hours of the 1990 Iraqi aggression, Turkey decried the barbaric offensive, describing it an aggression against the international laws, the international legitimacy, demanding that sovereignty and independence be restored to Kuwait. Furthermore, Turkey following the invasion decided to prohibit exports of Iraqi oil via its territories, declared solidarity with the international coalition that carried out the liberation operation and effectively contributed to the alliance despite economic losses.

In October 1997, the late Turkish president Suleyman Demirel visited Kuwait, holding talks with the late Amir Sheikh Jaber on ties and issues of common interest. During the visit, the two sides inked two accords, one on averting double taxation and the other on cultural cooperation.

In turn, Kuwait expressed support for the democratically elected Turkish government against the foiled coup that happened in July 2016, where His Highness the Amir cabled the Turkish president congratulating him on the democracy victory.

During the first visit to Turkey by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah, in 2008, the two countries signed seven treaties for cooperation in the economic, scientific and technical fields. They also formed a higher cooperation commission at the level of foreign ministers and another for labor cooperation. The two sides endorsed, during His Highness the Amir second visit to Turkey, in April 2013, eight accords in aviation, aerial cargo, higher education, scientific research, health, livestock, military industries, cultural cooperation, in addition to the cooperation between Saud Al-Nasser Diplomatic Institute and the Turkish Diplomacy Academy, as well as visa exemption accord for holders of diplomatic and special passports. Kuwait and Turkey signed a large number of agreements between 2008 and 2014; most notably was a memo for expertise swap, training, military education and holding joint military drills.

They had also signed, during ministers' reciprocal visits, multiple agreements, one stipulating formation of a common commission, others on labor swap, environment protection, safeguarding natural resources for sustainable development, boosting industrial exports, cooperation in

customs, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, agricultural and technical realms.

In 2014, they inked agreements for military training, cooperation in the press, media, maritime commercial transports and a protocol for cooperation in archives. They have been bonded with 54 treaties, including three signed during the Turkish premier visit to Kuwait in November 2017, in sports, direct investments, scientific research and technology.

During the latest visit by His Highness the Amir to Turkey, in March 2017, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan decorated His Highness with the state top medal in appreciation for His Highness' great role in boosting the bilateral relations, as well as for his paramount contributions to humanitarian relief worldwide. His Highness the Amir had awarded President Erdogan Mubarak Al-Kabeer medal in appreciation for his pivotal role at the bilateral and international levels. In November 2009, His Highness the Amir visited Istanbul heading the State of Kuwait delegation at the 25th meeting of the permanent committee for economic and commercial cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). His Highness headed the State of Kuwait delegation at the 13th session of the OIC Summit in Istanbul in April 2016, the global summit for humanitarian action, also held in Istanbul in May the same year. His Highness had also led the State of Kuwait delegation at the OIC extraordinary summit on Jerusalem, also hosted by Istanbul, in December 2017.

Former Turkish President Abdullah Gul had paid three visits to Kuwait in February of 2009 and 2011, and March 2014 as part of the Turkish-Kuwaiti leaderships' continued efforts to support and bolster their friendship and cooperation. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had also visited Kuwait in April 2015, and once again in May 2017 to inaugurate a new terminal at Kuwait International Airport that was built by the Turkish-based company Limak Construction. Erdogan has also paid a visit to the country in July 2017 to support Kuwait's mediation efforts toward solving the Gulf crisis, and most recently in November 2017. In 2016, trade volume between Kuwait and Turkey reached \$1.287 billion. Turkish exports to Kuwait amounted to \$431 million, and imports to \$856 million. Furthermore, the total value of Turkish projects in Kuwait,

carried out by Turkish construction companies, reached \$6.5 billion in 2016, while Kuwait's direct investment volume in Turkey reached \$1.7 billion in that same year. More Kuwaiti companies and individuals are investing in Turkey, prompting the Ankara government to waive visa on Kuwaiti citizens.

At the parliamentary level, former speaker Cemil Cicek paid an official visit to Kuwait in January 2014, while Kuwait National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim visited Ankara in February 2016.

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) began operations in Turkey in 1979, extending loans to build development projects in many sectors. KFAED offered, up until November 2009, 12 loans totaling KD 106 million, which equals \$352 million.

Kuwait also contributed to meet humanitarian needs in Turkey, whether from citizens or Syrian refugees. The GCC-member state offered up to \$20 million of health and educational services for the Syrian refugees in Turkey. His Highness the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah had personally donated \$1 million to help alleviate the suffering of victims of the earthquake that struck Turkey. In November 2014, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's "Humanitarian Leader Village" was opened in the eastern city of Van, and was subjected later to a devastating earthquake in 2011, which killed 644 people, injured 4,152 others, and destroyed 2,262 houses.

Another Kuwaiti-financed village was built to house Syrian refugees in the southern city of Kilis. The Kuwaiti government and non-government organizations also contributed heavily in assisting the Syrian refugees in Turkey, offering financial and material aid in order to ease their suffering.

Kuwait also hosted three international donor conferences to help the Syrian people, pledging a total of \$7.5 billion, of them Kuwait contributed \$1.3 billion. Moreover, Kuwait's medical teams, including 'Shefaa' voluntary group, Kuwaiti Medical Society, and Patients Helping Fund Society conducted several surgical operations and treatments on wounded Syrian refugees in Al-Amal Hospital in Al-Rihana district of Hatay province in southern Turkey. — KUNA



Local

# Kuwait eager to interact with Silk City project: Sheikh Nasser

‘Kuwait faces a great challenge in implementing the project’

**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah expressed yesterday sincere eagerness to interact socially and politically with the northern Kuwait and Silk City development projects. Works on these two projects are currently in early stages. Sheikh Nasser said in his opening speech at a workshop, entitled ‘Kuwait’s Northern Gulf Gateway Project: Silk City’, organized by the World Bank’s Kuwait Office. Silk City was not just a mere vision, but it has been a reality in Kuwait since the pre-oil discovery period, he said.

Kuwait thrives on its courteous and friendly culture, which welcomes and helps everyone without discrimination of their religion or ethnic backgrounds, he added. “This is exactly what we need to do; rehabilitate the location of Silk City and put it back on its previous historic place,” said Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah. Kuwait faces a great challenge in implementing the project, he said, affirming the country’s ability to overcome such a major test just as it had always done with past major development plans.

Materializing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah’s “Kuwait 2035” vision began two years and three months ago, he said, affirming Kuwait’s constant strive to provide assistance to neighboring countries. Due to geographic locations, many

Central Asian nations have limited links and access to trade and interact with other countries around the world, Sheikh Nasser noted. Thus, Kuwait intends to link Central Asia, South Russia, Mongolia, and rest of Asian countries with the world through Silk City, which would also serve other countries in the region as well, particularly Iran, Iraq, and Gulf states, he noted. Kuwait

is well-renowned for aiding many countries around the world as it is part of its genuine heritage, which is a blend of history, culture, commerce, and tourism, said Sheikh Nasser.

Gulf nations have a tendency of linking themselves with the rest of the world via several routes, including the Red Sea and Mediterranean

Sea, he noted. GCC states benefit highly from the Red Sea mountain areas in Saudi Arabia and the coastal city of Aqaba in Jordan, he said, pointing out the valuable minerals available in these areas that could be availed.

Sheikh Nasser urged neighboring countries to understand Kuwait’s 2035 vision and cooperate with each other in peace and harmony to achieve the desired goal successfully. He also hoped the workshop benefits from the World Bank expertise, especially in reviewing the successes achieved by South American and Southeast Asian nations. He also called on the workshop’s participants to review World Bank’s positive and negative experiences to avoid mistakes and failure. — KUNA



Workshop hosted by World Bank’s Kuwait Office



**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (right) speaks during the workshop as Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan (left) looks on. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## KFAED offers Vietnam KD 4 million loan

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and Vietnam have signed a loan agreement worth KD 4 million (\$13.6 million) for financing the Multipurpose Development Project for Ethnic Minorities in Poor Communes in Xin Man District in Vietnam.

It was co-signed by Vietnamese Vice Minister of Finance Tran Xuan Ha and KFAED Deputy Director General Hesham Al-Waqayan, the fund said in a press release yesterday. The loan aims to enhance economic and social development in Xin Man District, which falls within ‘Ha Giang’ Province, by constructing and developing the essential infrastructure to improve traffic conditions and effectively use water resources in the area, as well as to restructure the local economy and contribute to poverty reduction, it said.

The project shall include construction works of rural roads and an agricultural irrigation system. Moreover, the venture covers consultancy services, bidding documents, construction supervision, management services auditing, insurance and compensations for land acquisitions, the fund added. KFAED has already provided 14 loans with a total amount of about KD 49.7 million (\$168.98 million) for financing projects in various sectors in Vietnam. — KUNA

## Cabinet commends Premier’s arguments at National Assembly

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwaiti cabinet yesterday applauded the arguments of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah during a recent grilling at the National Assembly. During its weekly routine meeting, the Cabinet said His Highness the Prime Minister had rebuffed the aspects of the grilling in a clear-cut and transparent fashion, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement following the meeting. The ministers also spoke highly of the National Assembly’s renewed confidence in His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak.

Furthermore, they lauded the unequivocal and conclusive reply by Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rashidi and Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh during the grilling at parliament. They hoped that the parliament would renew confidence in both ministers so that they could carry on their reform efforts for the sake of national objects. The way National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem managed the interpellation session was also acclaimed by the Cabinet during its weekly meeting.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet welcomed a planned visit by Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim to the State of Kuwait yesterday, which reflects mutual interest in the



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

promotion of existing relations between both friendly countries. The ministers, then, reviewed an annual report by the Government Performance Follow-up Agency on the implementation of public projects in 2017 and the agency’s remarks in this regard.

On Arab and international subjects, the Cabinet condemned two recent suicide attacks on Libya’s election committee office in the Libyan city of Tripoli, which left a number of casualties, billing them as a criminal act

that targets innocent people. It also deplored a recent attack on Pakistani Minister of Interior Ahsan Iqbal, along with a mosque bombing in east Afghanistan. The Cabinet reaffirmed Kuwait’s unwavering positions based on rejecting all forms and motives of terrorism. Finally, the Kuwaiti ministers offered heartfelt condolences to the government and people of India over the victims of thunderstorms that lately hit the north of country. — KUNA

## Sheikh Nasser meets ministry official, governors

**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received yesterday the Undersecretary of Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, and Kuwait’s governors at Bayan Palace. Sheikh Nasser and the officials discussed the government’s role in supporting national youth, the ministry’s Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press statement. They officials considered the youth as “the country’s real fortune to achieve 2035 new Kuwait vision,” said the statement.

Kuwait had concluded on Sunday a year-long cultural, social, educational and sports of the capital of Arab Youth activities. This event had provided a desperately needed platform for Arab youth to engage in a real partnership to harness their talents and instill the values of tolerance, peace, moderation and cooperation, the Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri said in his speech at the closing ceremony at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center.

He added that the diverse activities of the event had helped participating Arab youth exchange expertise create new common spaces for cooperation. It also installed the special characteristics of Arab identify among youth and strengthened cooperation between government and non-government youth-focused institutions, the minister said. He pointed out that Egypt would organize the coming edition of the capital of Arab youth event. On the sidelines of the ceremony, the awards of the Arab youth humanitarian center were distributed. The contest is part of the capital of Arab youth’s activities.

In other news, Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday with visiting former Nigerian Prime Minister Hamid Algabid and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, Algabid delivered a letter to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Niger’s President Mahamadou Issoufou. They discussed bilateral relations, along with the latest regional and international developments. —KUNA

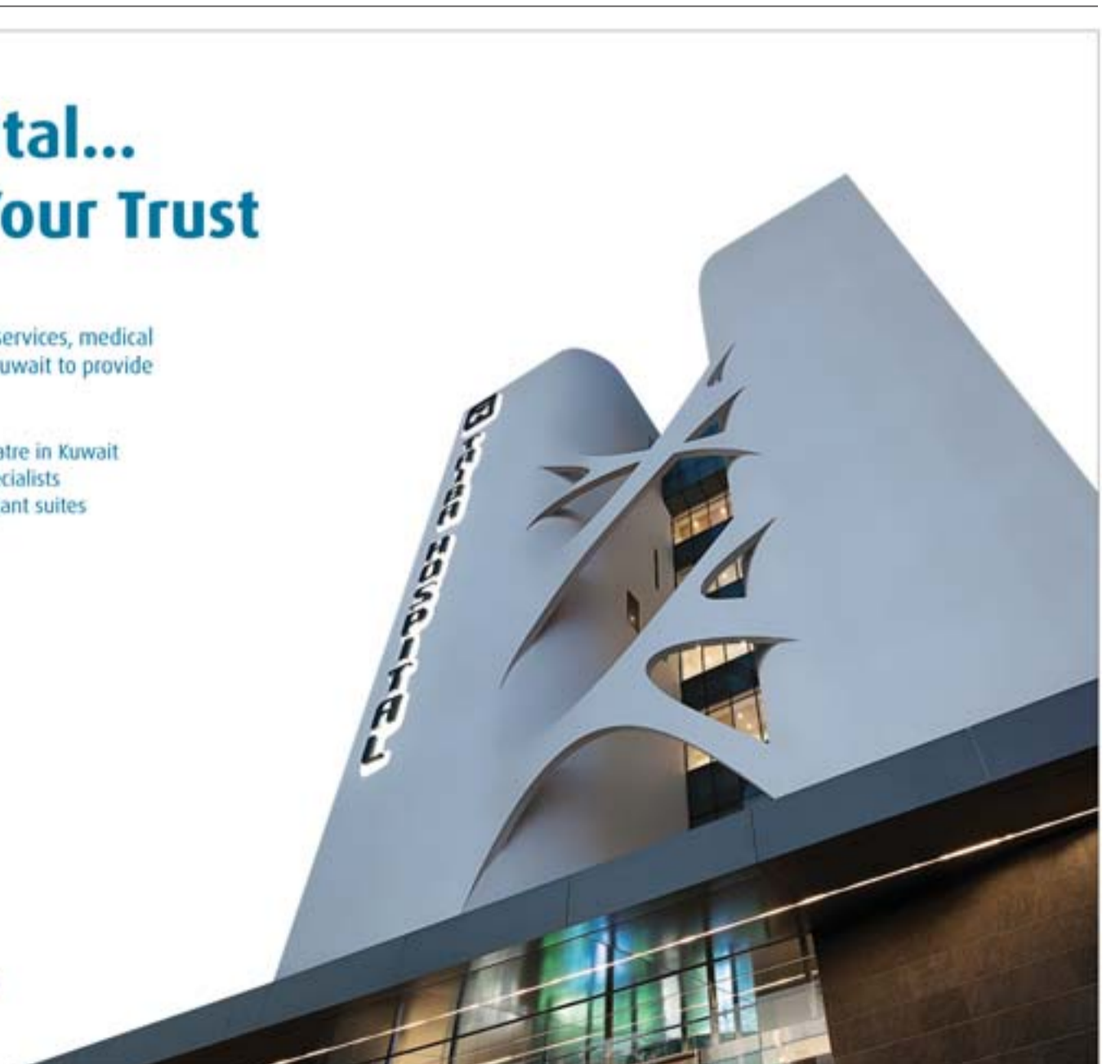
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## Local

## Photo of the Future

# Salem Al-Mubarak Street turned into tourism, shopping attraction

**KUWAIT:** Authorities are renovating Salem Al-Mubarak shopping street, closing it to traffic and re-naming it as 'Barayeh Salem' - derived from the genuine Kuwaiti term 'Baraha,' meaning a yard. The enterprise is designed to lure tourists and shoppers as part of the state approach toward commercial and economic prosperity.

Transparent kiosks dotting the street in a long row, with surrounding palm trees and greenery, are offered for investment to young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs. Shoppers can shop at ease along the shaded road in a refreshing atmosphere amid water fountains, children play grounds and tracks for those of special needs. The re-decorated street will also host exhibitions. — KUNA



## 'Kuwait Yoga Meet 2018' set for Friday

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** A yoga workshop will be organized on Friday at the LOYAC headquarters in Qibla in Kuwait City. A non-profit organization working towards the overall development of Kuwait's youth, LOYAC is collaborating with the Kuwait Yoga Meet team and Seva Darshan Kuwait, along with its arm LOYAC Academy of Performing Arts (LAPA) for this full-day event. They intend to share the discipline they say they have developed when practicing yoga. Yoga is part of India's cultural heritage and it is a way of life for numerous people around the world.

Roopesh Raveendran, Kuwait Yoga Meet coordinator, told Kuwait Times the event will be held from 7 am to 9 pm and will have a variety of yoga and meditation workshops to be conducted by popular local and international experts, culminating in an India-Kuwait cultural program. The highlight of the workshop is a hands-on workshop by yoga and meditation expert Brahmachari Amit, chief yoga trainer of the Amritanandamayi organization.

"The workshop is open to all. The Indian ambassador will grace the occasion and I hope to see Kuwaitis and non-citizens come and join us in this beautiful event," Raveendran said. Yoga trainers in Kuwait like Miss Camilla, Rawan Alawnah, Seham Allasaf, Nawaf Mazaj, Fatima Arikat and Mister Reece will hold their own workshops separately that are restricted to pre-registered participants. The event is supported by Talabat, Art of Living, Amma Kuwait, Heartfulness, PSM and Mind Me Campaign.

Every two years, the group conducts a mega event to celebrate Kuwait's National Day and Liberation Day. "We try to inculcate our rich culture in children and youth through art and music," Raveendran said. Doss Al-Eidani, LAPA-LOYAC dance instructor, is happy to collaborate with the event's organizer for the yoga event. "I am in charge of the LOYAC Academy for Performing Arts. Here at LOYAC, we empower the youth in several aspects and my expertise is in dance. In fact, we are already mixing some of the movements in yoga in our dance classes, we are excited to share and learn more on Friday," he said.



**KUWAIT:** Roopesh Raveendran, Kuwait Yoga Meet coordinator (right), speaks to Kuwait Times as Doss Al-Eidani, LAPA-LOYAC dance instructor, looks on. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

## NBK launches training program for KOC employees

**KUWAIT:** The Group Human Resources in the National Bank of Kuwait launched in cooperation the Foreign Corporate and Trade Finance Group, a comprehensive field training program for the Kuwait Oil Company. The program aims to train KOC employees working in the departments of treasury, finance and accounting on banking operations.

The trainees were welcomed by NBK and KOC leaders headed by Emad Ahmad Al-Ablani, General Manager,

Head of Group Human Resources at NBK, Pradeep Handa, Group Head - Foreign Corporate, Oil and Trade Finance Group, Fawaz Al-Fulaij, Head of Oil and Gas Unit, Akram Al-Shami, Head of Trade Finance, Teddy Nohra Head of Talent and Training and Development. The Kuwait Oil Company was represented by Maysam Al-Ghanem, Team Leader Treasury Accounts and Modhi Al-Shammari from the Financial Investments. The four weeks program covers both theoretical and practical training. And will be delivered for two groups separately.

"This program is in the context of the bank's aim of disseminating the banking culture and introducing the cadres working in the oil sector to the banking activities in general, in addition to explaining banking related processes required for their work," Ablani said.

Ablani stressed that the importance of the program stems from the importance of the subjects that will be

addressed and which will help provide knowledge to the employees dealing with the banking sector. He listed the following as some of the program's topics: trade finance, treasury, operations, risk management, letters of guarantee, all types of letters of credit and anti-money laundering.

He hoped that the program would achieve its desired aims of acquainting the employees with the nature of the banking sector's activities and processes, pointing out that NBK views the training of the national working cadres as a vital part of its social responsibility.

These initiatives all planned to be delivered on an annual basis in harmony with the bank's established policy of shouldering its social responsibilities and out of its belief in the efficacy of these purposeful programs in serving society and its members. It also reflects the leading role played by NBK in this field over many decades.



## Sheikh Salem Award holds eighth dialogue

**KUWAIT:** His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award is scheduled to hold tomorrow the eighth dialogue council, themed 'small and medium

enterprises in Kuwait .. challenges and aspirations.' The board coordinator, Ahmad Safar, said in a press release yesterday that the dialogue would shed light on major challenges facing the Kuwaiti youth in digital industries and incentives for backing up this sector. He indicated that the dialogue would be held in line with the award strategy (2015-2020), aimed at "backing up digital transformation in the realms of know-how and economy in the shadow of the fourth industrial revolution currently experienced worldwide" — where it has merged real and virtual worlds.

Moreover, it is designed to propose 'advanced ideas'

for digitizing tasks, in tandem with pioneers' aspirations in the digital realm, owners of small and medium enterprises, finding solutions to challenges to pave way for international competition.

Eight entrepreneurs and innovators in the digital field will partake in the dialogue to talk about snags facing them. The forthcoming dialogue is the latest in the series of such gatherings that have been organized by the award since 2013, tackling a cocktail of issues namely citizen's media role, legislations for information security, cyber impact on man's wellbeing and cyber hacking. —KUNA



Local

# MoI has no problem in lifting absconding reports upon sponsors' request: Official

## Company received 5,000 requests to hire domestic helpers

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has no problem in lifting absconding reports upon sponsors' request, a senior ministry official said yesterday. Furthermore, the ministry is fine with the possibility of lifting the ban on domestic helpers from certain nationalities provided the foreign minister approves it, Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Maj Gen Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah said.

The official was speaking during a ceremony organized yesterday to launch the new citizen services center at Al-Durra Labor Company in Sharq. Responding to a question about transferring the domestic helpers' department from MoI to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL), Sheikh Mazen stressed that both ministries are the same and that they always cooperate and coordinate the process of recruiting domestic helpers from abroad in a manner that reflects Kuwait's leading role.

The new center's opening ceremony was attended by residency affairs director Maj Gen Talal Maarafi, Al-Durra Chairman Eyad Al-Sumait and Al-Durra General Manager Saleh Al-Wehaib. Sheikh Mazen said the new center is an embodiment of ongoing cooperation between MoI and Al-Durra with the aim of providing the best quality services to citizens seeking the recruitment of domestic helpers. "We have more citizen service centers in Kuwait than restaurants," Sheikh Mazen quipped, noting that there are over 50 centers.

Meanwhile, Sumait said the company has so far received over 5,000 requests to hire domestic helpers of both genders and that 500 workers had been already provided. He added the company provides a six-month probation period for both helpers and sponsors, after which they decide whether to continue with their contracts or cancel them. He said it takes from 35 days to three months to recruit a domestic helper from other countries.

Recent statistics issued by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) showed that the total number of public sector employees is 349,691, an increase of 10,751 employees compared to the first quarter of 2017, when there were 338,940 employees. The statistics also explained that 42.33 percent, ie 148,009, were male employees, while 57.67 percent (201,682) were female employees. Moreover, statistics showed that 75.55 percent of the government's workforce (264,195) comprises of citizens, while GCC nationals number 4,563, other Arabs 49,337 and foreign expats 31,596.

Statistics showed that the majority of civilian employees worked for the Ministry of Education (MoE) with 113,875 employees, followed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) with 63,508, the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) with 20,749 and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) with 20,536 employees. CSC statistics also explained that 5,437 of government employees are PhD holders, 11,441 master's degree holders, 160,446 are university degree holders, 54,502 hold diplomas, 65,860 hold school leaving certificates and 11,059 (including 3,328 citizens) are primary school dropouts.

Well-informed sources at Kuwait University (KU) said that orders to construct and maintain a multi-storey parking complex at the Kaifan and Khaldiya campuses have been changed upon a request from the construction and maintenance department. The sources added that the change will affect 4.89 percent of the original contract value with a cost of KD 74,958. They added that the changes will be executed by the company that won the tender and that the contract's duration will thus be extended for six more months to be concluded in December instead of in June 2018.

Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said the government will refer the privatization law amendments to the parliament soon. Hajraf added that the national program for financial sustainability did not include taxing businesses and companies. He also stressed that one of the program's main aims is to preserve citizens' current living standards, giving an example of keeping fuel prices stable since Sept 2016 to be amongst the lowest in the GCC states and the world, which costs KD 1.623 billion in fuel and energy subsidies; ie 47 percent of the amount allocated for subsidies in the 2018-2019 fiscal year's budget.



### Service center opened at Al-Durra Company

#### KU parking

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**KUWAIT:** Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Maj Gen Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah (center) inaugurates the new citizen services center at Al-Durra Labor Company. —Photos by Fouad Al-Shalkh



Interior Ministry employees at the new service center.

## Three injured in car fire on Sixth Ring Road

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) said firemen dealt with a traffic accident on Sixth Ring Road that resulted in a fire. Three persons were injured and handed to paramedics. The fire was put out by Jahra occupational fire center.

#### Fatal accident

An unidentified person drove a rental car in the wrong direction for more than 10 km on the Sixth Ring Road, finally colliding head on with another vehicle driven by a citizen. Both cars caught fire and both drivers were killed. The coroner recovered both bodies.

#### Drug overdose

Security sources reported finding an Iranian man dead inside his car in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital parking lot. Initial reports suggest that the man had died due to an overdose of drugs. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

#### 14 citations

Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Ahmadi inspectors of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition inspected a number of stores, cafes and restaurants in Mangaf and Fahaeel, which resulted in filing 14 citations and issuing five warning notices. Food and nutrition department's acting public relations and media manager Mohammed Jeraq said that the citations were made for violations including operating a facility handling food prior to obtaining a license and not having health registration and health certificates, in addition to violating general hygiene conditions.

#### Bloggers sentenced

The criminal court yesterday sentenced bloggers Sager Al-Hashash and Musaed Al-Musaileem to five years with labor each over charges of insulting His Highness the Amir.

#### Workshop opened

KFS's Deputy Director General for the Firefighting Sector Maj Gen Jamal Al-Bulaihees opened a workshop on an integrated plan on preparations to support nuclear security, organized by the human resources development department in cooperation with Mubarak Al-Kabeer fire department. The workshop will continue until May 10 at the Regency Hotel, and aims at setting a national plan to protect Kuwait against radioactive materials, while atomic energy agency experts will evaluate the plan and discuss it with concerned authorities.

#### Building evacuated

Fire broke out in the basement of a Mahboula building, prompting firemen from the Mangaf fire station to respond. The seven-storey building was evacuated while the fire was being fought. No injuries were reported.



**KUWAIT:** Firefighters deal with a vehicle's fire following an accident on Sixth Ring Road.



A firefighter tackles a blaze reported in the basement of a Mahboula building yesterday.

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Putin sworn in for 4th term as Russian leader

## Trapped: Many hurdles to repatriate foreigners sex trafficked to India

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CHATRA, India: Indian relatives mourn following the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl at Raja Kundra Village in Chatra district of the eastern Indian state of Jharkhand. —AFP

# Second Indian teen raped, set on fire

## Girl raped, doused in kerosene and set alight

**NEW DELHI:** A 17-year-old Indian girl was fighting for her life yesterday after being raped, doused in kerosene and set alight, the second such case to shake the country this week as it reels from a series of brutal sexual assaults. The teenager was attacked on Friday—the same day a 16-year-old was raped and burned to death, also in the eastern state of Jharkhand. The two incidents have shone a spotlight on the treatment of rape in India, where authorities are facing renewed pressure to act on sexual crimes after the recent gang rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl.

The cases are some of the most high-profile since the 2012 rape and murder of a student on a New Delhi bus that triggered mass protests. “The girl has suffered 70 per cent first-degree burns. There is a chance that she will survive,” Shailendra Barnwal, police superintendent of Pakur district said. The victim has been moved to a private hospital with specialist facilities for “proper treatment and recovery”, he said. Police have arrested a 19-year-old man who lives in the

same neighbourhood as the victim. “He poured kerosene on the girl and set her on fire,” Barnwal said. Fifteen people have been detained in the case of the 16-year-old, who was torched to death in the state’s Chatra district.

The main suspect in that case is said to have been angered by a village council punishment of 100 sit-ups and a \$750 fine for raping the girl. He attacked her parents before setting their house on fire with the teenager inside. Some 40,000 rape cases were reported in India in 2016, but campaigners though say the real number is higher, with victims wary of making complaints because of social stigma.



### Authorities facing renewed pressure to act on sex crimes

**Safety concerns**  
The country is already agonizing over the brutal attack on an eight-year-old in Jammu and Kashmir state, where eight Hindus have been accused over the Muslim girl’s abduction, repeated rape and killing. Hindu activists have staged angry protests claiming that the police inquiry was biased. The Supreme Court yesterday ruled the flashpoint trial should be moved away from Jammu, a Hindu-majority region of the Muslim-dominated state, to Pathankot in neighboring Punjab state.

The victim’s family made the request for the move, saying they feared for their lives. Concern over

women’s safety has been heightened further by new police figures indicating that more than five women were raped every day in the Indian capital this year. Some 578 rape cases were reported in Delhi up to April 15, against 563 in 2017 in the same period. Amid mounting outrage, the government has changed the law to allow execution for child rapists—but daily sexual assaults continue to be reported.

Yesterday, a female lawyer from the low-caste Dalit community accused a senior lawyer associated with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of rape and blackmail. “I am scared as he is threatening my family. I am being made to face this only because I am a Dalit,” the woman, who covered her face to remain anonymous, said at a televised news conference in Lucknow, capital of Uttar Pradesh state. She chopped her hair off at the press conference to protest the lack of official action and threatened to kill herself if nothing was done against the accused. A BJP leader from the state facing allegations of abduction and rape was arrested last month. —AFP

## Why is US moving its embassy to Jerusalem?

**JERUSALEM:** The United States opens its new embassy in Jerusalem on May 14, a move that has delighted Israel and infuriated Palestinians. Yesterday, road signs directing traffic there went up around the neighborhood where it will be situated, and next week’s opening ceremony is timed to coincide with Israel’s 70th anniversary. The initiative was driven by President Donald Trump, after he broke last year with decades of US policy by recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Trump said his administration has a peace proposal in the works, and recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of America’s closest ally had “taken Jerusalem, the toughest part of the negotiation, off the table.” Israel’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, celebrated Trump’s decision, but the move upset the Arab world and Western allies. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called it a “slap in the face” and said Washington could no longer be regarded as an honest broker in any peace talks with Israel. Initially, a small interim embassy will operate from the building in southern Jerusalem that now houses US consular operations, while a secure site is found to move the rest of the embassy operations from Tel Aviv.

### Why Jerusalem?

There has long been pressure from pro-Israel politicians in Washington to move the embassy to Jerusalem, and Trump made it a signature promise of his 2016 election campaign. The decision was popular with many conservative and evangelical Christians who voted for Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, many of whom support political recognition of Israel’s claim to the city. Trump acted under a 1995 law that requires the United States to move its embassy to Jerusalem, but to which other presidents since then - Bill Clinton, George W Bush and Barack Obama - consistently signed waivers.

### Jerusalem, Mideast conflict

Religion, politics and history. Jerusalem has been fought over for millennia by its inhabitants, and by regional powers and invaders. It is sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and each religion has sites of great significance there. Israel’s government regards Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of the country, although that is not recognized internationally. Palestinians feel equally strongly, saying that East

Jerusalem must be the capital of a future Palestinian state. The city even has different names. Jews call it Jerusalem, or Yerushalayim, and Arabs call it Al-Quds, which means “The Holy”. But the city’s significance goes further.

At the heart of the Old City is the hill known to Jews across the world as Har ha-Bayit, or Temple Mount, and to Muslims internationally as Al-Haram al-Sharif, or The Noble Sanctuary. It was home to the Jewish temples of antiquity but all that remains of them above ground is a restraining wall for the foundations built by Herod the Great. Known as the Western Wall, this is a sacred place of prayer for Jews. Within yards of the wall, and overlooking it, are two Muslim holy places, the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, which was built in the 8th century. Muslims regard the site as the third holiest in Islam, after Mecca and Medina. The city is also an important pilgrimage site for Christians, who revere it as the place where they believe that Jesus Christ preached, died and was resurrected.

### What is the city’s modern history and status?

In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly decided that the then British-ruled Palestine should be partitioned into an Arab state and a Jewish state. But it recognized that Jerusalem had special status and proposed international rule for the city, along with nearby Bethlehem, as a ‘corpus separatum’ to be administered by the United Nations. That never happened. When British rule ended in 1948, Jordanian forces occupied the Old City and Arab East Jerusalem. Israel captured East Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it. In 1980 the Israeli parliament passed a law declaring the “complete and united” city of Jerusalem to be the capital of Israel. But the United Nations regards East Jerusalem as occupied, and the city’s status as disputed until resolved by negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

### Any embassy in Jerusalem?

In March Guatemala’s president, Jimmy Morales, said that his country will move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on May 16, two days after the US move. Netanyahu said in April that “at least half a dozen” countries were now “seriously discussing” following the US lead, but he did not identify them. In December, 128 countries voted in a non-binding UN General Assembly resolution calling on the United States to drop its recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Nine voted against, 35 abstained and 21 did not cast a vote.

### What is likely to happen next?

Since Trump’s announcement there have been Palestinian protests and wider political tensions. Arab leaders across the Middle East have warned the move could lead to turmoil and hamper US efforts to restart long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. More than 40 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops in Gaza during a six-week border protest due to



JERUSALEM: A worker installs decorations of Israeli and US flags in front of the US Consulate in Jerusalem where US officials will install the new US Embassy. The embassy move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is expected to occur on May 14. —AFP

culminate on May 15, the day after the US Embassy move and when Palestinians traditionally lament homes and land lost with Israel’s creation.

Although the clashes have not been on the scale of the Palestinian intifadas of 1987-1993 and 2000-2005, violence has erupted before over matters of sovereignty and religion. In 1969 an Australian Messianic Christian tried to burn down Al-Aqsa Mosque. He failed but caused damage, and prompted fury across the Arab world. In 2000, the Israeli politician Ariel Sharon, then opposition leader, led a group of Israeli lawmakers onto the Temple Mount/Al-Haram Al-Sharif complex. A Palestinian protest escalated into the second intifada. Deadly confrontations also took place in July after Israel installed metal detectors at the complex’s entrance after Arab-Israeli gunmen killed two Israeli policemen there. —Reuters

## 45 dead as militia, and bandits clash in Nigeria’s north

**KANO:** Fighting between armed bandits and militiamen left 45 dead in northern Nigeria, police and a local militia said yesterday, amid escalating rural violence often involving cattle rustling, robbery and kidnappings. “The 45 bodies were found scattered in the bush. The bandits pursued residents who mobilized to defend the village after overpowering them,” said a vigilante who asked not to be named for fear of reprisals. “The dead included children abandoned by their parents during the attack” in the village of Gwaska, in Kaduna state.

“The attackers were obviously armed bandits from neighboring Zamfara state who have been terrorizing Birnin Gwari area,” he added. The Kaduna state police chief, Austin Iwar, confirmed the attack, saying: “There was violence between the militias, who are very powerful, and bandits.” He could not break down the casualties, saying only: “For now all we know is that 12 people were buried yesterday and 33 today.” The vigilante said the bandits struck at about 2:30 pm (1330 GMT) Saturday and stayed for three hours before retreating to their base in the forest in Zamfara. “They burnt many homes,” he said.

The killings follow the death of 13 people in prolonged clashes between cattle thieves and local civilian militia in Zamfara last week. The attacks underlined the diversity of Nigeria’s security threats that persist because of an overstretched army and security forces. Rural communities in Zamfara have been under siege for several years from cattle rustlers and kidnapping gangs, who have raided herding communities, killing, looting and burning homes. To defend themselves, villages and herdsmen form vigilante groups, but they too are often accused of extra-judicial killings, provoking a bloody cycle of retaliatory attacks.

Adding to the proliferation of violence due to these criminal groups, Nigeria is in the grip of a security crisis as nomadic herders and sedentary farmers fight over land in an increasingly bloody battle for resources. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has been criticized for failing to curb the violence, which is becoming a key election issue ahead of presidential polls in 2019. The military and police are fighting Boko Haram jihadists in the north, militants and pirates in the oil-rich south, a simmering separatist movement in the east as well as the bloody conflict between herdsmen and farmers spanning the vast central region. —AFP



International

# European powers make last-ditch appeal to save Iran nuclear deal

## Scrapping deal would spark an 'escalation'

**BERLIN:** Britain, France and Germany made a last-ditch appeal yesterday to US President Donald Trump not to abandon the Iran nuclear deal as a key deadline approaches, warning that scrapping it would spark an "escalation". Trump has threatened to withdraw from the 2015 pact when it comes up for renewal on May 12, and to reimpose sanctions unless European signatory states fix its "terrible flaws". German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas warned that the accord's collapse could spark "an escalation" in the region and stressed that Washington's key European allies remain convinced saving it "makes the world a safer place".



### Trump threatens to withdraw from 2015 nuke pact

His French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian, on a Berlin visit, said that the agreement is "the right way to stop Iran from getting access to nuclear weapons" and "will save us from nuclear proliferation". British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, who was visiting Washington yesterday, cautioned that "at this delicate juncture, it would be a mistake to walk away from the nuclear agreement and remove the restraints that it places on Iran". "Now that these handcuffs are in place, I see no possible advantage in casting them aside," Johnson wrote in *The New York Times*. He argued that "every available alternative is worse", adding that "the wisest course would be to improve the handcuffs rather than break them".

#### 'United in our effort'

Under the landmark nuclear pact, also signed by Russia and China, Iran pledged not to build a nuclear bomb in return for relief from international sanctions. Trump has consistently complained about the agreement, reached under his predecessor Barack Obama, citing perceived flaws including "sunset" provisions lifting some nuclear restrictions from 2025. In an attempt to salvage the deal, French President Emmanuel Macron has pushed to extend its scope to address this issue, as well as Iran's missile capabilities and its role in the region.

Israel has also pushed to have the accord ditched, arguing that intelligence documents it recently unveiled showed that Iran had had a secret atomic weapons program which it could re-activate at any time. Britain, France and other signatories have said those arguments only strengthened the case for the deal, which has safeguards in place designed to keep Iran from pursuing atomic weapons. Johnson was yesterday to start a two-day visit to Washington, with the nuclear deal top of the agenda, the Foreign Office said.

He was due to meet US Vice President Mike Pence,

National Security Advisor John Bolton and Congressional foreign policy leaders. He said in his article that Britain, the US and Europe were "united in our effort to tackle the kind of Iranian behavior that makes the Middle East region less secure—its cyber activities, its support for groups like Hezbollah, and its dangerous missile program". Iran's support for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, via the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah in Syria's civil war, and its backing for Shiite Houthi rebels in Yemen have added to frictions between Tehran and Western powers. "Regret like never before" Iran has always denied it sought a nuclear weapon, insisting its atomic program was for civilian purposes. Its

President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday issued a strong warning to the United States not to quit the pact. "If the United States leaves the nuclear agreement, you will soon see that they will regret it like never before in history," the reform-minded Rouhani said in a televised speech. —AFP



**SABZAWAR, Iran:** A handout picture shows Iranians holding a portrait of President Hassan Rouhani as they attend a rally in the northwestern city of Sabzevar. Rouhani said that if the United States quits the nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers then Washington would regret it "like never before". — AFP

## Trapped: Many hurdles to repatriate foreigners sex trafficked to India

**MUMBAI:** Women are increasingly being trafficked into India's sex industry from countries outside South Asia that do not have repatriation agreements, which leaves victims trapped in limbo for months after being rescued, officials said. India has long been a destination for traffickers bringing women from neighboring Bangladesh, which has a repatriation treaty, and Nepal, which works closely with Indian authorities on the issue.

But nations beyond South Asia - Uzbekistan and Thailand in particular - have emerged as source countries over the past three years, according to police, campaigners and government data. "The (repatriation) process is streamlined for Bangladesh and Nepal. But now people are coming from other parts and we have no treaties with them," said Mahesh Bhagwat, police chief of Rachakonda

district in the southern state of Telangana. In 2016, there were 33 recorded cases of women trafficked from Bangladesh and 16 from Nepal, according to the government's annual Crime in India report.

In contrast, authorities in 2016 recorded 70 trafficking cases from Thailand and Uzbekistan, which were combined in the report. Previous reports did not mention victim's nationalities. An official at the National Crime Records Bureau said Thailand and Uzbekistan were named because most of the recorded trafficking cases in 2016 originated in those two countries. The number of trafficked foreign nationals recorded by authorities was lower in previous years, varying from 36 in 2010 to 13 in 2014.

Data is not yet available for 2017, but authorities said 40 Thai women were rescued from massage parlors acting as fronts for prostitution in Mumbai and Pune in the first half of last year alone. Another 34 Thai women were rescued later in 2017 from massage parlors and spas in the Telangana state capital of Hyderabad, Bhagwat told the Thomson Reuters Foundation yesterday. Bhagwat's team also rescued an Uzbek woman last year from the sex trade in Hyderabad, the state capital of Telangana. She committed suicide late last month, four months after her repatriation process began, he said. The embassies of Uzbekistan and

Thailand did not respond to phone calls and emails seeking comment. After being informed that a victim of trafficking from their country has been rescued, embassy officials need to verify the person's identity and home address. Campaigners say this can be difficult as victims sometimes provide false information, because they are afraid that traffickers may hurt them or their families. "These girls are controlled by traffickers and they are coerced into saying many things. They are deeply indoctrinated," said Sunitha Krishnan, co-founder of the anti-trafficking charity Prajwala. Krishnan said the Uzbek woman who had been sheltering in one of Prajwala's facilities had been carrying forged Indian identity documents when she was rescued, and at first refused to say which country she was really from.

Krishnan urged more countries to make agreements with India to quickly repatriate those rescued from sex trafficking. Her call may take on more urgency if traffickers continue to cast their nets wider than South Asia - which campaigners say is likely. The massage parlor industry is booming and many customers prefer fair-skinned women from countries like Thailand and Uzbekistan, said Hasina Kharbhil, founder of the anti-trafficking group Impulse NGO Network. "The demand for foreign girls is growing in India," she said.—Reuters

## As elections loom, Thai leader gets cosy with the old political clans

**BURIRAM:** The sons of a convicted murderer, a rural "don" who has spun a fortune from football and gun-loving provincial bigwigs-as elections near, Thai junta leader Prayut Chan-O-Cha is cosying up to "influential figures", a group he vowed to expunge from politics with his coup four years ago. Throughout his rule Prayut, the mercurial ex-general whose army seized power in May 2014, has maintained one key refrain: politicians and their cronies are the cause of the country's political instability. But the 64-year-old is suddenly changing tune as he looks to complete a metamorphosis from dictator to elected leader at polls promised for 2019.

The retired general has been coy on formally announcing a run for office. Yet in recent months he has been busily courting the political fiefs that dominate the country, specifically potential allies of his nemesis, the billionaire former premier Thaksin Shinawatra. Yesterday Prayut arrived in Buriram, a northeastern province dominated by Newin Chidchob-an ex-politician turned sports mogul whose shape-shifting alliances have made him a key political "kingmaker".

He was welcomed by a full house of some 30,000 in Buriram FC's "Thunder Castle" stadium-an unprecedented reception for the junta leader, whose popularity is on the slide among the Bangkok middle class. Many will interpret the hearty welcome as sign of a deal between Prayut and Newin, who steers his Bhumjaithai Party from behind the scenes and has secured the lucrative rights to host MotoGP from this year in his rural backwater. Strutting across the field, microphone in hand, a jocular Newin urged crowds to cheer Prayut loudly to squeeze out cash from the government.

"The budget for your flood protection will be gone if your voice is not loud!" he said. A relaxed Prayut laid out his vision for the country, while also denying he was in town for political reasons. "I didn't come here to ask you

to love me... It's fine if you don't love me, just don't hate me," he told the stadium. Prayut rejects accusations he is on the campaign trail, with political activity banned by his regime. But there are few doubts he is out to complete his mission of scuttling the Shinawatras' election machine.

The Shinawatra clan have won all general elections since 2001, relying on their popular appeal in the rural north and northeast. Prayut toppled the government of Yingluck Shinawatra, who has now joined her brother Thaksin in self-exile after being convicted of criminal negligence. Their Pheu Thai party is weakened without the siblings' star power and Prayut is seeking to overrun them at elections with the support of provincial bosses-and the vote banks they carry. "Prayut has become the ultimate hypocrite," said Paul Chambers, a Thailand-based expert on the kingdom's politics. After endless politician-bashing, "now Prayut and the (junta) are using many of these same corrupt politicians to build a political party."

#### 'Political mafia'

What Newin might get for backing Prayut remains unknown. But his counterparts in eastern Chonburi province already appear to have been rewarded. Two brothers from the Kunplome clan, who dominate Thailand's eastern seaboard, were made cabinet-level advisors in April. Their family is headed by elderly Somchai, dubbed the "Godfather of Chonburi", who was released early from jail in December after serving a fraction of a 28-year sentence for masterminding the murder of a local politician.

Prayut has repeatedly denied any horse-trading is going on. But his meetings continue to raise eyebrows, including a golf outing with another influential clique-the Pheu Thai-linked Sasomsap brothers in Nakhon Pathom. A few years ago they were targeted by a junta crackdown on "influential figures". Police raids found scores of guns in raids at their homes, according to local media. "Political mafia is a more appropriate term for these type of people," said Thai politics professor Titipol Phakdeewanich. The families maintain control through business links, donations and other "generous deeds", Titipol added. "Prayut understands how politics functions. If you want to win an election as a newcomer you have to collaborate with existing powers in provinces." — AFP



**BURIRAM:** Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha delivers his address at a massive gathering in Buriram FC's Thunder Castle stadium in Buriram yesterday. — AFP

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## International

# Russia's Putin sticks with same prime minister for a new term

## Putin sworn in for fourth term as Russia president

**MOSCOW:** President Vladimir Putin stuck with his long-serving prime minister in his first act after being sworn in for a new term yesterday, signaling that he would keep faith with a policy direction that has brought Russia into conflict with the West. Standing in the ornately-decorated Andreyevsky Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace, with his hand on a gold-embossed copy of the constitution, Putin, 65, swore to serve the Russian people, to safeguard rights and freedoms, and protect Russian sovereignty.

Putin won the new six-year term after more than 70 percent of voters backed him in a March 18 presidential election. His most dangerous challenger, Alexei Navalny, was not allowed to take part. Navalny was detained on Saturday at a protest called under the slogan: "Putin is not our tsar." Soon after the inauguration ceremony, the Kremlin issued a statement saying that Putin had nominated Dmitry Medvedev to be prime minister in his new term. Medvedev, a loyal Putin lieutenant, has held the job since 2012.

The appointment needs to be approved by the lower house of parliament, but that is likely to be a formality because the chamber is dominated by Kremlin loyalists. Some Kremlin-watchers had speculated Putin might bring in a fresh face as prime minister to kick-start reforms of the sluggish economy and revive foreign investment curtailed by stand-offs with the West. By choosing Medvedev - seen by people close to the Russian elite as a safe pair of hands whose chief quality is loyalty to his boss - Putin indicated he favored continuity.

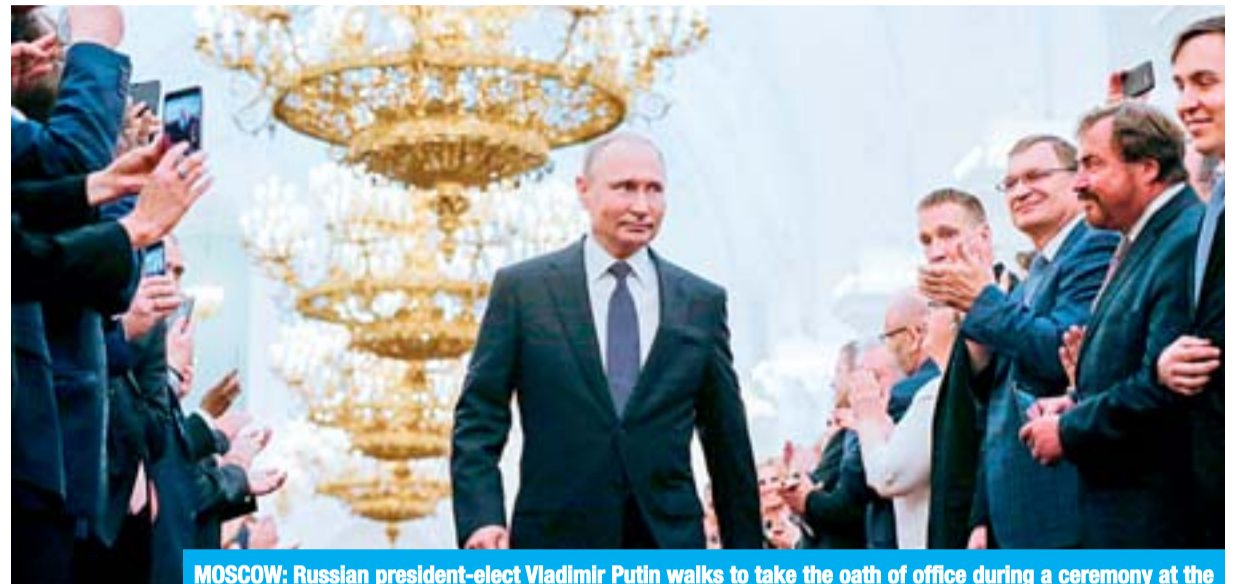
The choice is also likely to be parsed by Kremlin-watchers for any clues about what happens after Putin's current term ends in 2024. The constitution bars him from seeking a third consecutive term. When Putin came up against the same term limits in 2008, he got around the problem by anointing Medvedev as president, before taking back the job after one term. Some observers believe Putin, who has not anointed any heir apparent, could attempt the same manoeuvre a second time.

### Limousine

Putin embarks on his new term, his fourth in total, buoyed by widespread popular support but also weighed down by the costly confrontation with the West, low economic growth, and uncertainty about what happens when his terms ends. In a speech after the swearing-in ceremony, Putin said that in the next six years Russia would prove a strong, muscular player on the world stage, backed by a powerful military, while pushing hard to improve life for its citizens at home.

"Taking up this post, I feel a colossal sense of responsibility," Putin told his audience of Russian officials and foreign dignitaries, among them former German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. For the short journey from his office to the inauguration ceremony, Putin travelled in a new Russian-made limousine. From now on, the limousine will replace the fleet of imported vehicles Putin uses, state television reported.

The choice of transport chimes with a message, often repeated by Putin, that Russia is ready to stand on its



**MOSCOW:** Russian president-elect Vladimir Putin walks to take the oath of office during a ceremony at the Kremlin yesterday. —AFP

own feet and shake off its dependence on the West. Foreign diplomats see little prospect that Russia's stand-offs with the West that have dominated the past four years will ease during Putin's new term. Clashes in the past few weeks over US sanctions on Russia, the conflict in Syria, and the poisoning in England of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal have left some diplomats worried that the confrontation could spiral out of control.

### Troubles ahead

Opinion polls show Putin has high levels of support among Russian citizens, and Navalny has not been able to inspire a nationwide upsurge of protests. But the Russian economy is a potential weakness for Putin. Buffeted by lower oil prices, falls in the rouble, inflation

and the impact of sanctions, average monthly wages have fallen from the equivalent of \$867 in 2013 to \$553 last year.

Russia's economy, the world's eleventh largest, returned to growth of 1.5 percent last year, helped by a recovery in oil prices. But that fell far short of the growth Russians grew accustomed to earlier in Putin's rule. Putin, first elected president in 2000, will soon have ruled longer than Soviet Communist leader Leonid Brezhnev, whose 18-year rule from 1964 to 1982 is primarily associated with stagnation. By the time his term ends, Putin will be 71. Foreign diplomats and analysts say uncertainty over what happens after 2024 is likely to destabilize the ruling elite and spark infighting among rival Kremlin clans. —Reuters



## Putin re-elected with over 70% support

### News in brief

#### 6 killed in Yemen capital

**SANAA:** Two air raids targeted the office of the presidency in Yemen's rebel-held capital Sanaa yesterday, leaving at least six people killed and 30 wounded, a medical source said. The rebel-run Al-Masirah television blamed the Saudi-led coalition for the raids. Witnesses said the office, used by the Houthi rebel administration and located in the Tahrir district of Sanaa, is normally bustling with employees. Residents said they heard two powerful explosions hit the building, which is located near a hotel, a bank and shops, and not far from the central bank. —AFP

#### 'Nazi grandma' skips jail

**BERLIN:** German police are hunting an 89-year-old grandmother convicted on several occasions for Holocaust denial, after she failed to turn herself in to serve her prison sentence. Ursula Haverbeck, dubbed "Nazi-Oma" (Nazi grandma) by German media, was convicted in October on eight counts of incitement and sentenced to two years in prison. But she did not report to prison to serve her sentence by the April 23 deadline. "After the convict failed to report to the relevant penal institution within the deadline, prosecutors in Verden on May 4, 2018 issued an order to execute the sentence and have charged police with its implementation," prosecutors said in a statement. —AFP

#### 13 dead, 150 hospitalized

**PHNOM PENH:** At least 13 people have died and nearly 150 have been hospitalized in central Cambodia after drinking contaminated liquid, health officials said yesterday, blaming either home brewed rice wine or water. The deaths began on May 3, rocking two villages in the poor, rural Chet Borey district of Kratie province. "As of today (Monday) 13 people have died," Chheang Savutha, provincial health director, said. "We don't know what cause is of the incident yet, we are working on that now," he added. —AFP

#### IS claims assassination

**BAGHDAD:** Gunmen shot dead a parliamentary candidate at his home in northern Iraq yesterday, a local official said, in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group. The candidate was "shot dead" by armed men at dawn "after they forced their way into his home," said Salah Al-Juburi, a local official in Qayyarah, 70km south of Mosul city. The official named the slain candidate as Faruq Zarzur Al-Juburi, 45, a Sunni from Shiite Vice President Ayad Allawi's National Alliance list. National elections are set to take place in the Shiite majority country on Saturday. In a statement on the messaging app Telegram, IS said Zarzur al-Juburi was killed because he was "an atheist". —AFP

#### Hawaii residents warned

**PAHOA:** Emergency authorities battling lava flows and gas erupting from Hawaii's Kilauea volcano told some residents to "Go now" as a new fissure opened and more structures were destroyed. Kilauea has destroyed 26 homes and forced 1,700 people to leave their residences since it erupted on Thursday, spewing lava and toxic gas from volcanic vents in a small area of Hawaii's Big Island. A new fissure opened on Sunday night in the Leilani Estates area some 12 miles from the volcano, prompting a cellphone alert for residents to leave homes to avoid sulfur dioxide gas, which can be life threatening at high levels. —Reuters

#### Trial resumes in Turkey

**ALIAGA:** The trial of an American pastor that has strained relations between Turkey and the US resumed yesterday, with the defendant again rejecting charges of links to terror groups. Andrew Brunson, head of a small Protestant church in the western city of Izmir, faces up to 35 years in jail if he is convicted. He has been held in detention since October 2016. —AFP

## 'Shooting gallery' helps addicts in Europe's richest country

**LUXEMBOURG:** Far from the glitzy bank buildings and boutiques in Luxembourg city sits a run-down prefab building behind the railway station that shows another side to Europe's richest country. The tiny grand duchy nestled between France, Belgium and Germany has for more than 10 years played host to a busy "shooting gallery" to give drug addicts a safe space to inject narcotics. Here in Luxembourg there are around 2,000 users of hard drugs. For a country with 600,000 people, that's a lot," says Patrick Klein, director of the Abridgo "shooting gallery". Abridgo-which means "sheltered" in Portuguese, a nod to the fact that the historic home of Luxembourg's largest immigrant community is nearby-opened in 2005. It now boasts a consumption room, a day centre with a medical service, and a night shelter with 42 beds. The money to run it comes from a 2.7 million euro a year budget financed by the Luxembourg health ministry and the city of Luxembourg.

### 'Family spirit'

Between 2011 and 2016, the last year for which figures were available, usage doubled to more than 57,000 annual visits to consume drugs, which works out at more than 156 a day. "It's going well. The chances of catching something are minimised, they've done that well," says drug user Patrick Steffen, 54. Needle exchanges-swapping dirty needles for sterilised ones-rose by 25 percent in 2016, and is now "nearly 100 percent," explains Luxembourg health minister Lydia Mutsch. This is a big step forward in a country where intravenous drug use has become the third biggest mode of transmission of AIDS.

"Here there is a family spirit," says another user, Thierry Yavo, 41, from France. But Abridgo chief Klein says the shelter



**LUXEMBOURG:** A social educator displays a sterile drug use equipment at the Abridgo Center - a 'shooting gallery' in Luxembourg. —AFP

is "reaching its limits in terms of welcoming capacity" during the seven hours a day that it is open. The question is why Luxembourg-which has the highest gross domestic product per head of population in the 28-nation European Union-has so many drug addicts.

Klein blames "social tourism" enabled by Europe's open borders policy, with a number coming from France. He also noted that at Abridgo the proportion of addicts from countries from EU countries that used to be part of the Soviet bloc has grown, and now represents 20 percent of all users. "There are lots more coming now that the borders are open," agrees Steffen. "Some migrants are coming too. Some are economic migrants, some are fleeing the Islamic State, but all in all it means a lot of new faces for us." Klein however rejects claims that Abridgo itself attracts more drug users, a common criticism of shooting galleries when they have been set up in other countries such as Switzerland and France.

"In our centre, the average length of time that people have been drug users is 12 years," he says. But for the German

national-who has advised the French health minister and worked in a Parisian shooting gallery called Gaia-there is only one number which counts. "Our key figure is zero. Zero deaths from drug overdoses in our institution," says Klein. He attributes that to the daily presence of a nurse, along with visits by a doctor three times a week. In 2016 there were 69 drug overdoses, 29 of whom lost consciousness, says Abridgo's annual report.

In the shooting gallery users have to give their identity and sign a users contract. They also have to promise to obey the centre's rules, while there is a week-long exclusion rule for those who flout the regulations. It also works in full cooperation with the authorities. "After 13 years I can tell you that it's the 'best practice' for Europe," Klein says. "Every two months we have a meeting with a pilot group comprising the police, the prosecutor, customs officials and the health ministry," he says. "There is also a deal with the cops, so that users can consume here without the risk of police coming and arresting us while we're using, so we lose our dose," says Jean-Charles, a 46-year-old drug user. —AFP

## Mud-slinging and sabotage; Malaysia gears up for polls

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Vicious mud-slinging, allegations of voter fraud and sabotage have marred a hard-fought campaign for Malaysian elections tomorrow, in which scandal-plagued Prime Minister Najib Razak will take on a heavyweight ex-leader. Najib's ruling coalition has governed Malaysia since independence from Britain in 1957 but is facing a tough test at the polls due to a challenge from a former insider-veteran ex-premier Mahathir Mohamad-and the IMDB financial scandal. The government is expected to win, partly helped by a healthy economy, however critics say gerrymandering and electoral abuses have also been used to tip the scales in Najib's favour.

But the surprise return of 92-year-old Mahathir at the head of an alliance filled with parties he crushed during two decades in power has shaken up the race, giving the opposition a charismatic standard-bearer they hope can topple Najib. "This is the most unpredictable general election in Malaysia for years," Yang Razali Kassim, a Malaysia expert from the S.Rajaratnam School of International Studies of Nanyang Technological University in Singapore said. "Mahathir's comeback has been a game-changer. It reversed the political fortunes of the opposition and shook up the entire political landscape." The high stakes have prompted a brutal campaign, in which Najib and Mahathir have relentlessly hurled insults at each other as they raced up and down the country for rallies. Mahathir has run down Najib, his one-time protege, lambasting him over IMDB, and taking aim at his wife Rosmah Mansor, whose reportedly spendthrift habits have made her unpopular. Billions of dollars were allegedly looted from IMDB, set up by Najib, in a sophisticated money-laundering scheme. The leader and IMDB deny any wrongdoing. Najib has hit back, criticizing Mahathir's authoritarian track record when in office.



**KUALA LUMPUR:** Supporters of former Malaysian prime minister and opposition party Pakatan Harapan's prime ministerial candidate Mahathir Mohamad attend a campaign rally ahead of the upcoming 14th general elections. —AFP

### 'Too much corruption'

As the battle heated up, authorities have increasingly taken aim at the opposition. Police have started a probe into Mahathir for allegedly breaking a controversial new law against "fake news" after he claimed that a plane he chartered was sabotaged. Civil society groups have raised the alarm about what they say are attempts by the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition to cheat, including allegations that millions of voters without addresses, as well as dead people, have appeared on the electoral roll.

Critics say one of the clearest attempts to rig the poll came in March when the BN-dominated parliament voted to redraw the electoral map, creating new constituencies dominated by the Muslim Malay majority, who traditionally back the government. Najib's party has been accused of running a racially-charged campaign to shore up the support of the Malays, who make up some 60 percent of the population in the multi-ethnic country. But even many Malay voters have had enough. —AFP

## Italian parties still far apart; election re-run looming

**ROME:** The prospect of an election re-run in Italy grew yesterday as President Sergio Mattarella held a final round of consultations to try to break two months of political deadlock with party leaders still far apart. The head of the far-right League, Matteo Salvini, said he had asked Mattarella to give him a mandate to try to form a government as chief of a centre-right alliance that won the most seats at the inconclusive March 4 election.

"We trust that the president will give us the chance to find a majority in parliament," Salvini said after seeing Mattarella. However, the centre-right is some 50 seats short of majority and a source in the president's office said that without a clear political deal, Mattarella is more likely to try to form a neutral government acceptable to a broad range of parties. But it was far from certain whether such an administration could win a vote of confidence needed to get off the ground. Both the League and the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, Italy's single largest party, have been hostile to the idea.

With a mesh of seemingly rigid vetoes still in place, the presidential source said there was a growing possibility that a repeat election could be held as early as July, when many Italians will have already left for their summer holidays. This would be unprecedented in Italy, where in the post-war period elections have always been held in the spring. 5-Star leader Luigi Di Maio said after meeting Mattarella that he had reiterated his offer to form a government with the League, by which the two parties would jointly decide on a mutually acceptable prime minister. —Reuters



International

# In Turkey's Kurdish heartland, a battle for homes and votes

## Turkey to hold snap elections in June

**DIYARBAKIR:** Kurdish electrician Sukru Gunduz was out on a job when a friend came running to tell him his house was being knocked down, with five members of his family inside. Angry and alarmed, he rushed home. By the time he got there, a mechanical digger had smashed a hole in the small house in the historic Sur district of Diyarbakir, the biggest city in predominantly Kurdish southeastern Turkey.

Gunduz's mother, his wife and three of their five children were inside but no one was hurt and he persuaded the demolition workers to stop. But it was only a brief reprieve: two weeks later, at the start of this year, the two-storey structure was torn down in line with a state expropriation order. The house was one of thousands razed under a state urban renewal program intended also to relocate residents from areas devastated after a decades-old conflict between government forces and Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants resumed in 2015.

The government hopes the program will boost the economy and win President Tayyip Erdogan and the ruling AK Party some goodwill—and votes—as they prepare for snap presidential and parliamentary elections on June 24. But Gunduz and three others interviewed by Reuters whose homes were demolished say they are awaiting compensation. The 47-year-old electrician has also lost part of his livelihood: the ground floor of his house was his electrical shop and a grocery store. "I haven't sold the house, received money or signed anything. What right do you have to demolish my house?" Gunduz, 47, said in the courtyard of a house in Sur where he and his family are staying.

Two government officials in Ankara declined to comment on the redevelopment issue. But Urbanisation Minister Mehmet Ozhasaki said in

March the government would provide housing for all those left homeless by the destruction in Sur, one of seven areas of southeast Turkey that are being redeveloped. "We will give houses to all our brothers whose homes have been destroyed. Our levels of agreement are around 80 percent. When houses for the remaining 20 percent have been built and handed over, we will have dressed the wounds," he told a crowd in Sur when Erdogan visited to launch the construction of new homes.

Hundreds of thousands in southeast Turkey have been displaced by clashes between Turkish security forces and the PKK, which began its separatist insurgency in 1984, and more than 40,000 people have been killed in its conflict with the Turkish state. The PKK is designated a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union. A group set up to support those displaced in Sur says more than 700 people have opened court cases to challenge the expropriation and settlement terms for their homes, among some 4,000 properties demolished in the process.

The top administrative court rejected the challenges to the expropriations, citing the need to redevelop areas damaged by conflict and on the grounds that affected buildings presented a risk to locals and did not respect the area's cultural heritage. Homeowners say they have been offered only small

improvements in the sums the state offers for their properties. Appeals over the expropriation have also been made to Turkey's constitutional court. The constitutional court has not yet put these appeals on its agenda and it is unclear when it will do so, according to a court official who declined further comment.

### Snap elections

Erdogan's announcement of snap elections has caught the opposition off guard and will complete Turkey's switch from a parliamentary to a presidential system. But the opposition pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) is dominant in southeastern Turkey and won a large share of votes there in a parliamentary election in 2015. In the clashes between Turkish security forces and the PKK, Sur witnessed some of the heaviest fighting in the conflict, and violence has picked up in the southeast since the breakdown of a 2-1/2 year-old ceasefire in 2015.

When he visited Sur in March, Erdogan launched the construction of 1,500 houses and inaugurated the renovation of the district's main streets under the 10-billion-lira (\$2.36 billion) plan to revive damaged areas in the southeast. "When the terror is over, tourists will come. My citizens will come from across the country. The economy will be vibrant," Erdogan told a crowd waving Turkish flags near revamped shop fronts in the main thoroughfare running through

Sur. Firat Kertisci, who is among those whose homes were demolished in Sur, has been offered an apartment in a new housing development outside Diyarbakir city.

"I went and saw it and liked it very much," the 34-year-old tradesman said. "We are now slowly getting over it and the biggest support came from the state, materially, morally and psychologically." Despite the availability of new housing, rights group Amnesty International says many of the 25,000 displaced residents, around half the district's former population, had expressed a desire to return to Sur. The AKP disputes this, saying the vast majority of people who have been displaced have agreed on compensation. "People will move to a more modern life than in those ramshackle, run-down, derelict houses," Serdar Budak, the head of the AKP in Diyarbakir, told Reuters.

### 'Old spirit has gone'

The HDP says Erdogan cannot count on winning votes from the urban renewal program. "They are calculating that they can turn this into votes in the elections," said Mustafa Akengin, the HDP's deputy head for Diyarbakir province. "They won't be able to succeed in that in the region. The elections will show that." People who have lost homes receive monthly rental support of 1,000 lira (\$236), and the state has paid out 96 million lira in such support, the provincial governor said in April. Like the other Sur residents interviewed by Reuters, carpet seller Hasan Yilmaz, 53, did not disclose how he planned to vote in the snap elections. His preoccupation is with how more has been lost than buildings. "There was deep solidarity, coordination and social activity among the people who lived there," he said in his carpet store in Sur. "That old spirit has gone." —Reuters



## Ankara rebuilding devastated areas

## Pakistan's interior minister recovering after gun attack

**LAHORE:** Pakistan's interior minister was recovering in hospital yesterday after being shot in a suspected assassination attempt possibly linked to blasphemy, with the attack seen as an ominous sign for security ahead of nationwide elections. Ahsan Iqbal, 59, was shot in the right arm as he prepared to leave a public meeting in his constituency in Punjab province late Sunday.

A man identified by police as Abid Hussain and said to be in his early 20s was wrestled to the ground by officers and bystanders as he was preparing to fire a second shot. He is due to appear in an anti-terrorism court yesterday. Police are still investigating, but local deputy commissioner Ali Anan Qamar said that the shooter said he was inspired by a controversy last year in which a small amendment to the oath election candidates must swear had to be hastily reversed after it was linked to blasphemy.

The row sparked a three-week sit-in last November by a previously little-known Islamist group, which paralyzed the capital. That demonstration ended when the government capitulated to the protesters' demands—including the ousting of the federal law minister—in a deal brokered by the military. At the time many Pakistanis and

analysts warned that a dangerous precedent had been set in which fringe groups could bend the state to their will by citing blasphemy, a highly inflammatory charge in the conservative Muslim country. Iqbal, a champion of Pakistan's much-persecuted religious minorities who has condemned hate speech against them, pushed for a negotiated settlement to the controversy.

Police said they were investigating links between Hussain and the controversy, including the small Islamist party at the centre of it. After the shooting Iqbal was airlifted to Lahore. Doctors performed surgery on him until the early hours, Shafiq Waseem Chaudhry, one of the five-member medical team responsible for him said. Iqbal is "stable" but will remain in the intensive care unit for two days, he said. The attack was swiftly condemned by the international community as Pakistanis voiced fears it represented an attempt to weaken democracy ahead of the federal elections. The elections are set to be only the second ever democratic transition in the country, and are widely expected to be held late this summer.

Ziauddin Yousafzai, the father of Pakistani Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai, "strongly condemned" the attack, tweeting that it was a "bad omen for upcoming general elections that is supposed to be free, fair and transparent". Security analyst Amir Rana told AFP the shooting of the minister nominally in charge of security in a country that has long grappled with militancy was a "serious" development.—AFP



LAHORE: A Pakistani policeman stands guard outside a hospital where country interior minister Ahsan Iqbal shifted after the assassination attempt in Lahore yesterday. —AFP

## Over 30 Syria forces killed

**BEIRUT:** More than 30 Syrian government troops have been killed in a southern district of the capital in a fierce counter-offensive by Islamic State group fighters, a monitor said yesterday. Regime forces are seeking to end IS's years-long foothold in the Palestinian camp of Yarmuk and neighboring district of Hajar al-Aswad, both in southern Damascus. Last week, troops managed to sever a route linking the two areas, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said, but IS launched a fightback at the weekend and successfully reopened it.

"Their hit-and-run operations have continued since then, killing a total of 31 regime forces,

mostly in ambushes," said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Britain-based Observatory. "The regime has since been advancing slowly, taking some positions and buildings, but there hasn't been any strategic advance since Saturday," he told AFP. Regime troops control 60 percent of Hajar al-Aswad, while IS still holds more than 80 percent of Yarmuk.

Forces loyal to President Bashar Al-Assad were pounding both districts with air strikes and shelling yesterday, Abdel Rahman said. Since the start of the offensive in mid-April, more than 150 regime forces have been killed, as well as 120 IS fighters, the Observatory said. Another 47 civilians also died in the fighting. Yarmuk was once a thriving Palestinian camp that was home to around 160,000 people but only a few hundred are expected to still remain. Syria's government besieged the camp in 2012, and IS overran large swathes of it three years later.—AFP

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E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
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turn down volume  
on Trump tax cuts

Right after Republicans in the US Senate passed their income tax overhaul in December, delivering tax cuts to businesses and most American taxpayers, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell was buoyant. Surrounded by jubilant fellow Republicans, he told reporters, "If we can't sell this to the American people, we ought to go into another line of work." Four months later, McConnell's attempt at levity could prove prophetic.

The most vulnerable Republican incumbents in the tightest congressional races in the November elections are talking less and less about the tax cuts on Twitter and Facebook, on their campaign and congressional websites and in digital ads, the vital tools of a modern election campaign, a Reuters analysis of their online utterances shows. All told, the number of tax messages has fallen by 44 percent since January. For several congressmen in tough reelection fights, Steve Knight in California, Jason Lewis in Minnesota, and Don Bacon in Nebraska, messaging is down much more - as much as 72 percent.

Right after the tax law passed, lawmakers piggybacked on a surge of corporate announcements of tax-cut fueled bonuses to employees, wage hikes and job creation plans to tout the benefits of the bill to voters. As those corporate announcements trailed off in March and April, so did Republican politicians' messages about tax relief, the Reuters review found. With the exception of a flurry of news releases on or around April 17, when federal tax returns were due, few incumbents kept up the pace. The Reuters review did not capture candidates' email, direct mail or private conversations with donors or voters or stump speeches.

Most of the 13 Republican incumbents in the most competitive reelection bids, and their aides, declined to answer Reuters' questions on why they were communicating less online about the tax cuts. But a Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted from March 14 to 29 found that just 3 percent of American adults were aware of receiving a material benefit from the Republican legislation. Ford O'Connell, a Republican strategist, said that is why his party's candidates need to energize voters by talking about other issues, too, like restricting immigration and stopping Democrats from taking control of the House of Representatives so that they cannot impeach President Donald Trump.

Jesse Hunt, a spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee, acknowledged there "has been a downturn in what voters are hearing from members and businesses on the tax reform front." He said it was because lawmakers had moved on to other issues. "Candidates and members need to make sure that they stay focused on what is our signature achievement in this Congress," Hunt said.

Five of the 13 candidates who did respond to Reuters said they do talk regularly to voters at events. The Republican tax law sharply cut the corporate tax rate, encouraged corporations to repatriate overseas income at lower rates, and at least temporarily, cut taxes for the wealthy and most other Americans. Many of the benefits to individuals won't become obvious until they file their tax returns in early 2019, and that is long after the congressional elections.

## Koch spending

The election cycle is still in its early stage, so the volume of talk on the tax overhaul could always increase. And even if politicians are reluctant to tout it, conservative financial supporters are showing an eagerness to fill the gap. Billionaires Charles and David Koch are spending \$20 million to promote the benefits of the tax cuts in battleground states with digital ads and even door-to-door canvassing.

Some polling results suggest that taxes are not the burning issue for voters that Republicans hoped they would be. A Quinnipiac University poll in March said only 8 percent of voters thought taxes was the most important issue in deciding how to vote in the congressional elections. It was fifth, behind healthcare, the economy, gun policy and immigration. It is also harder for Republicans to talk about lower taxes in states with high local taxes like New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. That also happens to be where 10 of the 17 most competitive congressional races are.

Many taxpayers in those states will pay more in federal taxes because the new law reduces the deduction for state and local tax payments. About one in four Americans expect their state and local income taxes to rise because of the Republican tax law, while only 11 percent expect them to fall, according to a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll.

## What they do say

Barbara Comstock, locked in a tight race for reelection in Virginia's 10th Congressional District, says she talks about the tax overhaul at campaign events. The Reuters analysis shows that though she mentioned the benefits of the tax cuts 36 times in January in social media, she did so only 13 times in March and then 22 times in April. She said in an interview that she is reacting to constituents, whose interests have moved on to other issues.

Don Bacon, of Nebraska's 2nd district, sees economic growth, and the threats posed by North Korea and Islamic State as the election-winning issues for Republicans. "Taxes will be one of the pillars of our campaign, but more indirectly. In the end, it's going to be about an economy that's growing."

Republican Mike Coffman, whose reelection prospects are rated a toss-up in his Denver-area congressional district, has not been visible at all on tax issues via social media. But his campaign spokesman, Tyler Sandberg, said Coffman talks about tax cuts regularly with supporters via email and with small business owners. When they do talk about taxes, Republican candidates prefer to talk about the tax law in the context of how it is really a form of financial assistance to help families cope with college tuition, buy new cars, make mortgage payments, or even pay for summer camp. —Reuters



## EU defenses post-Brexit taking shape

A broad European military strategy involving Britain after Brexit has started to take shape with France at its center, often in negotiations far from the Brussels spotlight and, in one top-level EU meeting, without the UK defense minister. Despite an impasse over how to start formal negotiations with Britain on a new defense and security relationship, France is pushing a two-track approach that it discussed at a weekend gathering of EU defense ministers in the Bulgarian capital Sofia on May 5, even though Britain's Gavin Williamson did not attend.

France supports a bigger role for Spain in EU military missions to fill the hole Britain will leave, while it will offer London a place in a new French-led European "intervention force" to keep Britain close in military cooperation.

Meanwhile, a group of Britain's closest EU allies, led by the Netherlands and Belgium, signed a paper in Sofia pressing for London's swift inclusion in the bloc's new flagship defense pact, agreed in December. That would allow British industry into lucrative EU military projects, albeit on a selective basis. Spain and Estonia said they also want to see Britain in the Galileo satellite program that the EU is developing to rival the US Global Positioning System, despite rules that prohibit sharing sensitive information with non-EU states.

## Members only

"We must avoid a rupture (with Britain)," Spain's Defense Minister Maria Dolores de Cospedal told Reuters. Her counterpart, Sweden's Peter Hultqvist, had a similar message: "It is important that Britain is involved in Europe's future security cooperation." Such support reflects a recognition that the EU cannot defend itself from Russian and militant threats without Britain, which with France is Europe's biggest security power. For its part, Britain would become more vulnerable without continued access to EU intelligence and databases.

Formal negotiations on the post-Brexit security rela-

German business  
advocates for  
rejected asylees

Denied asylum and put on deportation notice, Iranian seamstress Masoumeh Bayat in February became one of Germany's Geduldete - "tolerated persons". The German government acknowledges Bayat, her husband and two daughters can't return to Iran where they could face reprisal for converting from Islam to Christianity. But the three-year permit that allowed her to work at the Fahren Koessinger textile factory has been revoked.

"What happened to Bayat shows the idiocy of the system," said Florian Englmaier, owner of the firm in the southern Bavarian town of Schierling, who hired her in Sept 2016. "They don't let her work, they can't deport her to Iran, and so they make her a burden on the welfare system," he said. An order for a major client was delayed by her departure, he said, and he has still not found a replacement.

It's a big source of frustration for the hundreds of small-and medium-sized "Mittelstand" companies that eagerly hired asylum seekers in the midst of a labor shortage, only to see their work permits revoked. A record 1.2 million jobs remain unfilled in Germany, the Federal Labor Office says. "We need security for refugee workers so that we can plan long-term," Englmaier said.

Faced with cases like Englmaier's, business leaders are pushing the government to reform a system that leaves decisions over the fate of the Geduldete to Germany's 16 states, with inconsistent outcomes that often seem arbitrary. Their efforts could be foiled by politics, however. After losses to a far-right anti-immigrant party in last September's election, Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and their center-left Social Democrat (SPD) coalition partners can ill afford further liberalizing immigration policies that are already seen by many voters as overly generous.

A two-pronged approach is taking shape, according to a federal government official who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity: lenient rules for migrants who are already in Germany in exchange for tougher rules for ones who come in the future. "All refugees who are either studying, have qualifications, or are in preparatory voca-

tionship between the EU and Britain have not yet started, despite British Prime Minister Theresa May's call for a defense and security treaty by 2019. Britain will leave the EU on March 29, 2019. EU officials say Britain must still come forward with a detailed proposal to the European Commission's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier, while London says it has already presented a position paper and wants to get on with working out a deal. "A future security agreement sounds logical, as nobody wants a dark space in European territory that militants could exploit," said one

fund. It also wants a role in the European Defense Agency, which helps EU governments to develop weapons.

The European Commission has stressed the bloc's status as a members-only club, seeing Britain as a third-party outsider. EU capitals are eager to come to a better arrangement. "There are a lot of ideas on the table and it's now up to EU governments to find a solution," Estonia's Defence Minister Juri Luik told Reuters, saying "hard-nosed defense" was always about coordination between states. But it is the Commission which will negotiate with London.

## Enter France, Spain

France, for one, is not waiting. Spain sees an opportunity. Madrid has Paris' backing to take over Britain's command of an EU maritime mission off the Horn of Africa, known as Atalanta, and to run it from its Rota naval base in southern Spain. France's naval base at Brest would also be involved. "Ours is very rigorous proposal with a fundamental guarantee because Spain is the only country with an uninterrupted presence in Atalanta," said Cospedal, who discussed the issue with her French counterpart Florence Parly in Sofia. Italy is also vying for command of Atalanta. EU governments are set to decide in June.

At Rota, Spain also hopes to host one of the European Union's five military "operational headquarters", replacing Britain's Northwood base outside London. France, Germany, Italy and Greece host the other four. French President Emmanuel Macron next month hopes to agree a 10-nation coalition, including Britain, called the European Intervention Initiative. Paris says it would be a more agile, decisive force than the existing EU battle-groups, which have never been used. Representing Britain at the Sofia talks, junior defense minister Frederick Curzon said involvement in the force would help London's search for a "deep and special partnership" in defense and security. —Reuters

EU govts seen  
more flexible  
than EU  
Commission

senior EU official. "But that logic does not make a deal any easier."

Part of the sensitivity stems from Britain's years of blocking EU defence cooperation, fearing an EU army, as well as EU rules that restrict access for non-EU states to European Union bodies such as police agency Europol. With Brexit removing an obstacle to such cooperation, the EU has agreed a new defence pact and plans a \$5.5-billion (\$6.6 billion) weapons fund. The EU's common budget will fund defense research for the first time from 2021. Britain, fearing that it may get shut out, says it could pay into the

tional courses, should be granted secure residency permits," said Eberhard Sasse, president of the Bavarian Industry and Commerce Chambers (BHK), which has called on the government to consider an amnesty for the Geduldete. "This would bring to an end the burdensome tug of war over the right to stay for many refugees who have integrated well and want to earn a living," he said.

## In limbo

Some 1.6 million people have come to Germany seeking asylum since 2014, mostly from the Middle East and Africa. Of these, more than 166,000 people are now in limbo: Their applications for asylum have been rejected but they cannot be deported because they have no identification documents, their home countries refuse to accept them back, or there is founded fear for their safety once home. The number of these "tolerated persons" is expected to grow as Germany has been rejecting more asylum applications. About 25 percent of asylum decisions were rejected in 2016, government figures show. That figure rose to 38.5 percent last year.

According to rules introduced after the influx of migrants peaked in 2015, asylum seekers can apply to work three months from the date of their arrival while they wait for a decision on their asylum, a process that takes seven months on average. Their work permits can be taken away if they've been rejected. But in some cases, if they retain their permits, they can apply for three-year apprenticeships that include language training as well as work experience followed by another two years to look for work.

The problem is the three most populous German states, which have absorbed nearly half of the new arrivals, have different positions on the issue, according to business leaders, migration experts and the government official. Baden-Wuerttemberg in the southwest and North Rhine-Westphalia on the Dutch border are showing leniency. But Bavaria, where the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) is expected to enter regional parliament for the first time in elections in October, is taking a tough line.

"This is a big and growing problem," said Thomas Liebig, a migration expert at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). "The longer those people stay here the more difficult it will be to return them. Their prospects of finding work will also decrease. Pressure to find a solution for them will rise."

The government has said it plans to set up a commission to recommend how integration and immigration policies can be improved. The government official, who is familiar

with the efforts but asked not to be named because the commission's mandate has not yet been agreed, said it would seek to address the inconsistencies.

Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU), their Christian Social Union (CSU) allies in Bavaria and the SPD were unlikely to go as far as declaring a general amnesty, the official said. But they could agree an amnesty for failed asylum seekers who have made an effort to integrate through language learning or who could work, the official said. It would only apply to those who arrived in Germany before a certain deadline. "No-one has an interest in an amnesty that comes without strings attached for migrants," the government official said.

## Language and residency

Experts say reforms should facilitate language study and establish permanent residency status for those who qualify. That would appeal to companies which have said in surveys that knowledge of German and secure residency status are the two most important factors in hiring. "The initial reaction when the refugees arrived was very positive. Companies thought: 'we are looking for young people and those people are mainly young. Perfect!'," said Andreas Oehme, managing director of the West German Skilled Crafts Chambers, which represents the sector employing most refugees. "Then there was a phase of frustration: 'Oh! They don't speak German, they need training'. Today the approach is more realistic. Companies know the refugees are no solution to their labor shortages but they think they could make a contribution."

The situation would be different for new arrivals. The coalition partners want to set up centers where newly arrived asylum seekers would be held for up to 18 months until a decision on their application is made. Interior Minister Horst Seehofer of the arch-conservative CSU, which is based in Bavaria, has vowed to use the centers to increase deportations. Some 24,000 people were deported last year, 5.6 percent less than in 2016.

"With regards to the centers, one of the overarching goals would be deportations in order to send a message to newcomers that the rules have changed," said Julian Lehmann of the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin. Speaking to Reuters on her old factory floor, Bayat said she hoped an amnesty can be agreed that will apply to her family. "The whole situation makes me very sad," she said, wiping tears away with one hand while she held her deportation order in the other. Around her, her former colleagues embroidered banners for churches and unions. "I just want to work, rent a bigger flat, buy a car, take the kids on holiday." —Reuters





A boy holding an umbrella walks past an abandoned fountain in the town of Gyumri, some 120 km northwest of Yerevan, on May 5, 2018. — AFP

## Hezbollah hails 'great victory'...

Continued from Page 1

sent congratulatory cables to the president and prime minister of Lebanon on the parliamentary elections. The Amir commended the elevated organizing level of the electoral process in which the voters cast their ballots in a smooth manner. HH the Amir wished the Lebanese leaders good health and more development and growth of relations between both sisterly countries. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

The number of Hezbollah lawmakers in the 128-seat parliament may not increase from the current 13 but astute pre-electoral tactics have secured it enough allies to withstand challenges on strategic issues. "Hariri's loss will be the distinguishing mark of these elections, which will have consequences on the battle to form a new government," the pro-Hezbollah Al-Akhar daily wrote earlier yesterday.

Hezbollah, which was created in the 1980s to fight against Israel and currently battles in Syria alongside regime forces, is listed as a terror organization by the United States. The group, whose arsenal outguns the army's does not derive its dominant status on the Lebanese scene from the ballot box but the new breakdown of parliament will increase its political legitimacy. Lebanon's unique brand of sectarian-driven, power-sharing politics mean rival factions often end up in the same government, as is the case now where Hezbollah is represented in Hariri's cabinet.

The constitution stipulates that parliament is equally split between Muslims and Christians, whose biggest party, led by President Michel Aoun has been a Hezbollah ally. "The biggest swing vote will be

President Aoun's group, which will move among the other blocs. Hezbollah will benefit from the lack of a broad coalition against it," political analyst Imad Salamey said. Lawmakers had extended their own mandate three times since 2009, ostensibly over security concerns linked to the war in neighboring Syria and political divisions that led to long and crippling institutional crises.

A higher turnout than the 49.2 percent announced overnight had been expected after the long electoral hiatus but the new pre-printed ballots used Sunday appeared to confuse some voters. Some voters also said the sometimes absurd web of local alliances that saw some parties work together in one district and compete in others had put them off. Senior political leaders, including Hariri himself and Interior Minister Nohad Machnouk whose task it was to supervise the vote, admitted that new voting rules tested for the first time had been perplexing for the electorate.

Lebanon has often been a scene where the rivalry between the region's two heavyweights Iran and Saudi Arabia has played out, but their political clients in this election seemed content to maintain the status quo. In line with the "national pact" dating from independence in 1943, the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the parliament speaker a Shiite. Nabih Berri, who heads the Shiite party Amal and was allied with Hezbollah, looks certain to keep the position of speaker he has held since 1992. And the Lebanese Forces party of former warlord Samir Geagea were set to score significant gains, with a projected 15 seats.

Despite the disappointing turnout among an electorate that included around 800,000 people who were too young to vote in the previous general polls, the new electoral law that allows smaller parties to run helped a civil society list break into parliament. At least one of two women in the movement was expected to enter parliament, where they have pledged to extend their feisty campaign against political dynasties they charge are incompetent, self-serving and corrupt. — Agencies

## US Embassy signs go up...

Continued from Page 1

Kushner, as well as American Ambassador David Friedman and Jason Greenblatt, Trump's Middle East peace negotiator, the White House said yesterday.

At the consulate site, mechanical diggers cleared scrubland as workers posted embassy signs along city roads and hung US, Israeli and Jerusalem flags from street lights. "We are thrilled that the American Embassy is coming here, finally," said Ruthann Nahum, 64, a New

Yorker who moved to Israel 35 years ago. A restaurateur, she lives in the overwhelmingly Jewish neighborhood of Arnona. "Welcome Trump, we belong here, forever. Jerusalem is our capital," she said.

The Trump administration has left the diplomatic door open to a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Palestinians on defining Jerusalem's borders. "By recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the seat of its government, we're recognizing reality," US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said during a visit to Israel last week. "I also stress, as President Trump has said in December, the boundaries of Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem remain subject to negotiations between the parties, and we remain committed to achieving a lasting and comprehensive peace that offers a brighter future for both Israel and the Palestinians." — Reuters

## Palestinians slam Gulf presence...

Continued from Page 1

Individual Israel athletes have periodically participated in sporting events in Gulf Arab states, such as a tennis player at the Qatar Open in January. But team participation and the display of flags have previously been rare. The move comes as Palestinian anger has mounted over the United States moving its embassy to Jerusalem, expected next week, and Palestinians mark the 70th anniversary of what they call the "Nakba" or "Catastrophe" when hundreds of thousands fled or were driven out of their homes when the state of Israel was created in 1948.

The Gulf teams' participation in a race in Israel may signal thawing ties among the US-allied states who share a common enemy in Iran but drew some accusations that they were abandoning the Palestinian cause. Along with most other Arab and Muslim states, the two countries do not recognize Israel out of solidarity with Palestinians who seek a state in Gaza and the Israeli-

occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Malak Hassan, founder of a 3000-strong club Cycling Palestine, condemned the move and said Israeli checkpoints barred her and fellow bike enthusiasts from travelling freely. "We were shocked... Israel is trying to polish its image by hosting this race," she told Reuters in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah. "The UAE and Bahrain know a lot about our cause and there was no need for us to explain to them why they shouldn't take part," she added.

Saudi Arabia, the powerful main ally of the two smaller Gulf states, has been working closely with the United States on a new Mideast peace plan in a bid to solve the 70-year-old conflict as Israeli and Arab worries rise over Tehran's regional influence. In November, an Israeli cabinet member disclosed covert contacts with Riyadh, a rare acknowledgment of long-rumored secret dealings which the kingdom still denies.

Saudi Arabia's crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, said in a published interview last month that Israelis were entitled to live peacefully on their own land, in a rare acknowledgement of Israel's right to exist by a senior Arab leader. While official ties may be quietly improving, the diplomatic moves are viewed with suspicion by many Arabs for whom Jerusalem and Palestinian statehood are treasured causes. — Reuters

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## Sports

# Louis Cardinals stun Cubs on Fowler's homer in 14th inning

## Washington rally for a victory over visiting Philadelphia

ST LOUIS: Dexter Fowler's two-out, two-run homer in the bottom of the 14th inning early yesterday morning gave the St Louis Cardinals a 4-3 win over the visiting Chicago Cubs. Harrison Bader started the winning rally with an infield single off Luke Farrell (0-2). Fowler followed by golfing a 2-2 fastball off the top of the right field wall and into the seats for his fifth homer and the Cardinals' fifth walk-off win in 17 home games.

The Cardinals swept the three-game weekend series. The finale lasted 4:46 and was delayed twice in the first three innings by rain for a total of 59 minutes. Mike Mayers (1-0) got the win despite allowing Javier Baez's ninth homer in the top of the 14th that gave Chicago a brief 3-2 edge. However, Fowler's dramatics extended St. Louis' winning streak to five games and the Cubs' losing streak to five games.

### YANKEES 7, INDIANS 4

Rookie Gleyber Torres hit a three-run homer with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning as New York erased a four-run deficit and recorded a stunning victory over visiting Cleveland. Torres lifted Dan Otero's full-count sinker into Yankee bullpen beyond the right-center field wall. His first career walk-off hit gave the Yankees a sixth straight win and 15th in 16 games since April 20. According to the Elias Sports Bureau, at 21 years, 144 days old, Torres is the youngest Yankee to hit a walk-off homer. The mark was previously held by Hall of Famer Mickey Mantle (21 years, 185 days old).

### DIAMONDBACKS 3, ASTROS 1

Arizona's A.J. Pollock had two hits and drove in two runs, and Justin Verlander took his first regular-season loss since joining Houston last August as the Diamondbacks earned a victory in Phoenix. Pollock tripled in a run in the sixth inning and continued home to score when Houston third baseman Alex Bregman was called for obstruction. He singled home an insurance run in the eighth inning as the Diamondbacks extended their streak of unbeaten series to 11. They are 10-0-1 in series during that span. Verlander (4-1) gave up three hits and two runs (one earned) in six innings, with eight strikeouts and three walks. He had been 13-0 in regular-season starts over parts of two seasons with the Astros.

### NATIONALS 5, PHILLIES 4

Max Scherzer struck out 15 in 6 1/3 innings, and Wilmer Difo produced a walk-off single in the bottom of the ninth as Washington rallied for a victory over visiting Philadelphia. The Nationals loaded the bases with no outs in the ninth, and Hector Neris (1-2) walked pinch hitter Pedro Severino to force in the tying run. With five Phillies playing in the infield, Difo lined a game-winning single to center. Scherzer allowed one run on five hits and two walks in a no-decision.

### ANGELS 8, MARINERS 2

Shohei Ohtani pitched effectively, and Mike Trout hit his 12th home run of the season as Los Angeles won at Seattle. Ohtani (3-1), making his first start on the mound since April 24 because of a mild left ankle sprain, took a

shutout into the seventh inning. He wound up allowing two runs, both on a Ryon Healy homer, in six-plus innings. Trout's three-run shot in the sixth inning off Mariners reliever Chasen Bradford extended Los Angeles' lead to 6-0. The Angels improved to 13-3 on the road, taking two of three games in Seattle.

### ROCKIES 3, METS 2

Ian Desmond's second solo homer of the game snapped an eighth-inning tie and lifted Colorado to a win at New York and a sweep of the three-game series. The Rockies won the final five games of a nine-game road trip and finished 6-3 on the first of their three nine-game trips this season. The Mets finished 0-6 on a six-game homestand and have lost 14 of 20 following an 11-1 start. The two-homer game was Desmond's second as a member of the Rockies. His first homer Sunday cut the Mets' lead to 2-1 in the second inning.

### GIANTS 4, BRAVES 3

Rookie Andrew Suarez pitched 5 1/3 strong innings to earn his first career victory as San Francisco competed a three-game series sweep in Atlanta. Suarez, a 25-year-old southpaw, was making his third major league start. He allowed one unearned run on seven hits and one walk. Suarez (1-1) struck out six and solidified his place in the starting rotation as a replacement for the injured Johnny Cueto. Hunter Strickland earned his eighth save. He has converted six straight save opportunities for San Francisco, which has won four straight and eight of its past nine.

### A'S 2, ORIOLES 1

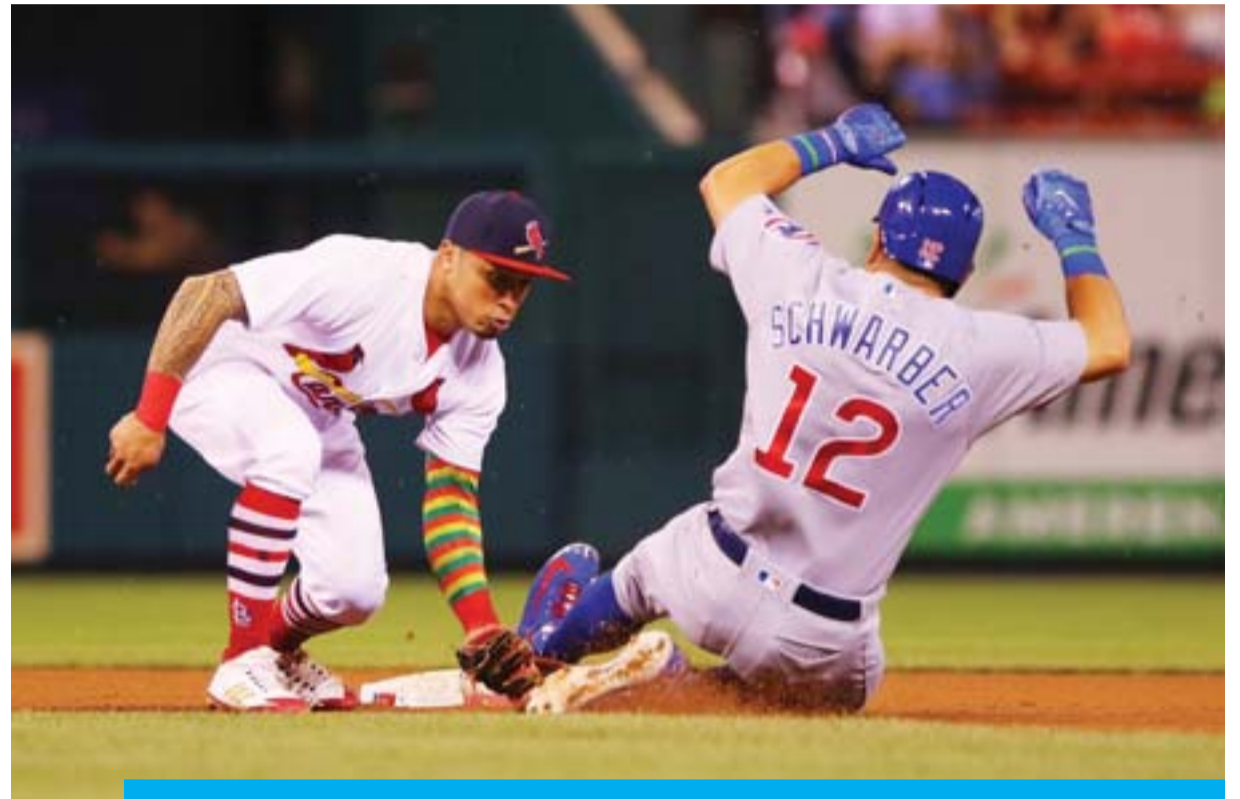
Andrew Triggs pitched seven solid innings, and Oakland completed a three-game sweep of visiting Baltimore. Triggs (3-1) tied a career high by pitching seven innings for the second time. He allowed one run on two hits while throwing 96 pitches. The right-hander recorded nine strikeouts and finished his outing by retiring the last 12 hitters. He matched his career best for innings and strikeouts. Oakland completed its first three-game sweep of Baltimore since June 5-7, 2009. The Athletics also won for the 13th time in their past 19 games.

### PADRES 3, DODGERS 0

Rookie Eric Lauer tossed six shutout innings to earn his first major league win, and Eric Hosmer hit his second two-run homer in as many games as San Diego defeated Los Angeles in the rubber match of a three-game series at Monterrey, Mexico. Lauer (1-1) allowed seven hits and a walk with five strikeouts, lowering his ERA from 10.13 to 5.79 in his third big league start. Relievers Craig Stammen, Kirby Yates and Brad Hand completed the Padres' first shutout of the season, with Hand striking out the side in a perfect ninth. The save was Hand's ninth of the season and second in as many games.

### RED SOX 6, RANGERS 1

Chris Sale fanned 12 hitters over seven dominant innings while batterymate Sandy Leon cracked a game-breaking, three-run homer as visiting Boston beat Texas.



ST LOUIS: Kyle Schwarber #12 of the Chicago Cubs is caught stealing second base by Koltan Wong #16 of the St Louis Cardinals in the third inning at Busch Stadium on May 6, 2018 in St Louis, Missouri. —AFP

Sale (3-1) gave up just four hits and a run-Ryan Rua lined a homer to right to start the bottom of the seventh-while issuing just one walk. He has 63 strikeouts in 49 innings this year. Doug Fister (1-3) permitted nine hits and six runs over 6 1/3 innings, departing after J.D. Martinez swatted the last of his 103 pitches into the seats in right field for a solo homer.

### ROYALS 4, TIGERS 2

Behind three RBIs from Mike Moustakas, Kansas City beat visiting Detroit for the third time in the four-game series. The Tigers left nine runners on base and only had one hit with runners in scoring position, while the Royals went 2-for-3 with runners in scoring position and left only two runners on. Jakob Junis (4-2) pitched seven innings of two-run ball to get the win for the Royals, striking out eight, walking one and scattering eight hits.

### TWINS 5, WHITE SOX 3

Eddie Rosario homered and drove in two runs, and Minnesota scored five runs after breaking up James Shields' no-hitter in the seventh inning for a victory at Chicago. Rosario singled in a run in a three-run seventh inning and homered in the ninth as the Twins overcame a 2-0 deficit and extended their winning streak to three games in their first series victory in a month. They have won four of five after losing 11 of 12. Logan Morrison had a two-run double to cap a three-run seventh inning for a 3-2 lead. The Twins also scored an unearned run on Max Kepler's groundout in the eighth inning after Leury Garcia tied the game at 3 with a single in the last of the seventh.

### MARLINS 8, REDS 5

Starlin Castro drove in three runs for the second

straight game as Miami won at Cincinnati to capture its fourth consecutive series victory. The Reds lost for the fifth time in six games. Marlins catcher JT Realmuto, who had his 12-game hit streak snapped on Saturday, went 2-for-4 with two walks and two runs scored. Joey Votto led the Reds, going 4-for-5 with four RBIs. He hit a two-run, opposite field homer to left-center in the third and added RBI doubles in the seventh and ninth.

### BLUE JAYS 2, RAYS 1

Kevin Pillar doubled in the ninth inning and scored the go-ahead run on a wild pitch as visiting Toronto defeated Tampa Bay to avoid being swept in the three-game series. Carlos Gomez tied the game in the eighth for the Rays against Ryan Tepera (2-1) with his fifth homer of the season. Tepera survived a walk, a balk and a single that followed, and he picked up the win. Pillar led off the ninth with a double against Alex Colome (2-4), took third on a groundout by Kendrys Morales and scored on a wild pitch. Roberto Osuna pitched around a single in the bottom of the ninth to earn his ninth save.

### PIRATES 9, BREWERS 0

Chad Kuhl pitched seven shutout innings and combined with reliever Richard Rodriguez for a two-hitter, and Pittsburgh backed them with 13 hits, including three homers, in a win at Milwaukee. Kuhl (4-2) struck out eight, tying a career high, and walked two. He gave up one hit, a single by Domingo Santana. Rodriguez got all six outs in the eighth and ninth by strikeout. He allowed a ninth-inning single by Hernan Perez that went off Rodriguez's leg. Adam Frazier, Jordy Mercer and Josh Bell hit homers for the Pirates, who won two of three in the weekend series and are 11-2 against National League Central teams.—Reuters



## Kuwait shooters win gold, silver medals in Amir's Int'l Shooting tourney in Italy

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti shooter Abdelrahman Al-Faihan won first place and the Gold medal of HHI the Amir Cup Shotgun Tournament being held at Umbriaverde Shooting Complex, in Todi, Italy in the trap event while the team of Abdelrahman Al-Faihan, Khalid Al-Mudhaf and Talal Al-Rashidi won third place in the same event. Sarah Al-Hawal won the women's silver medal.



The club said in a press statement that Al-Faihan's win came after beating Stephen Scott from the UK, who finished second, and Italian Marcelo Netarli who came third. In the women's competition, Ludmila, Russian, took first place, while Italian Federica Kayosko finished third.

President of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi said Kuwait shooters proved they were up to the task and exerted all efforts to win in the name of their beloved country Kuwait. Al-Otaibi said such achievements are only made through the efforts by shooters with preparations and hard training, besides the sound planning coupled with the cooperation between the technical and administrative departments.

Al-Otaibi dedicated the win to HHI the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HHI Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, government and people.

Al-Otaibi also acknowledged the support of Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri and Public Authority for Sports and its Director General Dr Humoud Fulaiteh.

## Tennis season 2017-18 concludes

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The tennis season 2017-2018 came to a conclusion under the patronage and presence of President of Arab and Kuwait Tennis Federations Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah, as the last tournament that started April 29 was held with the participation of 112 players representing 10 clubs, Al-Tadhamon, Al-Sahel, Salmiya, Shabab, Sulaibkhat, Qadesiya, Kuwait, Yarmouk, Kheitan and Kazima.

The final doubles match was between Ali Abdelreda Ismail and his partner Hamid Al-Sulaiten from Kheitan club, against Mansour and Abdullah Buhamad from Kazima, which was won by Kheitan 6-3, 6-3, as Kazima ended in second place.

The singles match saw Kheitan's Fahad Al-Saad winning first place, Kuwait's Abdullah Al-Mukaimi second and third place was won by Kheitan's Ali Ismail and Yarmouk's Abdelhameed Al-Shatti.

The final standings of participating clubs is Kheitan first with 306 points, Yarmouk second with 217 points, Kuwait in third with 125, Kazima fourth

with 81 points, Salmiya fifth with 57 points, Qadesiya sixth with 40 points, Sahel seventh with 20 points, Shabab eighth with 14 points, Tadhamon ninth with 10 points and Sulaibkhat tenth with nine points.

The closing ceremony saw the honoring of KTF technical director Abbas Al-Busairi, as all coaches of clubs were also honored in appreciation of their efforts.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah congratulated the winning clubs and wished the rest the best of luck in coming events. He expressed satisfaction towards the levels shown by many players be it in the final tournament or earlier ones.

He also congratulated national team players for their achievement in qualifying Kuwait to the second group of Davis Cup during the qualifiers held in Vietnam in April as Kuwait defeated Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar, Syria and Malaysia.

He said the club pays attention to youngsters, particularly juniors on whom the future of the game depends. He said KTF prepared a special program for the junior teams year long to guarantee their participation in several Asian and international tournaments.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber thanked the Public Authority for Sports for its support of all activities be it in Kuwait or abroad. He also thanked all participating clubs in the ICTF activities.





Sports

# Expansion Knights sink Sharks to reach Conference finals

## Tampa Bay punch their ticket to Eastern Conference final

LOS ANGELES: Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 28 shots for his fourth shutout of the postseason as the expansion Vegas Golden Knights advanced to the Western Conference final with a 3-0 win over the San Jose Sharks on Sunday.

It is another stunning development in the evolution of the NHL's newest franchise as the Golden Knights are off to the league semi-finals after eliminating the more experienced and playoff battle-tested Sharks in six games.

"I got lucky a few times. They missed the net, they hit the post," said Fleury, who won three Stanley Cups with the Pittsburgh Penguins. "I am a little bit tired. They made it tough for me. I am happy and proud of the way our guys played tonight."

The Golden Knights started the year as a team of rag-tag castoffs but quickly jelled into the hardest working team in the league that allowed them to get into playoff mode by mid-season. Jonathan Marchessault, Nate Schmidt and Cody Eakin scored goals for Vegas, who became the third team in NHL history to win multiple playoff series in its inaugural season, joining the Toronto Arenas (1918) and St. Louis Blues (1968).

The Arenas won the Stanley Cup in the first post-season in league history and St. Louis won two rounds to win the all-expansion West Division 50 years ago. Marchessault opened the scoring, Schmidt added an insurance goal that was only detectable by video replay and

Eakin scored into an empty net.

Fleury recorded shutouts in games one and six against the Sharks. Next up for Vegas will be the Western Conference final against either Winnipeg or Nashville. The Jets lead that series 3-2 heading into game six later.

In Tampa, Florida, J.T. Miller scored the go-ahead goal on the power play and the Tampa Bay Lightning punched their ticket to the Eastern Conference final with a 3-1 victory over Boston. After dropping the series opener 6-2, the Lightning won four straight to eliminate the Bruins in five games in the best-of-seven second-round series.

Miller scored at 14:00 of the second period for the Lightning, who reached the NHL's final four for the third time in four years. Tampa Bay move on to play the winner of the Pittsburgh Penguins-Washington Capitals series. The Capitals lead the Penguins 3-2 and can book their spot in the Conference final later today.

Brayden Point, with his fourth of the post-season, and Anton Stralman also scored for the Lightning while goalkeeper Andrei Vasilevskiy made 27 saves. Bruins goaltender Tuukka Rask made 19 saves but ended up losing his last four starts against Tampa Bay.

He made 34 of 36 stops to win the series opener but struggled since. One day after being threatened by the league with sanctions after he "licked" Tampa Bay player Ryan Callahan during Friday's game, Bruins winger Brad Marchand had an uneventful game five. — AFP



SAN JOSE: Pierre-Edouard Bellemare #41 of the Vegas Golden Knights tries to score on Martin Jones #31 of the San Jose Sharks during Game Six of the Western Conference Second Round during the 2018 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at SAP Center in San Jose, California. —AFP

“ They missed the net, they hit the post ”

## Pandya keeps champs Mumbai afloat in IPL

MUMBAI: Perennial slow starters Mumbai Indians are on course for a trademark late-season charge into the Indian Premier League (IPL) playoffs, thanks largely to some impressive performances by all-rounder Hardik Pandya. The defending champions, owned by India's richest man Mukesh Ambani, lost their first five matches but still reached the 2014 playoffs before completing a fairytale tournament victory a year later after losing their opening four fixtures. The 2016 edition saw the Rohit Sharma-led side win one out of their first four matches before they appeared to shed the tardy-starter tag last season, going on to win their third IPL title after 10 wins in 14 group stage games. The lack of victories at the start of the campaign returned to haunt them again this season as Mumbai lost five of their opening six games, appearing doomed to miss out on the playoffs as their title defence faltered. They have, however, managed to arrest the slide with three wins in four matches as Pandya's all-round abilities came to the fore in his side's turnaround. Pandya stole the show in Mumbai's 13-run win over the Kolkata Knight Riders on Sunday with an unbeaten 35 off 20 balls and then dented the opposition's seemingly comfortable chase with figures of two for 19.

The double strike means the seamer has claimed 14 victims to become the leading wicket-taker in the tournament as Mumbai moved up to fifth in the eight-team standings, two points behind the fourth and final playoff spot. "Really, really happy for him," Hardik's elder brother and team mate Krunal said after Sunday's win over KKR.



BANGALORE: File photo shows Mumbai Indians bowler Hardik Pandya (2L) celebrates the dismissal of Royal Challengers Bangalore captain and batsman Virat Kohli for 32 runs with his teammates during the 2018 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match. —AFP

"He has been bowling really well and he has transformed himself as a bowler. He has improved over a period of time and that's a great sign for a cricketer."

"The way he's batting also, he's in touch. And everybody knows he is a gun fielder. I am happy that everything is coming out good for him." The 24-year-old seamer and hard-hitting batsman cemented his spot in the Indian side last year in all three formats of the game and is considered the team's cleanest striker of the ball.

On Sunday, he kept the KKR batsmen in check with smart changes of pace during his four-over quota, including an 18th over that went for only six runs. "As a team, we believe we can do it. We have done it in the past though obviously it's difficult," Pandya said at the post-match press conference when asked if his team can once again go all the way. "I don't like anything which comes easy. I like difficult things. This is a challenge and I will love to take it." — Reuters

## Park wins storm-shortened LPGA Texas Classic

CHICAGO: Reigning US Women's Open champion Park Sung-hyun of South Korea chipped in for birdie on the final hole Sunday to edge fast-closing Lindy Duncan and win the storm-shortened LPGA Texas Classic.

Park fired a five-under par 66 to finish the 36-hole event at 11-under 131 at Old American Golf Club near Dallas for a one-stroke victory over American Duncan with Chinese rookie Liu Yu another shot adrift in third on 133.

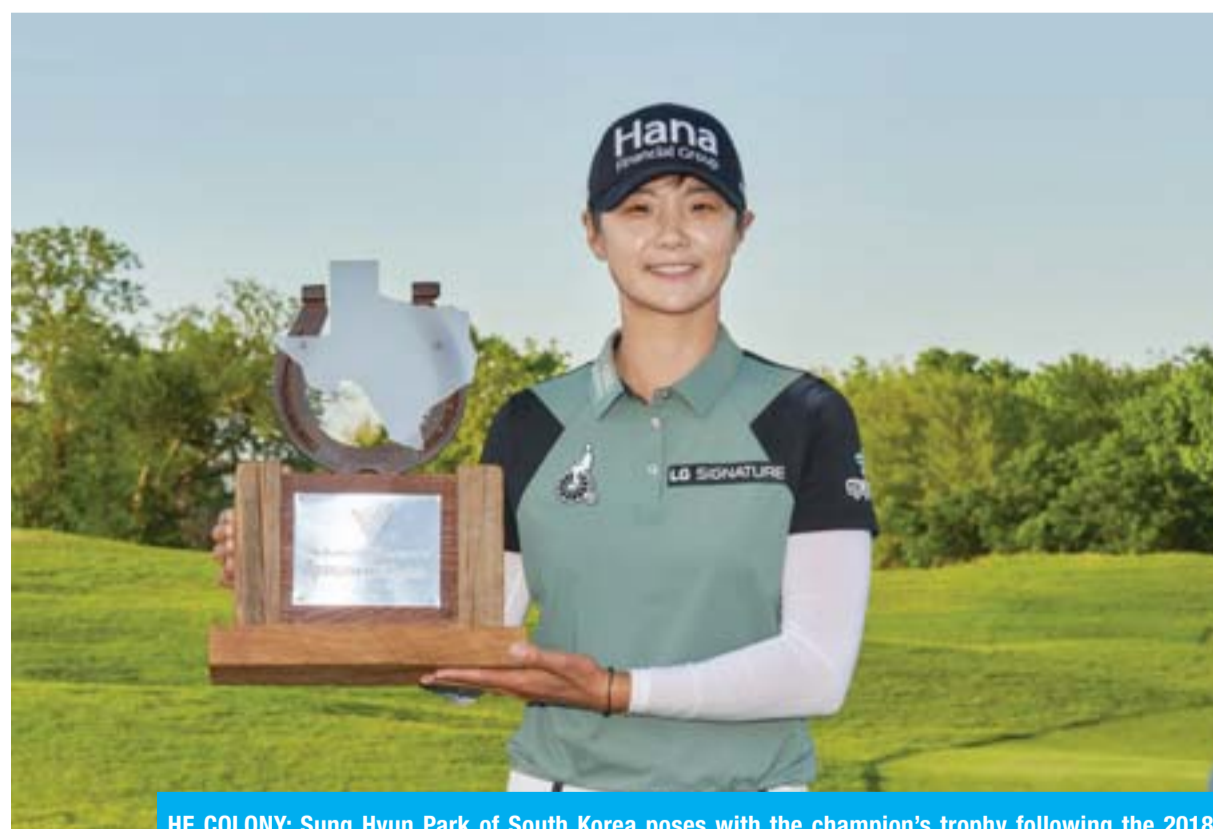
Park's pitching wedge chip-in at the 18th hole provided her margin of victory over Duncan, who closed with three birdies in a row after Park was in the clubhouse, and Liu, who like Duncan had a career-best LPGA finish.

"I knew it was a pretty important shot," Park said through a translator. "That shot was a difficult situation for me but I'm glad I made it." It was the third LPGA title for Park, who captured her first major crown last July in the Open at Trump National and added the Canadian Women's Open six weeks later.

Thailand's Ariya Jutanugarn and South Korea Kim Sei-young shared fourth with South Korean Jenny Shin and India's Aditi Ashok on 135. Storms that wiped out almost all play Thursday and Friday forced organizers to trim the event to 36 holes, with the final round starting Saturday afternoon.

Ashok, seeking her first LPGA title, birdied the par-5 15th on a five-foot putt and closed with three pars. The 20-year-old Olympian from Bangalore, three times a winner on the Ladies European Tour, completed a 66 to grab the early clubhouse lead.

"I'm happy," Ashok said. "I came back one better than I left so that's good." But 18-hole co-leader Park had yet to start her final round after opening on 65 and



HE COLONY: Sung Hyun Park of South Korea poses with the champion's trophy following the 2018 Volunteers of America LPGA Texas Classic at Old American Golf Club on Sunday in The Colony, Texas. —AFP

made her charge in the afternoon.

Park opened with a bogey but eagled the par-5 fifth and followed with birdies at the sixth, eighth and ninth before a bogey-birdie start to the back nine left her ahead by three with seven holes remaining.

After six pars, Park was off the green with her approach at 18 but punched a bouncing pitching wedge shot up the green and into the hole for a closing birdie that all-but sealed the title. Duncan, finishing on the front nine, fired a 64 that included a costly lip-out tap-in for par to bogey the sixth. She closed with three

consecutive birdies but was one shot shy of Park, settling for a career-best runner-up finish.

"It sure did feel like a back-nine Sunday atmosphere," Duncan said. "It was a great day. A crazy week but it was a great tournament." Liu eagled the eighth, her penultimate hole, but like Duncan couldn't make an unlikely hole-out from the fairway to match Park.

"This was a great confidence booster for myself to know I can contend out here," Liu said. "I was mentally strong, focused on one shot at a time, and it really worked out." — AFP

## Rahul wants to score big and not just fast

MUMBAI: India opener Lokesh Rahul has often faced criticism for failing to convert solid scores into big totals and the 26-year-old is no longer happy to just provide his Kings XI Punjab franchise with explosive starts in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

In the early part of his Test career, the stylish right-handed batsman scored four hundreds with just one half-century but since his 199 against England at the end of 2016, Rahul has scored nine more fifties without adding another ton.

The opener has provided Punjab with plenty of early quick runs but showed immense maturity on Sunday to remain unbeaten on 84 from 54 deliveries to lead his side to a six-wicket victory over the Rajasthan Royals. "I want to get as many runs as I can in the powerplay," Rahul told the IPL website <https://www.iplt20.com>. "(However,) I think I haven't converted those starts into big runs for the team: as an opening batsman that's what is crucial."

"If you get off to a good start, even if you get the run-rate down a bit in the middle overs, if you are set till the end you can do the most damage." During Sunday's innings, Rahul scored 18 off 15 balls during the powerplay and then 48 off 43 before he shifted gears effortlessly to lead Punjab to a win after two straight losses.

Rahul took 44 balls to get to his fifty—the slowest in his IPL career—but it ended up being his highest score in the Twenty20 tournament. The win took Punjab to third in the table on six wins from nine matches and firmly in position for one of the four playoff spots.

"Those were the things I was thinking about sitting back at home," Rahul said, referring to the break he had between Punjab's seventh and eighth fixtures. "I wanted to come here with a fresher approach and try to win as many games as I can. (I wanted to) try to bat deep in the innings and that was the plan and I am very happy that it paid off today." —Reuters

## Justify takes aim at Preakness crown

WASHINGTON: Undefeated Kentucky Derby winner Justify will race in the second leg of US flat racing's Triple Crown at the Preakness in two weeks, trainer Bob Baffert said Sunday. Baffert said the three-year-old colt had abundant energy the morning after defeating Good Magic by 2 1/2 lengths to conquer a 20-horse field over 1 1/4 miles on a muddy Churchill Downs track.

"He looks phenomenal," Baffert said. "He's full of himself. He knows he's a stud. He came back and he really wasn't that tired." He ate up last night and today he has been a handful. When I got him out of the stall he was pulling me around. Usually they are a little bit tired."

Justify, who has won all four of his starts, is expected to arrive three or four days before the second leg of the Triple Crown is contested over 1 3/16 miles on May 19 at Pimlico in Baltimore, Maryland. The third race of the treble is June 9 at the Belmont Stakes in New York. Only 12 horses have won all three races in the same year, the most recent being Baffert-trained American Pharoah in 2015.

Justify became only the second horse to win the Derby after not racing as a two-year-old, the other being Apollo in 1882. Baffert has trained five Derby winners, one shy of the all-time record, and no Derby winner of his who has raced the Preakness has failed to win it.

The fact Justify was still frisky to run after the sixth-fastest opening quarter-mile in Derby history at 22.24 seconds and a muddy race spoke volumes to Baffert in terms of winning style and what the future might bring. —AFP



## Sports

# Eight in a row for Lyon as teen Sylla rescues Monaco

## Marseille down Mediterranean rivals Nice 2-1

**PARIS:** Bertrand Traore continued his terrific goalscoring form as Lyon recorded their eighth straight victory in Ligue 1 by beating Troyes 3-0, while teenage forward Moussa Sylla hit a vital injury-time winner for Monaco in a 2-1 triumph at Caen on Sunday.

Burkina Faso international Traore struck twice in seven first-half minutes in Lyon, the former Chelsea striker finding the net for the fifth game in a row to move up to 13 goals for the campaign.

Maxwel Cornet replaced Nabil Fekir, who has been strongly linked with a move to Liverpool, late on and grabbed a third goal with two minutes left as Lyon stayed in second place and on track to secure automatic qualification for the Champions League. "Nothing is decided for the time being," Lyon coach Bruno Genesio said. "It will be tight until the finish and the team which controls their nerves best will prevail. We're in front and in control of our own destiny which is an advantage." A three-match winless run had cast serious doubts over Monaco's return to Europe's premier club competition next season, but a last-gasp goal from 18-year-old Sylla could provide just the spark they needed.

With Radamel Falcao, Stevan Jovetic and Keita Balde all sidelined by injury, France Under-19 international Sylla was handed his full debut by Monaco boss Leonardo Jardim. He needed just 12 minutes to make an impact, scrambling home the rebound after a shot from Belgium international

Youri Tielemans crashed back off the post. Caen levelled through Ivan Santini shortly before half-time, but Sylla snatched all three points for Monaco right at the death as he volleyed in a dramatic winner after a weak punch by home goalkeeper Remy Vercoutre.

"I think it's a double victory for us today," Jardim said. "A win that gives us the three points and a win for these Monaco youngsters, with five or six players aged 17 or 18 already showing they have the maturity to be part of the squad now and in the future."

### PAYET SHINES

The victory keeps Monaco third, one point clear of Europa League finalists Marseille who came from a goal behind to down Mediterranean rivals Nice 2-1.

Mario Balotelli fired Nice ahead at the Velodrome with an excellent individual effort on five minutes, but Valere Germain turned in a Dimitri Payet cross as Marseille responded eight minutes later. Payet bagged the decisive goal on 72 minutes, the France international coolly stroking into the net after Clinton Njie outmuscled Dante to keep the ball in play near the byline. Rennes climbed into fifth after a 2-1 win over Strasbourg, while Remy Cabella missed a late penalty for Saint-Etienne as they crashed to a first defeat in 14 outings at home to Bordeaux.

Cabella fired Saint-Etienne in front from the spot on 28 minutes but Bordeaux hit back through goals from Younousse Sankhare and Jules Kouade.

“Six players aged 17 or 18 showing maturity”



**DECINES-CHARPIEU:** Lyon's French goalkeeper Mathieu Gorgelin (L) vies with Troyes' French defender Christophe Herelle (R) during the French L1 football match Olympique Lyonnais (OL) vs ESTAC Troyes on Sunday, at the Parc Olympique Lyonnais stadium in Decines-Charpieu, central-eastern France. — AFP

Benoit Costil preserved the lead by keeping out another Cabella penalty on 89 minutes before Brazilian Malcom rounded out a 3-1 victory for Bordeaux in stoppage time. Metz became the first side to be re-

gated as a pair of injury-time goals condemned them to a 2-1 defeat by Angers, while 2011 French champions Lille pulled clear of the drop with a 3-2 win at fellow strugglers Toulouse. — AFP

## Man Utd's Jones hopeful of full recovery for legend Ferguson

**LONDON:** Manchester United defender Phil Jones is hopeful legendary former manager Alex Ferguson will make a full recovery from emergency surgery on a brain haemorrhage, despite admitting he was "devastated" by the news of his ill health.

Considered the most successful manager in the history of British football, Ferguson, 76, won 38 trophies in just over 26 years in charge of United, including 13 Premier League titles and the Champions League twice before retiring in 2013.

United have offered no update on Ferguson's condition since saying a procedure on the haemorrhage on Saturday had gone "very well", but that a period of intensive care is needed to optimise his recovery. "I am just devastated, absolutely devastated," said Jones, who was signed for United by Ferguson in 2011.

"He is such a legend in my eyes. He is the one who brought me to the club and gave me that opportunity to play for one of the biggest clubs in the world. He's taken me under his wing like a father and it was shocking." "It's sad, but I know his character. I know he has that fight in him. Hopefully he'll recover well." United midfielder Juan Mata also admitted news of Ferguson's condition had a "huge impact" on the current squad.

"This circumstance has had a huge impact on Manchester United, as you can imagine," Mata wrote in his blog. "All of us are united right now, wishing Sir Alex a speedy recovery. He has been a unique and fundamental figure in the football world over the last few decades."

United thanked the many well-wishers, including the likes of rival managers Arsene Wenger, Pep Guardiola and Jurgen Klopp, who spoke of their admiration for Ferguson. "As well as being uppermost in the thoughts of our own players, past and present, Sir Alex has been the subject of many warm and touching comments from other clubs, governing bodies and individuals in the beautiful game," United said in a statement on Sunday.

### 'STRONG MAN'

Wenger enjoyed a long, and at times fractious, rivalry with Ferguson as they battled for Premier League supremacy in the first decade of the Frenchman's 22-year reign in charge of Arsenal.

However, they later became friends and with Wenger leaving Arsenal at the end of the season, Ferguson presented the his old adversary with a memento on his final visit to United's Old Trafford ground just last weekend. "I was with him on the pitch last week. I went to see him in the box after the game and he looked in a perfect shape," said Wenger, after his final home game as Arsenal boss.

"He told me he is doing a lot of exercise, and he looked very happy but that kind of accident can happen. We wish him all well and to recover very quickly. He is a strong man and an optimistic man."

Sunday saw runaway winners Manchester City receive the Premier League trophy. But local rivalries were forgotten as a banner was held aloft by City fans reading: "Football aside get well Fergie" as supporters spilled onto the pitch at full-time of a 0-0 draw with Huddersfield. — AFP

## The sudden, irresistible rise of Istanbul's Basaksehir

**ISTANBUL:** Istanbul Basaksehir's home stadium is sometimes only a quarter full, they have yet to win a trophy and until a few years ago were floundering in the lower ranks of Turkish football. But now the team with an unpronounceable name for non-native speakers are major contenders to be Turkish champions and upend the traditional dominance of the three Istanbul giants of Besiktas, Fenerbahce and Galatasaray.

For their critics, Basaksehir are an artificial invention, owing their success to political support with none of the heritage or culture of the other history-laden sides.

But their success is indisputable. After finishing runners-up last season Basaksehir remain in contention for the Super Lig title with a team boasting international names like Gael Clichy and Emmanuel Adebayor.

No Istanbul side other than Besiktas, Fenerbahce and Galatasaray have ever won the Super Lig since it was created in 1959. Outside the big three, the only other winners have been Trabzonspor (six times) and Bursaspor (once).

"Basaksehir have put themselves forward and are now one of the great clubs," said Burak Bilgili, head of the Basaksehir 1453 supporters club. "Now there are four great clubs in Istanbul," he told AFP.

Basaksehir are "a club growing in power," said French-born Turkish striker Mevlut Erdinc, who joined them last summer. "We want to be among the best."

The rise of Basaksehir to this level, in some ways, reads like a fairytale. They were set up in 1990 and played under the unwieldy full name of the Istanbul municipality as Istanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi Spor (IBB), something of a tongue twister for foreigners.

They won promotion to the Super Lig in 2007 but were then relegated in 2014 and appeared at risk of being liquidated. But then their fortunes changed dramatically when they were bought by a consortium of businessmen reputedly close to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The result of the acquisition was a makeover for the club, and a move to the new high-rise Istanbul suburb of Basaksehir, taking the new name.

A new 17,000 capacity stadium was built, named after the legendary Turkish former player and manager Fatih

## Goal or no goal? Five VAR controversies

**SYDNEY:** Football's Video Assistant Referee (VAR) has been on trial since 2016 at both club and international level and will be employed at next month's World Cup in Russia. But some critics are calling for it to be dropped from the showpiece tournament after a string of controversial incidents. Here AFP Sport reviews five of the worst:

### ON-OFF SAGA IN GERMANY

In a Mainz v Freiburg Bundesliga match last month, the hosts had a penalty appeal for handball waved away in first-half stoppage time by referee Guido Winkmann, who blew for half-time and the players headed for the changing rooms. But Winkmann was advised by the VAR to take another look and after five minutes he reversed his decision, meaning both teams had to be dragged back onto the field. The penalty was scored and the players then headed straight back off again for half-time.

### FREEZING FARCE AT WEMBLEY

A catalogue of incidents during an FA Cup replay on a bitterly cold February night was a big factor in the



**ISTANBUL:** Basaksehir's supporters cheer their football team during the Turkish Super Lig football match between Basaksehir and Kayseri Spor on April 20, 2018 at Basaksehir Fatih Terim stadium in Istanbul. — AFP

Terim who ironically manages league rivals Galatasaray.

Erdogan blessed the club's new look when in July 2014 he donned Basaksehir colours to play in a charity game at the new stadium in which he scored an improbable three goals in just 15 minutes.

The year 2014 also saw IBB's former manager Abdullah Avci return from a stint as national coach to lead the reborn side. Unusual in the hurly-burly of Turkish football, he has remained in his post ever since.

### 'NO EMPTY STANDS'

In 2015 and 2016 the club finished fourth and enjoyed its first taste of European competition. Now, they are up there with the leaders. "We are competing against clubs that are 100 years old. It's an extraordinary situation," said Avci. Top international players have made their way to Basaksehir and the side now boasts the likes of French former Arsenal and Manchester City star Clichy and Togo striker Adebayor who played for a host of English clubs. The club also scored a major coup by securing the services of Turkey's best-known player Arda Turan on a loan deal from Barcelona. And their eye for local talent was underlined when in 2016 they picked up the then unknown Turkish winger Cengiz Under. After one hugely successful season, he was then sold to Roma in a deal worth 15 million euros (\$18 million).

English Premier League opting to go without VAR next season. Tottenham welcomed minnows Rochdale to Wembley and saw what looked a perfectly good Erik Lamela goal disallowed by the VAR. Graham Scott, who was watching in a studio some 20 kilometres (12 miles) away. He then refused a penalty when Lucas Moura was felled in the box, but awarded one after the referee had given a free-kick outside the area when Kieran Trippier was fouled. Son Heung-min struck the spot-kick home but the VAR then disallowed the goal for a stuttering run-up, with the coup de grace being the South Korean's subsequent yellow card for an "illegal feint". All the incidents took time to resolve with players and spectators left shivering in a sub-zero blizzard during an opening period that lasted the best part of 52 minutes. "The first half was a bit embarrassing for everyone," said Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino, after his side ran out 6-1 winners.

### PORTUGAL'S GIANT FLAG

A Primeira Liga match in Portugal descended into farce when a giant flag obscured the view of a camera, allowing an offside goal to stand. Aves beat Boavista 3-0, with their third goal scored by a clearly offside Vitor Gomes from a 70th-minute free-kick. There was no linesman's flag but when the referee asked the VAR to check, another flag proved crucial. A Boavista fan in the away end had waved his flag at exactly the wrong moment,

But sceptics point to the patchy attendances for home matches, which rarely rise above 5,000, and a lack of passion compared to the intensity of support at the other big Istanbul clubs.

Most controversially, the club is regarded by rival fans as a government side which would have got nowhere without Erdogan's support. The club's chairman Goksel Gumusdag is married to the niece of Erdogan's wife Emine and seen as close to the Turkish president.

"Two men are behind this (Basaksehir) miracle. Manager Abdullah Avci and chairman Goksel Gumusdag," said Turkish football writer Bagis Erten. On a recent visit to Basaksehir, Erdogan said that young fans of the of the team "needed to fill the stands", adding: "If I come to a game, I don't want to see the stands empty."

And a critical defeat by Galatasaray last month pleased not just fans of the rival team but also opponents of Erdogan who could not resist expressing schadenfreude. "Galatasaray 2 Recep Tayyip Erdogan 0," tweeted Meral Aksener, who heads the nationalist Iyi (Good) Party and is standing against Erdogan in presidential elections. But Bilgili sweeps away the criticism with anger. "We began hearing this when Basaksehir started playing for the title, getting familiar with the top and threatening the big clubs," he said. "Let them continue to criticise us. In the end, we will be league champions," he said. — AFP

blocking the camera's view. With no evidence to rule out the goal, the referee had to let it stand.

### ITALY'S SPOT OF LUCK

Guidelines say the VAR should only intervene if the on-field referee has missed an obvious infringement. But an incident in March, when England were leading Italy 1-0 in a friendly, prompted much debate over what constitutes a "clear error". Federico Chiesa went down in the box in the 87th minute but referee Deniz Aytekin said no foul-until the VAR suggested he look again. The ref then deemed James Tarkowski had made very slight contact, but it certainly hadn't been obvious when seen at full speed. When Italy scored and secured a 1-1 draw, Gareth Southgate was not happy. "I prefer that the referee's decision is final," the England manager scowled.

### THE WOBBLY LINE

Hawk-Eye apologised for using a wobbly line on a graphic to show Manchester United's Juan Mata was offside. The company said the decision, which ruled out a goal in United's 2-0 FA Cup win over Huddersfield Town in February, was correctly made using a straight line-but that an "incorrect graphic" was issued for broadcast on TV. "This was a case of the wrong image being provided to the broadcaster and we apologise," a Hawk-Eye tweet said, after the wonky yellow line prompted howls of protests by viewers. — AFP



Sports

# 934,484 km closer to a cure: Charity champions triumph again



Over 100,000 registered runners and wheelchair participants at more than 200 locations across 66 countries covered 934,484 km globally on Sunday in the fifth annual Wings for Life World Run charity event to raise funds for spinal cord injury research. Five and a half hours of camaraderie and competition shared across every continent produced unforgettable moments of elation and emotion until Swedish wheelchair athlete Aron Anderson and Portuguese runner Vera Nunes were crowned Global Champions.

Everyone can take part in the Wings for Life World Run regardless of fitness level, and the 2018 edition of the run for those who can't brought all-time event totals to more than half a million registered participants. Among those supporting or taking part on Sunday were sports celebrities like Formula One legend Niki Lauda, Dakar Rally winner Matthias Walkner, three-time Ironman World Champion Daniela Ryf and America's Cup winner Jimmy Spithill, as well as Paralympic and Olympic Champions including record-setting skier Aksel Lund Svindal, who "drove" the Virtual Catcher Car of the Wings for Life World Run App.

The run's simultaneous start – night or day, sun or rain – spanned every corner of the earth, from Australia to Colombia and the United Kingdom to Kuwait, and as always, the unique format with a moving finish line of Catcher Cars added to the excitement. Boosting the location count to a new high this year were caring people all over the world who organized group runs with the App, inspiring others to join them for a special day of fun while making a difference for others. Running in Sunrise, USA, Swedish wheelchair athlete Aron Anderson earned his second consecutive Global Championship by outpacing the Catcher Car to 89.85 km in an everyday wheelchair, while in Munich, Germany, Portugal's Vera Nunes ran hard to capture the women's crown with a distance of 53.78 km, a margin of just 50 meters over Croatia's Nikolina Sustic.

"I'm so happy. This race is awesome, it means so much that we are raising money for spinal cord injury. It truly makes a difference, so thanks to everybody for putting this race up," said Anderson, who with his back-to-back wins now holds the two longest distances in the history of the Wings for Life World Run. "I was so tired, but I wanted to keep pushing so that maybe we could raise more money and make even more of a difference. Everything hurts right now, but this is amazing!"

With a strong belief in its noble cause, Kuwait's Red Bull athletes Mohammed Burbayea (Jet Ski), Mansour Al Safran (BMX), Fahad Al Musallam (Motocross), and Mohammed Jaffar (Motocross) enthusiastically participated in the run this year.

One hundred percent of entry fees and donations raised in the Wings for Life World Run – over 3,000,000 euros in the 2018 edition alone, with more still coming in – goes to leading-edge research funded by the nonprofit Wings for Life foundation. Marc Herremans, the event's Sports Director Wheelchair, stated: "The Wings for Life World Run means a lot to me, because I am paralyzed from the chest down due to a bicycle accident, and I've also lost good friends because of medical issues related to paralysis.

Historically spinal cord research has received relatively little attention and funding, and it is time to change that." He continued, "I want to thank every supporter, because one day we will find a cure. When you participate in the Wings for Life World Run, you are not only changing lives – you're saving lives."

The date for the sixth edition of the Wings for Life World Run is Sunday, May 5, 2019. For registration alerts, along with complete 2018 global results, the full race broadcast on demand and more: [www.wingsforlifeworldrun.com](http://www.wingsforlifeworldrun.com)

#### About the Wings for Life Spinal Cord Research Foundation

Worldwide, millions of people are dependent on a wheelchair after having sustained a spinal cord injury, most often as the result of a traffic accident or a fall. Wings for Life is a not-for-profit spinal cord research foundation with the single mission to find the cure for spinal cord injury. Since 2004, Wings for Life has funded life-changing research projects and clinical trials around the globe. While the cure is still to be found, steady progress has been made. One hundred percent of the Wings for Life World Run entry fees and fundraising from this global running event will help work toward Wings for Life's ultimate goal. Every step taken at the Wings for Life World Run and with the Wings for Life World Run App is a step in the right direction – <http://www.wingsforlife.com>

#### About the Wings for Life World Run

On one day each year the Wings for Life World Run is held simultaneously in numerous locations and via the App across the world, everyone starting at the same time, whether day or night, and all with the same goal – to raise money for the Wings for Life Foundation. Under its unique format, participants run as far as they can until they are passed by a moving finish line, the "Catcher Car," which chases runners along the course or virtual in the App, gradually getting faster until each participant has been caught. This moving finish line allows participants of any ability to complete the run – the slower ones are passed early while ultra athletes go on for hours. 100% of entry fees and donations goes toward helping to find a cure for spinal cord injury; and in the fifth editions since it was launched in 2014, the World Run has attracted more than 500,000 people from 193 nationalities to participate in more than 66 countries across all seven continents.

#### The Wings for Life World Run App

The Wings for Life World Run App allows everyone, everywhere, to join the global movement. By activating the App, runners can take part in the Wings for Life World Run, chased by a virtual Catcher Car, at the same time as all Wings for Life World Runners across the globe. People can set out their own course when running individually with the App and in many locations around the world Organized App Runs take place, where people run in groups using the App.





**12** Kuwait shooters win gold, silver in Amir's Int'l Shooting tourney in Italy



**13** Park wins storm-shortened LPGA Texas Classic



**14** The sudden, irresistible rise of Istanbul's Basaksehir



NEW ORLEANS: Anthony Davis #23 of the New Orleans Pelicans shoots over Draymond Green #23 of the Golden State Warriors during the first half of Game Four of the Western Conference Semifinals of the 2018 NBA Playoffs at the Smoothie King Center on Sunday in New Orleans, Louisiana. —AFP

## Warriors, Rockets reach brink of final

### Durant scores 38 points to power reigning NBA champion

LOS ANGELES: The Golden State Warriors and Houston Rockets both raced to a pair of lopsided wins on Sunday and can book their spots in the Western Conference final with victories on their home courts today.

Kevin Durant scored 38 points to power the reigning NBA champion Warriors over the New Orleans Pelicans 118-92 and Chris Paul finished with 27 points and 12 rebounds as the Rockets defeated the Utah Jazz 100-87. Durant said his free form game plan allowed him to be aggressive and effective at the same time.

"I just try to tell myself that I'm at my best when I don't care what happens after the game, the outcome or anything," Durant said. "That's when I'm free and having fun out there, and forceful. I just try to play with

force no matter if I missed shots or not, just keep shooting, keep being aggressive."

Stephen Curry added 23 points as the Warriors seized a 3-1 lead in their best-of-seven second-round series. The Warriors are seeking a fourth consecutive trip to the NBA finals and their third crown in four seasons.

Curry said the key was getting the ball to their hottest player, Durant. "Just find ways to get him in scoring positions," Curry said. "Sometimes, that's not really hard to do—just throw it to him. "Just keep the game simple at that point because he's such a great scorer, you don't have to really overthink things."

The host Pelicans, led by 26 points and 12 rebounds from Anthony Davis, never led while Golden State

stretched the lead to as many as 26 points. Durant added nine rebounds while Draymond Green had eight points, nine rebounds and nine assists for the Warriors. Klay Thompson added 13 points and Quinn Cook added 12 off the bench. The Warriors limited Pelicans difference makers Rajon Rondo and Nikola Mirotic to just six and seven points. New Orleans made four of 26 attempts from three-point range. Pelicans coach Alvin Gentry said they have to get more scoring from multiple players to win.

"I told you right from the start. You're not going to beat them if you can't score 115 points," Gentry said. "I don't care how good your defence is. I don't care what you do. You have to be able to score 110, 115 points to have any chance to beat them." In Utah, NBA veteran

Paul, celebrating his 33rd birthday, also had 12 rebounds while James Harden scored 24 points to power the Rockets to a 3-1 series lead.

#### 'CRAZY GAME'

"It was an emotional, crazy game," said Paul, who is in his first season with the Rockets. Clint Capela tallied 12 points, 15 rebounds and six blocks in the win. Paul powered the offence and when he combined with Harden they were impossible to defend against.

"There are different ways to win," said Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni. "We got a lot of stuff we can go to. The plan was to get that, so we wouldn't be a one dimensional team." Donovan Mitchell scored 25 points and Joe Ingles finished with 15 for Utah. —AFP

### Zidane hopeful Ronaldo will be fit for Champions League final

BARCELONA: Zinedine Zidane is optimistic Cristiano Ronaldo will be fit for the Champions League final against Liverpool despite Real Madrid's star player going off injured against Barcelona on Sunday.

Ronaldo appeared to sustain a knock to his ankle as he bundled home a 14th-minute equaliser for Real at the Camp Nou. The striker played on until half-time but was substituted during the interval.

Real went on to secure a 2-2 draw without Ronaldo, as Gareth Bale struck in the 72nd minute after Lionel Messi's superb individual effort put 10-man Barca ahead. Sergi Roberto had been sent off at the end of the first period after Luis Suarez opened the scoring in

a pulsating, and highly controversial, Clasico.

But Ronaldo's injury will be the key talking point, with the Portuguese now facing a fight to recover in time for the Champions League final against Liverpool on May 26. "How long he will need I cannot tell you but for him, it is a small problem," Zidane said afterwards.

"We'll see tomorrow after the tests, what we have to do is see the damage done to the ankle. He is a little worried because his ankle is a bit swollen but he said it was only minor."

Ronaldo's injury, coupled with Barcelona avoiding defeat despite playing half the contest with 10 men, meant it was the Catalans who left the more satisfied.

Ernesto Valverde's men are now three matches away from becoming the first ever team to finish a 38-match La Liga season unbeaten. "It would have hurt to lose to Madrid, or any other team," Valverde said. "I think we are the only unbeaten team in Europe in the big leagues and that is something that pushes us."

Bale's goal was his 15th in 24 games this year and the Welshman will hope it sparks a return to favour ahead of Real's European climax in Kiev.

But Bale was lucky still to be on the pitch after he stabbed his studs into the back of Samuel Umtiti's calf, moments before Sergi was sent off. It was one of a

number of questionable decisions from referee Alejandro Jose Hernandez Hernandez, as both teams departed wondering what might have been. As well as Bale's reckless challenge, Suarez fouled Raphael Varane in the build-up to Messi's goal while Marcelo should have had a late penalty after he was brought down by Jordi Alba.

"Next year it will change with VAR," Zidane said. "Then we will see what a match like that will look like." Valverde added: "It was clearly a difficult match to referee. I am not sure about the red card for Sergi Roberto, he might have raised his hand but I do not think it was worthy of a red, maybe because I know him."

The thrilling nature of the match meant Andres Iniesta's last Clasico before leaving Barcelona at the end of the season was reduced to a footnote. The Spaniard went off to a standing ovation in the second half.

"I am doing everything possible so I can play these last few games and try to absorb them," Iniesta told Barca TV. "Three matches remain, they are the last ones, it seems that the end never comes but we have won the league already and I will try to enjoy every minute." —AFP



Zinedine Zidane



## Business

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

**18** Burgan Bank Group's Q1 net income reaches KD 20.4 million**19** Tourism accounts for nearly a tenth of global CO2 emissions**21** Workshop discusses importance of strengthening investor relations

## Zain Innovation Center startup hub opens in Kuwait

**Al-Kharafi: ZINC Kuwait to connect local community, promote activities and more**



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan (right) and Bader Al-Kharafi



**(L to R)** Aysha Al Mudhaf, Bader Al-Kharafi & Martial Caratti.

**KUWAIT:** Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces the opening of its Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) in Kuwait. Located within the Zain Head Offices, ZINC Kuwait falls within the company's youth empowerment initiative led by Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO, Bader Al-Kharafi. The co-working hub is the first of its kind in Kuwait provided by a corporate entity and aims to bolster youth entrepreneurship and the country's startup ecosystem.

The inauguration ceremony of ZINC took place on Sunday that saw the attendance of Kuwait's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Khaled Al-Roudhan; Bader Al-Kharafi and other Zain senior management plus successful identities from the Kuwait and regional digital ecosystem.

ZINC Kuwait is set to encourage young minds to think and act creatively outside of the norm in an open, supportive environment. The design of the hub utilizes light and is deliberately modern and sleek, with the view to creating the right atmosphere for entrepreneurs to generate new ideas and develop them into viable opportunities.

Apart from the inspiring co-working hub facilities, ZINC will provide aspiring entrepreneurs and startups access to experts in various fields and advice from mentors from the region and across the globe, including from Zain senior personnel and associated technology partners.

Bader Al-Kharafi commented, "The generation of successful innovative ideas is likely to become one of the greatest differentiators between societies that progress into the future. We are well-aware that there is a strong local entrepreneurial culture that is just waiting to be tapped into and we are excited to be fostering and unlocking opportunities for young Kuwaiti professionals."

### Hub for startups

Al-Kharafi added, "The ultimate aim of ZINC is helping young innovators turn their ideas into productive projects that would be marketed locally, regionally, and internationally. We plan to link them with angel investors and large technology companies, enhancing Kuwait's position as a fertile oasis for entrepreneurs and a major hub for the incubation of startups in the region."

The ZINC initiative was first launched in

Jordan, where it has proven to be an exceptional success where the creative startup culture, development of innovative ideas by entrepreneurs and successful commercial launch of many young Arab entities is booming. In recent years, many dignitaries toured ZINC Jordan and met with startups and shared their experiences, including visits from royalty of the likes of HM King Abdullah II and Queen Rania of Jordan as well as the Prince of Wales and Amazon's Jeff Bezos.

Additionally, over recent years, Zain Group and other country operations have been very active in the entrepreneurial and digital startup ecosystem across the region partnering key events like the MIT Enterprise Forum Pan Arab Startup competition held in various regional capitals that sees over 5,000 startup applications annually. Also in Sudan, the company partners in driving the success of the country's Global Entrepreneurship Week, while in Lebanon, 'touch', the mobile operator managed by Zain, recently opened an innovation lab and partners with Arabnet on events and much more to bolster the local ecosystem. In Bahrain, Zain holds a weekly event every Thursday allowing the Kingdom's aspiring youth to showcase their new startups ideas.

Furthermore, in Kuwait the company has partnered with the Tmkeen Kuwait annual Youth Empowerment Symposium since its introduction in 2012; and holding four annual Zain Great Idea programs in Kuwait that sees 10 Kuwaiti teams undergoing a thorough incubator process travelling to Silicon Valley and more. Also, the company partners with INJAZ, to deliver educational programs on entrepreneurship, financial literacy and work readiness for the country's youth as well as partnering Nuqat, a not-for-profit organization, in an innovative new educational and creative program.

Additionally, in Kuwait this year, Zain launched its 3rd Generation Z program for high caliber Kuwaiti graduates aimed at enhancing their digital skill sets and bridging the gap between today's curricular and the future's unpredictable corporate environment.

Notably in 2017 across all operations, Zain Group launched Zainiac, an internal e-platform initiative created by employees where ideas are shared and solutions are created aimed at stimulating creativity within the company. To date more than 100 initiatives and project ideas

have come from Zain employees with the main aim of the initiative being to promote internal innovation and push employees to start new businesses, and hopefully become the next unicorns in our region.

The introduction of ZINC to Kuwait is another step forward by Zain aligning to its brand values and Corporate Sustainability objectives, as well as the company's active investment in delivering on its strategic digital lifestyle aspirations. Zain expects to attract major global pioneers and mentors from across the digital value chain to make appearances to ZINC and inspire budding entrepreneurs through presentations and workshops and much more.



### Al-Roudhan attends ZINC inauguration

To connect and promote ZINC activities to the local startup community, a ZINC Kuwait app was developed to facilitate such. Interested young startups and entrepreneurs who wish to contact or visit ZINC Kuwait, please email: [zinc@zain.com](mailto:zinc@zain.com)

### Govt to support the youth

Minister Khaled Al-Roudhan during the opening of the Zain Center for Innovation (ZINC) said that the State supports and encourages business accelerators and incubators, and we have clear instructions from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah to wholeheartedly support the country's youth in their business aspirations.

The Minister added that the government has established the Kuwaiti National Fund for the Welfare and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises (NF), which is responsible for the

care and development of small and medium enterprises, supporting youth, fighting unemployment and empowering the private sector to achieve economic growth in Kuwait.

"There are efforts to introduce legislative amendments that are in line with these objectives, and we are in advanced stages of creating a favorable legislative environment to support enterprises and small businesses. Recently, amendments have been made to trade licenses, which has seen a fourfold increase in the issuance of commercial licenses, exceeding 12,000 licenses."

"We must invest resources in enhancing cooperation between the government and the private sector properly. We are optimistic that the future is better for all Kuwaitis driven by the evolving passion and ambitions of our youth towards entrepreneurship."

Al-Roudhan noted that the opening of ZINC embodies these efforts. Ideas are always influenced by the care they receive and I believe ZINC will provide adequate support to foster and develop these ideas. Zain has a successful track record in management and marketing experience and will provide the right business environment and consultancy to develop emerging ideas.

"Global markets are looking for smart innovative ideas, and Kuwaiti companies are moving to these areas. We believe that launching business incubators will help the country's ambitions." The Kuwaiti National Fund is an independent public corporation, with a total capital of KD 2 billion, that will finance up to 80 percent of the capital for feasible small and medium sized projects submitted by Kuwaiti citizens. The Fund's vision is to build a pioneering society that motivates entrepreneurs to innovate and achieve economic development opportunities in Kuwait.

### Be patient and determined

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi welcomed Minister Al-Roudhan during the inauguration of the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC). "We are delighted that Minister Khaled Al-Roudhan is with us to support this initiative. His reputation is well recognized as a keen supporter of youth empowerment and the results of his efforts have already proven successful on multiple fronts, and his presence today further solidifies his support for young startups and entrepreneurs."

"The idea of establishing the ZINC in

Kuwait was to continue our journey in Zain, supporting young innovators and great minds and this follows the success of the inaugural ZINC in Jordan."

We believe that smart ideas need to be nurtured to achieve their desired goals. Accordingly, as an internal initiative, we initiated within Zain a program called Zainiac, inviting our employees who have unique ideas to come forward to evaluate them. We have already received dozens of ideas and we have chosen five ideas to support them and encourage their owners to further develop them. Now we have ZINC as an incubator to foster these ideas, having a healthy and enabling environment for turning these ideas into successful businesses."

"We encourage our employees to embrace the spirit of creativity and innovation, and through ZINC we will provide them with the right atmosphere for these ideas," Al-Kharafi said. "We are inviting our people to spend one hour per day to engage with entrepreneurs to nurture and enrich emerging ideas."

"There is no magic formula," Al-Kharafi said. "Success depends on being well prepared and the owner must be determined and have the appropriate will-power to succeed. Ideas need effort and joint-cooperation to succeed."

"In confirmation of this, during my recent visit to the Kuwait Festival for Emerging Projects, which was held at the College of Engineering and Petroleum, I found many talented young minds with creative abilities and distinctive ideas, and they shared concerns about difficult bureaucratic procedures to implement ideas. My advice to them was that will power and determination are needed to ensure distinctive ideas see the light of success."

During the ZINC Kuwait inauguration, Al-Kharafi made special mention of a \$100 million fund that Zain Group Board of Directors have approved to support the company's digital lifestyle strategic aspirations. Over the last 18 months, this fund has and will continue to invest in strategic innovative opportunities and digital startups from across the region that can create wealth creation for Zain stakeholders as well as possibly offering Zain customers unique services to enhance their mobile experience.

Al-Kharafi concluded his presentation by inviting other Kuwait corporate entities to invest in the startup ecosystem and visit ZINC and play a contributory role in its future prosperity.



**All Zain personnel with Bader Al-Kharafi**



**Bader Al-Kharafi socializes with the audience**



## Business

# Burgan Bank Group's Q1 net income reaches KD 20.4 million

## Capital at comfortable levels with CAR of 16.6%

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank Group announced yesterday its first quarter earnings for the financial year 2018. The set of results for the period ending in 31st March 2018 demonstrated a solid operating capabilities and efficiencies. Reported net income for 2018 first quarter grew year-on-year by 14 percent reaching KD 20.4 million (\$68 million). Earnings per share grew year-on-year by 20 percent reaching 6.6 fils.

During the first quarter of 2018 and compared with the same period of 2017, Operating income grew by 8 percent to reach KD 60.5 million (\$201.7 million). Operating profit before provisions grew by 12 percent reaching KD 32.5 million (\$ 108 million). Asset quality measured by the Non-performing loans (NPL) to gross loans ratio, was significantly enhanced when compared

to the same period of 2017, with NPL to gross loans ratio declined to 2.7 percent and NPL ratio net of collateral declining to 0.7 percent.

Majed Essa Al-Ajeel, Chairman of Burgan Bank Group said: "Burgan Bank Group continues to deliver good performance enabled by the solid operating capabilities, diversification benefits, and the optimization of capital to strike the right risk/return balance."

"Once again, the focus on high quality earnings enabled by our solid operating capabilities and efficiencies at a group level yielded a good a top line growth of 8 percent. While credit growth in the market was modest in the first quarter of 2018, our net interest income grew by almost 20 percent compared to the first quarter of 2017."

"International operations contribute 47 per-

cent of Burgan Bank's revenues, enabling the bank to distribute risks, to diversify revenues streams, and to enjoy a solid presence in faster growth markets. All our subsidiaries are growing and profitable."

"As for capital, our executive management team has executed impeccably a capital optimization plan for the last three years that have averted a dilutive capital hike, and enabled us to be consistently positioned in the top quartile among peers in Kuwait, and delivering decent double-digit returns to shareholders. Our capital is managed well, and for the period ended March 31st 2018, our capital adequacy ratio stood at 16.6 percent."

"On behalf of the board, I take this opportunity to thank our customers and shareholders

for their confidence in our capabilities and our regulators; the Central Bank of Kuwait, for their support. I would also like to thank our executive management team for their leadership and the excellent execution of the corporate strategy, and to our staff for their continued support and commitment," concluded Al-Ajeel. The consolidated financials encompass the results of the Group's operations in Kuwait, and its share from its regional subsidiaries, namely Burgan Bank - Turkey, Gulf Bank Algeria, Bank of Baghdad, Tunis International Bank. Burgan Bank Group has one of the largest regional branch networks with 180 branches across Kuwait, Turkey, Algeria, Iraq, Tunisia, Lebanon and representative office in Dubai-United Arab Emirates.



Majed Essa Al-Ajeel

## Ooredoo Kuwait concludes visit to Silicon Valley

**SILICON VALLEY/SAN FRANCISCO:** As part of their Silicon Valley tour, representatives and leaders from Ooredoo Kuwait visited the Apple head office in Cupertino including the new Apple park office. This visit comes as part of the company's commitment to continue leveraging on its digital approach towards serving its customers in a superior manner. The visit included various meetings at some distinguished technology companies and organizations; including Cisco.

With multiple successful apple launches throughout the years; Ooredoo has proved themselves as a leader in the market in terms of Apple launches. These events have not gone unseen by Apple; leading to an invitation to visit their offices in Cupertino and being the first partner to visit the new Apple park office thus concluding a successful visit to Silicon Valley at one of the leading companies there.

Ooredoo Kuwait delegation; headed by CEO Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani who stated the importance of this visit and said in an official statement: "The main objective behind our visit to Apple comes in line with Ooredoo value "Connecting", whereby we focus on connecting with our partner and strengthening



the relationship and building on the previous successes to better serve our customers".

Al-Thani referred to the recent successful launches of the Apple devices at Ooredoo Kuwait during 2017 "With Apple, we were able to deliver the best and latest products to our customers, and together we are explor-

ing new products and services in a journey to provide the Kuwaiti Market with the best customer experience and products."

The delegation also discussed new areas for Kuwait in enterprise and education, providing information about recent updates that enhance deploying and sup-

porting Apple products in a large-scale organizations across Kuwait.

The Ooredoo Kuwait delegation concluded the silicon valley trip at the Apple park office; and these visits are just the start to our road to "Digitize to Differentiate".

## Boursa Kuwait hosts 3rd Investor Relations workshop MEIRA



**KUWAIT:** Building on the outcomes of its series of workshops in collaboration with the Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA), Boursa Kuwait hosted its third Investor Relations (IR) workshop, aimed at raising awareness and knowledge of the key role of Investor Relations from the buy-side analyst's perspective. The workshop took place at Boursa Kuwait's Al-Kharafi Hall yesterday.

Titled "Investor Relations: The Buy-Side View", the workshop started with a presentation from Ahmed Al-Kiswani, Executive Director - Risk, Compliance and Corporate Governance at Boursa Kuwait followed by a brief presentation from Clemence Piot, General Manager at the Middle East Investor Relations Association on MEIRA upcoming activities.

The workshop then welcomed three representatives of NBK Capital: Dr Husayn Shahrur, Managing Director - MENA Asset Management, Fahad Al-Yaseen, Manager - MENA Asset Management and Eithar Al-Rushaid, Portfolio Analyst - MENA Asset Management who shared their views on buy-side analysis and its relationship with the IR professionals during a panel discussion moderated by Dalal Al-Dousari, Assistant General Manager - Investor Relations at Gulf Bank.

The NBK Capital executives gave three separate presentations with NBK Capital Managing Director of MENA Asset Management Dr Husayn Shahrur highlighting the importance of transparency and visibility to national interests. "I am pleased to be a part of this workshop, which highlighted the buy-side analyst's view of Investor Relations. Ensuring transparency and visibility reduces market risk, improves the business environment and increases the flow of foreign investment," Dr Shahrur said.

The series of workshops conducted with MEIRA have been extremely beneficial and integral to understanding the key role of Investor Relations. After last

November's presentation of sell-side analysis, on this occasion the buy-side examined how to build a less adversarial, more cooperative relationship between buy- side and the IR officers in Kuwait.

"This third IR workshop delivered by the MEIRA Kuwait Chapter in collaboration with Boursa Kuwait responds to an increased demand from the local market professionals to understand how the IR function can add an actual value to the listed companies. MEIRA is delighted to continue supporting Boursa Kuwait's efforts to increase the sophistication of the financial markets in the country and encourage their listed companies to comply with international best practice in IR", added Clemence Piot, General Manager, MEIRA.

Zain Group Chief Communications Officer and Chairman of MEIRA Kuwait, Mohammad Abdal said: "MEIRA Kuwait's mission is to raise awareness of the important role that investor relations plays in helping listed companies effectively communicate with their stakeholders as well as keeping them abreast with the latest rules and regulations imposed by the various government authorities."

Abdal continued, "Our collaboration with Boursa Kuwait is mutually beneficial, with all workshops conducted to date proving extremely valuable. We are looking forward to driving and supporting more initiatives to continue improving IR best practice standards in Kuwait for the benefit of all our stakeholders and creating an environment conducive to increasing liquidity and attracting new listings."

Boursa Kuwait vision is to develop a liquid, reliable and sound capital market providing issuers with efficient access to capital, and investors with diverse return opportunities, evolving into a leading regional exchange. Its mission is to operate an efficient, fair and transparent capital market platform that services all relevant asset classes, whilst focusing on clients' interest through excellence in everything it does.

## Nestle to pay Starbucks \$7.15bn in global coffee alliance

**LONDON/ZURICH:** Swiss-based food giant Nestle will pay Starbucks \$7.15 billion in cash for the rights to sell the US coffee chain's products around the world, tying a premium brand to Nestle's global distribution muscle. The deal yesterday for a business with \$2 billion in sales reinforces Nestle's position as the world's biggest coffee company tries to fortify its place atop a fast-changing market.

It is a bold stroke by new Nestle Chief Executive Mark Schneider, who has made coffee a strategic priority as he tries to convince uneasy shareholders, including activist Third Point, that he can boost the sprawling group's performance. Bernstein analyst Andrew Wood said that Nestle's third-biggest acquisition would allow the Swiss company to expand the brand through its global distribution network. Nestle shares rose 1.4 percent by mid-session, having fallen by more than 8 percent so far this year. Starbucks stock was indicated 2.8 percent higher.

Seattle-based Starbucks, the world's biggest coffee chain, said it will use proceeds to speed share buybacks and the deal would add to earnings per share (EPS) by 2021 at the latest. Nestle said it expects the deal to sell Starbucks bagged coffee and drinks adding to earnings by 2019. It will not involve any of

Starbucks' cafes or ready-to-drink products.

But it does let Nestle sell Starbucks coffee in individual pods-as it does now with Nespresso and Nescafe-and expand sales of Starbucks soluble coffee, a key market in Asia. Starbucks now sells single-serve coffee in Kuerig K-cup pods.

The Nestle name will not appear on Starbucks products. "We do not want the consumer to perceive that Starbucks is now part of a bigger family," a Nestle source said. Starbucks, strong mostly in the United States, will have the final say on expanding its product range. "This global coffee alliance will bring the Starbucks experience to the homes of millions more around the world through the reach and reputation of Nestle," said Starbucks Chief Executive Kevin Johnson.

Nestle and Starbucks are joining forces in a highly fragmented consumer drinks category that has seen a string of deals lately. JAB Holdings, the private investment firm of Europe's billionaire Reimann family, has fueled the consolidation wave with a series of deals including Douwe Egberts, Peet's Coffee & Tea and Keurig Green Mountain, narrowing the gap with Nestle.

### Richer brew

Coffee is popular with younger customers who have grown up with Starbucks. A willingness to pay up for exotic beans and specialty drinks means companies can brew up richer profit margins than in mainstream packaged food. Starbucks said it now expects to return approximately \$20 billion in cash to shareholders in share buybacks and dividends through fiscal year 2020.

It said the transaction was expected to add to earnings per share by the end of fiscal year 2021 or sooner, with no change to the company's currently stated long-term financial targets. —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
<b>Europe</b>			
British Pound	0.404068	0.411568	
Czech Korune	0.006199	0.015499	
Danish Krone	0.044544	0.049544	
Euro	0.356348	0.363848	
Georgian Lari	0.138280	0.138280	
Hungarian 0.00138	0.001328		
Norwegian Krone	0.033498	0.038698	
Romanian Leu	0.064623	0.081473	
Russian ruble	0.004785	0.004785	
Slovakia	0.008995	0.018995	
Swedish Krona	0.030317	0.035317	
Swiss Franc	0.296206	0.307206	
<b>Australasia</b>			
Australian Dollar	0.220198	0.232198	
New Zealand Dollar	0.206221	0.215721	
<b>America</b>			
Canadian Dollar	0.230049	0.239049	
US Dollars	0.298050	0.302450	
US Dollars Mint	0.298550	0.302450	
<b>Asia</b>			
Bangladesh Taka	0.003002	0.003784	
Chinese Yuan	0.046047	0.049547	
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036747	0.039497	
Indian Rupee	0.003930	0.004657	
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023	
Japanese Yen	0.002695	0.002875	
Korean Won	0.000270	0.000285	
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072901	0.078901	
Nepalese Rupee	0.002785	0.003125	
Pakistan Rupee	0.001988	0.002758	
Philippine Peso	0.005688	0.005956	
Singapore Dollar	0.221910	0.231910	
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001615	0.002195	
Taiwan	0.010367	0.010547	
Thai Baht	0.009201	0.009751	
<b>Arab</b>			
Bahraini Dinar	0.794826	0.803326	
Egyptian Pound	0.014095	0.019813	
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085	
Iraqi Dinar	0.000203	0.000263	
Jordanian Dinar	0.421552	0.430552	
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000	
Lebanese Pound	0.000155	0.000255	
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022258	0.048258	
Omani Riyal	0.778487	0.784167	
Qatar Riyal	0.078703	0.083643	
Saudi Riyal	0.079487	0.080787	
Syrian Pound	0.001280	0.001500	
Tunisian Dinar	0.118292	0.126292	
Turkish Lira	0.067014	0.077314	
UAE Dirhams	0.080839	0.082539	
Yemeni Riyal	0.000982	0.001062	



Business

# Tourism accounts for nearly a tenth of global CO2 emissions

## Aviation industry responsible for 2% of all human-generated CO2

**BONN:** Domestic and international tourism account for eight percent of greenhouse gas emissions, four times more than previously estimated, according to a study published yesterday. The multi-trillion dollar industry's carbon footprint is expanding rapidly, driven in large part by demand for energy-intensive air travel, researchers reported in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. "Tourism is set to grow faster than many other economic sectors," with revenue projected to swell by four percent annually through 2025, noted lead-author Arunima Malik, a researcher at The University of Sydney's business school.

Holding the sector's carbon pollution in check will likely require carbon taxes or CO2 trading schemes for aviation, the

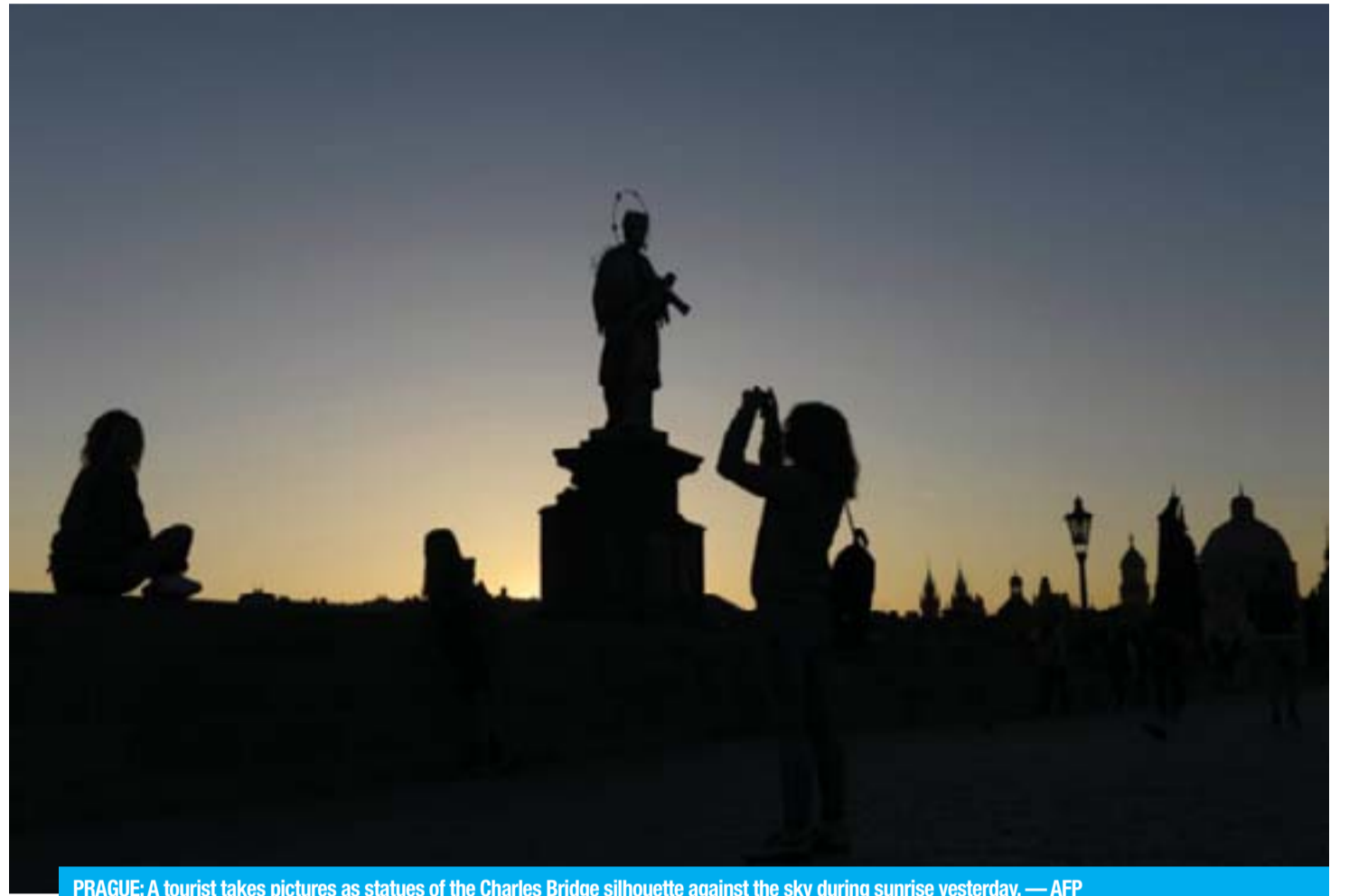
year, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The aviation industry accounts for two percent of all human-generated CO2 emissions, and would rank 12th if it were a country. "We see very fast tourism demand growth from China and India over the past few years, and also expect this trend will continue in the next decade or so," Ya-Sen Sun, a professor at The University of Queensland Business School in Australia, and co-author of the study, told AFP. "Besides the sheer population number, what's worrying is that people with a rising income tend to travel further, more frequently, and with a higher reliance on aviation."

International travel accounts for a quarter of tourism-related carbon emissions. Neither tourism nor aviation are currently covered by the 2015 Paris climate treaty. In 2016, however, 191 countries struck a deal - voluntary until 2027 - under which the aviation industry would curb most of its greenhouse emissions after 2020 by diverting about two percent of its revenue to reforestation and other carbon-reducing projects. The 197-nation Paris Agreement calls for capping global warming at "well below" two degrees Celsius.

With only one degree of warming so far, Earth has seen a crescendo of droughts, heatwaves, and storms ramped up by rising seas. Voluntary national pledges made under the Paris pact to cut CO2 emissions, if fulfilled, would yield a 3C world at best, say scientists. "Our analysis is a world-first look at the true cost of tourism, including consumables such as food from eating out and souvenirs," said Malik.

Looking at its full "life cycle", the



PRAGUE: A tourist takes pictures as statues of the Charles Bridge silhouette against the sky during sunrise yesterday. — AFP



### Carbon taxes can help to put extra pressure to curb travel

researchers concluded. As in past decades, the United States is the single largest emitter of tourism-related carbon emissions, with other wealthy nations - Germany, Canada and Britain - also in the top ten.

But burgeoning middle classes have moved emerging economies up the ranking, with China in second place and India, Mexico and Brazil 4th, 5th and 6th, respectively. International travel involving long-haul flights is among the fastest growing sectors, and could threaten efforts to reign in planet-warming carbon pollution. The total number of air passengers is expected to almost double by 2036 to 7.8 billion per

researchers calculated that carbon emissions from tourism increased 15 percent in five years from 2009 to 4.5 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent, a measure that also takes into account other greenhouse gases such as methane. Yesterday, the UN's climate chief said during UN climate talks in Bonn that it was "in the interest" of the tourism industry cut its carbon pollution.

"A lot of what it is selling - its products,

if you like - depends on the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment, and avoiding the worst impacts of climate change," Patricia Espinosa told journalists. Curbing the growing appetite for tourism and travel may prove difficult. "Behavior change from travellers - travel less, stay close to home, pay carbon offset - are found to be slow and marginal," said Sun. "Carbon taxes or carbon trading

schemes can help to put extra pressure to speed the process."

A carbon pollution abatement that covered environmental costs, for example, would tack on an additional \$425 to offset emissions from a round-trip flight from Sydney to London, the authors calculated. "From the sustainability perspective, a restricted travel style may be required," said Sun. — AFP

## KFH participates in global forum of CIBAFI

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the 3rd Global Forum of the General Council for Islamic Finance and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI), held for two days in Istanbul, Turkey.

The CIBAFI Global Forum brought together top notch Islamic finance experts, and diverse range of decision makers, regulatory bodies and industry leaders to discuss the most significant recent developments of Islamic finance and the major issuers in this regard. The forum was attended by over 350 participants from 37 countries across the world.

Group Chief Financial Officer at (KFH) Shadi Zahran said during Session one, themed "Global C-Suite Opening Panel: Leadership Response to the Change" that global growth has recovered 3.8% 2017, and expected to sustain at 3.9% 2018 & 2019 according to an IMF report, indicating cuts and spending in US are expected to further stimulate economic activities, same scenario is seen in the region.

Financial policies reform, subsidies, costs cuts, VAT, and partial recovery in commodity prices (Oil is good example). He added that global debt is at historic highs, reaching the record peak of \$164 trillion in 2016, equivalent to 225 percent of global GDP. The world is now 12 percent of GDP deeper in debt than the previous peak in 2009. Debt in advanced economies is at 105 percent of GDP on average-levels not seen since World War II. High government debt and deficits are cause for con-



Shadi Zahran

cern. It hinders governments' ability to implement a strong fiscal policy response to support the economy in the event of a downturn which increases the depth and duration of recession.

However, Zahran stressed the importance of building fiscal room to maneuver and protect the economy, both by creating room for fiscal policy to step in to support economic activity during a downturn and by reducing the risk of financing difficulties if global financial conditions tighten suddenly.

He raised the importance of automatic stabilizers that is, tax and direct the spending toward output and employment. "Fiscal policy should be recalibrated to ensure that the government debt-to-GDP ratio declines over the medium term" he added, indicating higher inflation may lead central banks to respond more aggressively than currently expected, which could lead to a sharp and sudden tightening of global financial conditions, this means further increasing borrowing costs, less available credit, sizable stock market decline that affects banks from investments as well as collateral.

Moreover, Zahran discussed the regulators pressure, illustrating that IFRS 9, Basel III & IV, and Liquidity LCR & NSFR, all of that contribute

in increasing the pressure on lending capacity. Also, governance, and compliance cost, taxes increase operating costs.

He noted that 2013 - 2017 Islamic banks show more rapid growth of 6.9 percent than the 3.7 percent for conventional banks. According to S&P, he expects the Islamic banks' financing growth will maintain 4 percent-5 percent, supported by strategic initiatives such as the Dubai Expo 2020, Saudi Vision 2030, the World Cup 2022 in Qatar, and higher government spending in Kuwait led by Kuwait 2035 Vision. GCC Islamic Banks managed to optimize their capital more efficiently in 2013 - 2017 and continued to display strong capitalization by global standards. Some Islamic banks have issued capital-boosting Sukuk, primarily in the UAE, Qatar, and KSA. He said Islamic banks in the region facing three challenges which are geopolitical tensions, higher cost of risk due to IFRS 9 / FAS 30, and lower profitability (VAT & IFRS 9).

He said that important factors could act as accelerators for growth and improving business environment: Standardization and Fintech, and Merger & Acquisitions.

He emphasized that Fintech could stimulate growth by making transactions quicker and easier, improving customer experience, increasing profitability by reducing expenses or better analysis and increasing productivity. He indicated according to a study by PwC that 61 percent of banks believe more than 60 percent of their clients will be using mobile apps in the next five years. He added that the number of Internet users worldwide has more than tripled in a decade-reaching 3.2 billion at the end of 2015-and is expected to rise further according to the World Bank.

Zahran concluded "a prerequisite for Fintech's ability to enrich the Islamic finance industry is the implementation of the necessary supervision and regulatory framework."

high-speed TGVs ran during last week's strikes, up from one in eight at the start.

#### Technology

Rail users have managed to adapt to the regular strike pattern. Real-time information on phone apps, car-sharing and remote working arrangements have helped many workers avoid problems or organize their travel on non-strike days.

A BVA poll on April 25 found that for 74 percent of respondents, the stoppages had no impact on their personal life. "The strike design might have seemed innovative, but in the medium term it looks like it has gradually boomeranged," Dominique Andolfatto, a specialist in trade unions at the University of Bourgogne, told AFP.

#### No mass uprising

The rail strike has not spurred the wider, more powerful movement against the government to defend public services, which CGT leader Martinez has consistently called for. He had raised the idea of a re-run of the epic 1968 anti-government protests by students as well as workers, who launched a general strike in their millions which paralyzed France. But although there have been several mass protests and a handful of French universities occupied in recent months, neither students nor other public sector workers have mobilized in large enough numbers to really pressure the government. — AFP

week, however, there seem more lows to worry about than highs for Martinez, with momentum clearly in Macron's favor. Having prevailed in his first clash with the CGT last October over changes to labor law, Macron appears to have the upper hand-for at least four reasons:

#### Public opinion

Public opinion remains broadly behind government plans to remove job-for-life privileges for new recruits on the railways and to turn the organization into a public company. The government's argument that SNCF benefits are too generous appears to resonate, while Macron has repeatedly denied claims from the CGT that he is preparing a privatization by stealth. An Ifo poll published Sunday showed 56 percent believe the strikes are "not justified", in line with other surveys since April. "That's the big difference compared to 1995 when the French were for the reforms at the beginning but then got behind the strikers," veteran political commentator Alain Duhamel said recently, referring to massive stoppages 23 years ago.

#### Falling participation

The number of staff joining the strikes has also fallen progressively. Some 57 percent of train drivers took part in the seventh round Thursday and about 63 percent on Friday morning, down from 77 percent at the start. This has allowed SNCF managers to keep more trains running: half of

## Zain partners with Erada Business Incubator to support Kuwait entrepreneurs

**KUWAIT:** Coinciding with the launch of the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) at Zain's head office on Sunday, Zain Group announced partnering with Erada Business Incubators, fully licensed and accredited by the Kuwait National Fund (NF) for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. The initiative is aimed at preparing and building a thriving ecosystem for the startup community, through private and public-sector collaboration.

Launched in Kuwait, Erada combines the best of Silicon Valley's long-heralded incubator nurturing approach and international best practice with local expertise to help budding entrepreneurs kick-start their journeys. Erada cooperates with multiple leading entities in Kuwait with expertise in various industries including design, talent development, sales strategies, payment solutions, financial modelling, and legal structuring, to ensure the growth and success of startups.

Through the partnership and incubator program, Zain will support Erada and the startups on multiple fronts including in the provision of space for startups to work at ZINC; Zain personnel, associated technology and other partners providing advisory services; and by offering startups special prices on Zain voice and data services. Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO stated, "Erada is the

first-of-its-kind in the country, and we are delighted to be working with them as an essential partner in this endeavor to empower and promote aspiring Kuwaiti entrepreneurs. Zain has a long history of supporting the youth of Kuwait and this strategic partnership bolsters our efforts in the development of a diversified and sustainable economy. At Zain, we hope and look forward to having other leading Kuwait entities join the Erada initiative and be part of its future success."

Al-Kharafi added, "This partnership supports the future prosperity of the Zain Innovation Center (ZINC) and also offers Zain a prime opportunity to capitalize on the most promising innovative ideas in the regional digital space with the aim of investing in or partnering with these entities to offer our customers unique life-enriching services."

Erada Founding Directors, Talal Al-Ajeel and Mohammed Al-Roumi see the empowerment of Kuwait's young population as a vital part of their responsibility as community leaders. With two-thirds of Kuwaitis currently under the age of 30, preparing the local youth for the challenges of the 21st century is crucial. "We are very proud to launch Erada Business Incubators in partnership with Zain, as we strongly believe in the potential of the Kuwaiti youth and are dedicated to building an ecosystem that enables them to bring their business ideas to life."



KUWAIT: Bader Al-Kharafi shakes hands with Erada's Talal Al-Ajeel and Mohammed Al-Roumi.

## 4 reasons French rail battle is swinging in Macron's favor

**PARIS:** A month ago, President Emmanuel Macron was facing his biggest showdown with France's trade unions. It was to be his "Thatcher moment," some observers predicted, recalling a make-or-break time for Britain's prime minister in the 1980s. By taking on reforms of the debt-laden SNCF railways, Macron has thrown down the gauntlet to one of the strongest bastions of French trade unionism — the same way Thatcher did with mining unions in 1984.

On April 3 rail workers launched the longest strike sequence ever for the network: stoppages every two days out of five until June 28. Analysts agreed that if Macron backed down as a result, the 40-year-old centrist could kiss goodbye to further ambitious reforms of the civil service and pensions.

CGT union chief Philippe Martinez said last week that as with every strike movement, "there are highs and lows". "But it has settled at a high level," he insisted. As the disruption enters its sixth



Business

# US oil breaks through \$70, stocks firm

LONDON: Oil prices hit their highest since late 2014 yesterday, driven by a deepening economic crisis in Venezuela and worries that the United States could re-impose sanctions on Iran, while stocks firmed and the dollar surged to another 2018 high. With trading thinned by a holiday closure in London, European shares opened higher, boosted by energy stocks as well as encouraging earnings updates.

"It's a positive environment for the equity markets," said Niels Christensen, chief analyst at Nordea in Copenhagen. Nestle shares also gained after the Swiss-based food firm agreed to pay Starbucks \$7.15 billion in cash for the rights to sell

the US coffee chain's products around the world.

Most Asian markets also rose after Friday's tame reading on US wage growth lessened the chances of a pick-up in the pace of interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve. Gains were capped by Sino-US trade tensions. US equity futures pointed to a positive open for Wall Street.

The day's eye-catching moves came in energy markets. US crude oil prices rose more than 70 cents, or 1.1 percent, pushing above \$70 a barrel for the first time since November 2014 as the crisis in OPEC member state Venezuela threatened to further crimp its production and exports. Brent crude oil futures gained to \$75.64 per barrel at 1210 GMT,

up 1.14 percent and having also touched their highest since November 2014. Also driving oil prices higher was the May 12 deadline set by US President Donald Trump for Europeans to "fix" the deal with Iran over its nuclear program. If they do not, Trump has said he would refuse to extend US sanctions relief for the oil-producing Islamic Republic. Germany and France yesterday vowed to stand by the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers even if the United States pulls out. The European oil and gas share index was up 0.5 percent.

**Euro at 2018 low**

The dollar rose to a new 2018 peak, extending its

2-1/2 week-long rally as investors unwound short positions against the currency and bet that the relative strength of the US economy would feed through to a stronger greenback. Against a basket of currencies the dollar, which has enjoyed a sudden reversal in fortunes as investors bet on more Fed rate hikes and a slower pace of tightening in the euro zone, rose 0.4 percent to 92.968, having shrugged off Friday's weaker-than-expected jobs report.

The euro slid to below \$1.19 versus the dollar, down half a percent on the day and its weakest since Dec. 28. In data from the euro zone's largest economy Germany, industrial orders unexpectedly dropped for the third month running in March,

suggesting factories there are shifting into lower gear. The week ahead includes readings on the health of the Chinese economy and, US inflation, and a Bank of England monetary policy meeting. "Looking at the US economic data, everything is looking quite positive. No one expects higher interest rates to be a brake on economic growth," said Christensen. The soft German data supported eurozone government bond markets as investors continued to bet on caution from the European Central Bank. "A lot has been repriced in terms of the ECB so the outlook for bonds is a bit more mixed," said Commerzbank rates strategist Rainer Guntermann. — Reuters

## China's April FX reserves fall to 5-month low as dollar bounces

BEIJING: China's foreign exchange reserves in April fell more than expected, to a five-month low, as the US dollar rebounded and on growing signs that Chinese regulators are less worried about capital flight. Reserves fell \$17.97 billion in April to \$3.125 trillion - the lowest since November 2017, compared with a rise of \$8.34 billion in March, central bank data showed yesterday.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast reserves would drop around \$10 billion in April to \$3.133 trillion, with a stronger US dollar versus other currencies expected to depress the value of China's dollar-denominated reserves. The fall in non-dollar currencies against the US dollar and correction in asset prices led to the small reserves drop in April, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE), China's foreign exchange regulator, said. "The drop reflected almost exclusively the valuation effect of a firmer USD in April," said Andy Ji, currency strategist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Singapore.

"In other words, there are no signs of capital outflows at the current juncture," But Julian Evans-Pritchard at Capital Economics said he believed China's current account returned to a healthy surplus in April from a seasonal deficit in March, implying a sharp reversal in capital flows from net inflows to net outflows. "This is nothing to worry about, however. Such volatility in net cross-border flows is not uncommon at this time of year and net out-



BEIJING: A customer leaves a hole-in-the-wall convenience store along a road in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

flows look to have remained well within regulators' comfort zone," he said in a note.

The dollar index, measuring it against other major currencies, rose 2 percent last month. Capital flight was seen as a major risk for China at the start of 2017, but a combination of tighter capital controls and a faltering dollar helped the yuan stage a strong turnaround, bolstering confidence in the Chinese economy. Last year, China's reserves rose for the first time since 2014 and its cross-border capital flows went from net outflows to basically stable.

Trade disputes between China and the United States could hurt exporters on both sides and weigh on their economic growth, while adding to volatility in global financial markets. But China's foreign exchange regulator said in April that any potential impact on its cross-border capital flows

stemming from Sino-US trade frictions can be controlled.

**Courting capital inflows**

The yuan lost around 1 percent against the resurgent greenback in April, but it is still up about 2.5 percent so far this year. Indeed, in recent weeks, Chinese authorities have announced a series of moves which suggest they are less worried about capital outflows, including allowing domestic investors to put more money into global financial markets. At the same time, China has moved to give foreign investors more access to its equity, bond and commodity futures markets, which will help support the yuan and offer greater balance to cross-border flows. The value of China's gold reserves fell to \$77.788 billion at the end of April, from \$78.419 billion at the end of March. — Reuters

## Dollar surge bringing emerging market rate cut cycle to a halt

LONDON: A resurgent dollar and higher borrowing costs are smashing through Argentina and Turkey's currencies like a wrecking ball and raising the likelihood more broadly that emerging markets' three-year long interest rate cutting cycle is at an end. Emerging markets came into the year flying, riding on the back of a healthy global economy and rising commodity prices alongside tame inflation and a weak dollar. It looked more than likely that a wave of rate cuts would keep rolling, allowing a bond rally to continue.

From Brazil and Russia to Armenia and Zambia, developing countries, big and small, have been on a rate cutting spree. With hundreds of rate cuts since Jan. 2015, the average emerging market borrowing cost fell under 6

percent earlier this year from over 7 percent at the time.

Fund managers' profits too have soared in this time, with emerging local currency debt among the best performing asset classes, with dollar-based returns of 14 percent last year. Even in the first quarter of 2018, returns were a buoyant 4.3 percent.

Now though, almost exactly five years since the so-called taper tantrum shook an emerging market rally, these gains appear to be on the cusp of reversal. Argentina has jacked up its interest rates to 40 percent in response to a rout in its peso currency, while Turkey was also forced into a rate rise as its lira hit record lows against the dollar. Indonesia, after heavy interventions to stem rupiah bleeding, has also

said it could resort to policy tightening. As emerging currencies slide almost everywhere, yields on bonds denominated in emerging market currencies are back up near 6.2 percent and returns are now negative for 2018. "The rate cut trade has unwound," Naveen Kunam, a portfolio manager at Allianz Global Investors said, citing the increased uncertainty on monetary policy. For decades, a rising dollar has spelt bad news for emerging markets and despite all the progress in the developing world in recent years, latest price moves show not that much has changed.

With the dollar on the rise, emerging currencies have weakened some 3 percent in the past two weeks, as measured by a JPMorgan index. Figures from the Institute of International Finance this week showed that the result has been a faster exodus from EM debt than at a similar stage of the 2013 taper tantrum. At \$5.5 billion in two weeks the IIF described it as the "ghost of tantrums past". — Reuters

**NBK Capital Report**

## Global equities break losing streak in April

KUWAIT: Global equities broke their two-month losing streak in April with the MSCI All Country World Index climbing up 0.8 percent. US equities followed suit, yet posted lower returns with the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Index each closing slightly higher, up 0.3 percent. In the US, market volatility was a major concern with a potential trade war with China brewing and an air strike on Syria. Further adding suspense to market participants was the upcoming earning season, which for the most part exceeded expectations. During the month, the US 10 year treasury broke through the 3 percent yield for the first time in almost 4 years alleviating some concerns surrounding a flattening of the yield curve which would have indicated a weaker economic position. The Federal Reserve has recently confirmed that it is on track for two additional hikes during 2018. On the economic front, the Markit Manufacturing PMI came in below the previous reading yet still above the 50 mark at 57.3. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for Q1 annualized came in at 2.3 percent, higher than the consensus.

In Europe, the Stoxx Europe 600 posted a gain of 3.9 percent, making April the best month of 2018 so far. Unlike the US, European equities performed well during the month. Within continental Europe, three of the largest markets closed in the green. The French CAC 40 Index closed up 6.8 percent followed by the German DAX 30 Index up 4.3 percent and Spain's IBEX 35 Index up 4.0 percent. During the month, European leaders made it clear that they were willing to hit back if the US placed tariffs on euro countries. Towards the end of the month, the US did announce an

extension of tariff exemptions for the euro countries avoiding any form of a cross Atlantic trade war. The Markit Manufacturing PMI for the eurozone came in flat compared to the previous month at 56.2 while the preliminary Consumer Price Index for April, year on year, came in at 1.2 percent, which was slightly lower than the previous reading.

The UK's equity market was one of the best performers across global equities in April. The FTSE 100 posted a gain of 6.4 percent in April, marking its first month of positive return in 2018. Brexit remains a primary concern, although during April, UK's parliament attached two amendments to the EU Withdrawal Bill moving further away from a hard divorce. Mixed economic data during the month has reduced market expectations of a Bank of England rate hike in their May meeting. The UK economy remains robust with the Markit Manufacturing PMI above 50 at 53.9. The preliminary reading of Q1 GDP, year on year, came in at 1.2 percent, which was slightly lower than the previous reading of 1.4 percent.

**Trade dialogue**

Japan's Nikkei 225 reversed its negative performance from the previous two months, closing in April up 4.7 percent. During the month, Japan's Prime Minister visited the US and agreed to open a trade dialogue with the US. The Bank of Japan at their latest meeting left their key interest rate unchanged although it did suggest that it is struggling to achieve its 2.0 percent inflation target despite the strong economic data and overall growth. The Nikkei Manufacturing PMI came in above 50 at 53.8 while the Markit Service PMI also came in above 50 at 52.9.

In terms of Emerging markets, the MSCI Emerging Market Index in April continued its losing streak for the third month straight, closing in the red 0.6 percent. On a year to date basis the index remains positive given the stellar performance in January of 8.3 percent. Throughout the month, a US China trade war

has taken center stage. Towards the end of the month, President Trump sent an economic team to Beijing in the hopes of dialing back the rhetoric and coming to an understanding. On the Korean peninsula, North and South Korean leaders met for the first time in 11 years. The one-day meeting is historic with both ends declaring a mutual effort to "establish a permanent and solid peace on the Peninsula". The Shanghai Composite Index continued to underperform for the third month running closing in the red, down 2.7 percent while the KOSPI 200 Index posted a gain of 2.8 percent. On the economic front in China, the NBS Manufacturing PMI and Non-Manufacturing PMI came in above 50 at 51.4 and 54.8, respectively. Furthermore, the year on year Q1 GDP came in at 6.8 percent, no different than the previous reading.

Brent Oil in April closed up 7.0 percent marking its second month straight of positive performance. On a year to date basis, the commodity has increased in price by 12.4 percent reaching a 40-month high of \$73.48 pbl. Brent prices increased due to geopolitical concerns ranging from renewed sanctions on Iran to air strikes on Syria. Further providing support to the price rise was the strengthening of global demand and reduced crude inventory levels throughout the month. Gold, on the other hand, did not perform nearly as well, dropping in April 0.8 percent.

GCC equities ended the month in the green 3.1 percent as measured by the S&P GCC Index. The GCC equity markets were supported by higher oil prices with Qatar taking the lead, up 6.3 percent, followed by Saudi Arabia up 4.3 percent and Abu Dhabi up 1.8 percent. The worst performing index was Bahrain Bourse's All Share Index down 4.6 percent, followed by Kuwait's down 3.2 percent and Dubai down 1.4 percent. MENA equities, as measured by the S&P Pan Arab Composite Index, also closed the month of April in the Green 2.7 percent with Egypt's EGX 30 posting positive returns of 4.8 percent.

## Indonesia GDP growth slows in first quarter

JAKARTA: Indonesia's first-quarter GDP growth slowed on the back of a contraction in exports and public spending, the government said yesterday, despite efforts to rev up Southeast Asia's biggest economy. The latest figures present another challenge to Indonesia's President Joko Widodo who came to office in 2014 on a pledge to boost annual growth to seven percent.

But Indonesia's commodity-driven economy has been stuck in the 5.0 percent growth range despite repeated interest rate cuts by the cen-

tral bank over the past couple of years. Yesterday, Indonesia said its economy grew 5.06 percent in the January-March period, slightly off a 5.2 percent growth rate it saw in the previous three months, as lackluster consumer spending also weighed on activity. "We see little prospect of a rebound," Gareth Leather, a senior Asia economist at London-based consultancy Capital Economics said in a report after the data were published.

"Although the decent prospects for the global economy should help to support export volumes, subdued prices for Indonesia's main commodity exports (especially palm oil) mean revenues are likely to remain low by past standards." The country is the world's biggest producer of palm oil-used in everything from food to cosmetics. But the commodity has been facing a backlash over the environmental impact of massive land clearing to grow the crop. — AFP

National Bank of Kuwait		Financial Markets		Daily Report		At 02:00 PM Previous Day		
<b>Global Stock Indices</b>								
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %			
Dow Jones	23,930.15	24,262.51	332.36	▲	1.39	-1.85		
NASDAQ	7,088.15	7,209.62	121.47	▲	1.71	-4.44		
S&P 500	2,629.73	2,663.42	33.69	▲	1.28	-0.38		
Financial Times	7,502.69	7,567.14	64.45	▲	0.86	-1.57		
DAX	12,819.60	12,871.77	52.17	▲	0.41	-0.36		
CAC 40	5,516.05	5,519.69	3.64	▲	0.07	3.90		
Swiss	8,903.83	8,936.38	32.55	▲	0.37	-4.75		
Nikkei 225	22,472.78	22,497.16	-25.62	▼	-0.11	-1.30		
Topix	1,771.52	1,773.18	1.66	▲	0.09	-2.44		
Hang Seng	29,926.50	29,994.26	67.76	▲	0.23	0.25		
Straits Times	3,545.38	3,532.86	-12.52	▼	-0.35	3.82		
<b>MENA Stock Indices</b>								
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %			
Kuwait	6,603.51	6,633.44	29.93	▲	0.45	2.96		
Saudi Arabia	8,113.87	8,088.48	-25.39	▼	-0.31	12.28		
Dubai	2,972.41	2,962.84	-9.57	▼	-0.32	-11.80		
Abu Dhabi	4,560.38	4,540.09	-20.29	▼	-0.44	3.68		
Bahrain	1,275.79	1,278.61	2.82	▲	0.22	-4.20		
Qatar	8,908.03	8,983.79	75.76	▲	0.85	4.51		
Oman	4,718.48	4,711.73	-6.75	▼	-0.14	-7.47		
Lebanon	1,131.34	1,131.34	0.00	-	0.00	-1.50		
Jordan	2,159.74	2,165.12	5.38	▲	0.25	1.55		
Egypt	17,610.87	17,580.30	-30.57	▼	-0.17	17.26		
Morocco	13,038.74	13,033.49	-5.25	▼	-0.04	5.20		
Tunisia	7,143.55	7,154.65	11.10	▲	0.16	13.72		
<b>Global Currencies Exchange Rate</b>								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwaiti Dinar		12.3305	3.3020	2.7701	2.4399	3.3168	360.81	4.3973
Saudi Riyal	0.08110		0.2678	0.2247	0.1979	0.2690	29.26	0.3566
US Dollar	0.30285	3.7343		0.8389	0.7389	1.0045	109.27	1.3317
Euro	0.36100	4.4513	1.1920		0.8810	1.1975	130.26	1.5879
Sterling Pound	0.40985	5.0536	1.3533	1.1351		1.3598	147.89	1.8030
Swiss Franc	0.30149	3.7176	0.9955	0.8351	0.7354		108.80	1.3258
Japanese Yen	0.00277	0.0342	0.0092	0.0077	0.0068	0.0092		0.0122
Australian Dollar	0.22741	2.8041	0.7509	0.6298	0.5546	0.7543	82.05	
<b>MENA Currencies Exchange Rate</b>								
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30285	3.7343	0.3742	3.6270	0.3831	3.6571	17.6300
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3020		12.3305	1.2354	11.9762	1.2651	12.0756	58.2136
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08110		0.1002	0.9713	0.1026	0.9793	4.7211
Bahraini Dinar	2.6727	0.80943	9.9808		9.6940	1.0240	9.7744	47.1201
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08350	1.0296	0.1032		0.1056	1.0083	4.8608
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.79046	9.7468	0.9766	9.4668		9.5453	46.0157
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08281	1.0211	0.1023	0.9918	0.1048		4.8208
Egyptian Pound	0.0567	0.01718	0.2118	0.0212	0.2057	0.0217	0.2074	
<b>Global Interest Rates</b>								
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year			
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.25	1.75	2.00	2.19	2.44			
US Dollar	1.75	1.92	2.36	2.52	2.77			
Euro	-0.42	-0.40	-0.35	-0.31	-0.24			
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.50	0.67	0.77	0.94			
Swiss Franc	-0.79	-0.78	-0.72	-0.64	-0.51			
Australian Dollar	1.65	1.88	1.81	1.82	1.88			
Japanese Yen	-0.04	-0.04	-0.03	0.03	0.12			
<b>Global Bond Yields</b>								
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year				
United States	2.50	2.79	2.96	3.12				
Europe	-0.58	-0.08	0.54	1.22				
United Kingdom	0.77	1.10	1.40	1.82				
<b>Commodities</b>								
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %			
Kuwait Oil	71.37	71.37	0.00	-	0.00	11.07		
Brent	75.76	75.74	-0.02	▼	-0.03	11.46		
West Texas	69.76	69.66	-0.10	▼	-0.14	13.31		
Gold	1314.65	1312.96	-1.69	▼	-0.13	0.92		
Silver	16.49	16.42	-0.06	▼	-0.39	-2.81		



Business

# Workshop discusses importance of strengthening investor relations

## NBK Capital participates in workshop by Boursa Kuwait and MEIRA

**KUWAIT:** The regional asset management team participated in the National Investment Company under the chairmanship of Dr Hussein Shahrour and with the participation of Fahad Al-Yassin, Portfolio Manager and Eithar Al-Rasheed, portfolio analyst, in a workshop to discuss the institutional investment perspective on the importance of investor relations by the Kuwait Stock Exchange and the Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA). The event was attended by companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange and brokerage firms. The importance of investor relations and their impact on the investment situation in the Kuwaiti market has been reviewed in general and highlighted how to apply best practices of investor relations through the local market.

NBK Capital participation in the workshop was held at Bursa's headquarters in order to raise awareness in the market of the importance of building strong relationships with investors and the important role played by these relationships in business strategies, as well as identifying the perspective of institutional investment.

"We are working at NBK Capital to support various awareness initiatives in our belief in its importance and effective role. The role of investor relations is significant in guiding and rationalizing," said Dr Hussein Shahrour, General Manager, Regional Asset Management, NBK Capital.

We are pleased to have fruitful cooperation with the Kuwait Stock Exchange and the Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA) to hold this type of workshop that will generate positive and very positive feedback for us."

"The company has an integrated and innovative strategy to create high value investment opportunities for its investors and to meet their diverse needs. The company has expanded its services to serve its customers by establishing a



**KUWAIT:** Hussein Shahrour, Managing Director - MENA Asset Management, NBK Capital, Fahad Al-Yassin, Manager - MENA Asset Management NBK Capital, Eithar Al-Rasheed, Portfolio Analyst - MENA Asset Management Nbk Capital, Mohammad Abdal - Zain Group Chief Communications Officer and Chairman of MEIRA Kuwait and Dalal Al-Dousari, Assistant General Manager - Investor Relations at Gulf Bank.



**KUWAIT:** Hussein Shahrour, Managing Director - MENA Asset Management, NBK Capital, Fahad Al-Yassin, Manager - MENA Asset Management NBK Capital, Eithar Al-Rasheed, Portfolio Analyst - MENA Asset Management NBK Capital and Dalal Al-Dousari, Assistant General Manager - Investor Relations at Gulf Bank.

new department to manage portfolios that invest in debt instruments and regional bonds," Shahrour added. Shahrour pointed out that ensuring transparency, disclosure and affirmation of corporate governance reduces market risk by equitably distributing all information of interest to investors, increasing liquidity and thus reducing risks. Transparency also improves the business environment by increasing legislation that ensures good governance and governance, Foreign investments, particularly long-term ones.

Eithar Al-Rasheed, Portfolio Analyst at Regional Asset Management, said that by helping investor relations enable investors to have direct access to information affecting investment decisions by looking at all financial and non-financial

information, particularly those affecting stock prices. We also aim to strengthen channels of open dialogue with companies and encourage exchange of information to enable investors and financial analysts to gain insights into the strengths and prospects. Ether said that the scope of investor relations is based on a vision of meeting the highest standards of transparency and reliability, providing access to up-to-date information, and providing comprehensive financial performance information, including quarterly reports, market data, profit statements and presentations to the business and investment community.

She explained that the company's investor relations department is about creating effective communication between them, on the one hand,

and existing and potential investors on the other, in order to provide information services related to their investments, allowing the company to achieve a rational investment decision.

She stressed that communication with investors is a strategic managerial art that combines marketing, communication and knowledge of securities to create an effective two-way communication between the company, the financial community and the public of beneficiaries in order to achieve a fair valuation of the company's shares. Fahad Al-Yassin said that the role of Investor Relations has a number of positive impacts on the company, including the availability of investment research on the company and the public's access to all the information that guides the pricing of the securi-

ties. All these factors increase the flow of institutional investments in the company. And the market. "Institutional investment plays a pivotal role in the global financial markets and plays a pivotal role in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) markets," he added. He pointed to many studies that confirm that the increase in institutional investment has many positive effects, especially at the level of companies and markets in general.

The workshop was attended by representatives of listed companies and brokerage firms from the investor relations departments, financial departments, compliance and compliance officers, corporate governance departments and corporate communication. This event is also unique at the level of the working papers and the presentation.

## Jet Airways celebrates 25 years of the joy of flying

**MUMBAI:** Jet Airways, India's premier full service international airline celebrates the momentous milestone of 25 glorious years of service on the 5th of May 2018.

Credited with transforming the face of Indian aviation, Jet Airways first flight 9W321 took off on the 5th of May 1993 from Mumbai to Ahmedabad, marking its humble journey of 'Connecting India to the World'. From a modest beginning of a fleet of 4 aircraft serving 6 destinations in early 1993 - to its present day fleet of a 119, serving over 450 destinations globally along with its partner airlines; Jet Airways has been privileged to play a modest role in contributing to the growth of the Indian economy by enabling and facilitating passenger and freight businesses pan-India as well as internationally, and as significantly, fostering the growth of trade and tourism across India and the world.

The airline's brand and service philosophy defined personally by its Chairman, Naresh Goyal characterized by warmth, care and personal attention also brought to life the spirit of Indian hospitality. Investing significantly to fulfil its product and service experience, Jet Airways' immaculately trained its frontline employees, helping redefine service profes-

sionalism in the country, creating a culture of talented professionals who have earned the trust of its guests, both on ground as well as in the air. The airline's unique service philosophy also helped it emerge as an iconic Indian brand to create a name for itself on the global arena, providing guests the finest hospitality in the skies.

On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary, Naresh Goyal, Chairman, Jet Airways' Group said, "This day represents an unforgettable milestone and is a mix of emotion and elation for us all. We are both humbled and honored by the overwhelming trust, support and appreciation received from our Guests over the years, as we fondly recall the first steps we took on what has been a truly exciting journey in bringing the Joy of Flying to millions of our Guests. It gives me great pleasure to reaffirm our commitment to them and to our vision of connecting India to the world."

"Our partners also deserve a special mention for their consistent support that has surpassed our expectations. I also acknowledge the unwavering support of the Government towards opening up and promoting Indian aviation, facilitating greater access for travellers everywhere. Finally, I express my deep gratitude to each and every member of the Jet Airways family, without whose untiring efforts, this milestone and our success would not have been possible."

In its Silver Jubilee year, Jet Airways will be celebrating across its global network, on ground and in the air in its endeavor to thank the airlines' family of over 16,000 employees and to convey gracious appreciation to its valued guests for their continued patronage, support and trust.



## Kuwait Towers lights up in support of 'Arab Hope Makers'

**KUWAIT:** The Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) recently hosted an event at Kuwait Towers, as part of a regional campaign to announce the opening of registration in the second round of the Arab Hope Makers initiative; the regional philanthropic initiative which was launched by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

The event was attended by the UAE Ambassador to Kuwait, Rahma Al-Zaabi, as well as a delegation from the Embassy and representatives from TEC. As part of TEC's support of this worthy initiative, the registration announcement was also projected on Kuwait Towers over a period of three days in an effort to encourage people to participate.

Kuwait Towers was selected as one of several landmarks from around the region to host the launch event.

It serves to note that Arab Hope Makers is the largest initiative dedicated to honoring people that launch humanitarian initiatives, projects and programs. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid had announced the launch of the second round of the initiative back in February, following the success of the first round which saw more than 65,000 participants from around the region and honored a slew of individuals and programs, including: Ma'ali Al-Assoussi from Kuwait, The White Helmets from Syria, Mama Maggie from Egypt, Hisham Al Thahabi from Iraq, as well as Italian-Moroccan Nawal Al-Soufi.

## Gulf Bank showcases its WISE investment service at ECHO conference

**KUWAIT:** As part of Gulf Bank's strong commitment to being a leader in the field of blockchain technologies, the Bank showcased its WISE Investment Service at the 2018 East Chain Open Hub (ECHO) Conference, entitled "The Modern Age of Enlightenment", which took place on 2 and 3 May at Al-Shaheed Park in Kuwait City.

Focusing on the state of this cutting-edge technology today and its significance for different industries, the event shed light on relevant regulations and demonstrated how businesses can prepare for the impending blockchain revolution. During the event, Tareq Al-Saleh, Assistant General Manager for Investments at Gulf Bank, discussed financial technology and robo-advisory in the region and elaborated on the impact of blockchain technology on asset management.

"Blockchain technology can help in the elimination of redundant functions, reduce operational expenses, and increase opportunities to enhance the client experience, while also enabling companies to generate a much



clearer client profile. While it is unlikely to replace current systems, it will take on an important complementing role in enabling new infrastructure for markets and products," Al-Saleh said. Al-Saleh also showcased Gulf Bank's WISE Investment Service, a first-of-its-kind investment service in Kuwait launched in September 2017. WISE is an advisory portfolio management service for affluent, high net worth and ultra-high net worth customers, helping them diversify their investments and invest in international markets in an easy, transparent and cost-efficient way. "Gulf Bank's WISE Investment Service offers multiple, tailor-made portfolios based on invest-

ment objectives, length of investment and risk preferences. It allows customers to view their investment portfolio anytime and anywhere, with easy access through secure online and mobile banking. There are no transaction costs and a simple, cost-effective fee structure in one annual management fee," Al-Saleh added.

The ECHO Conference gathered people from around the world to highlight the latest advancements in the field of blockchain technology and discuss opportunities as well as challenges related to its adoption. The event offered participants the unique opportunity to engage in discussions with blockchain enthusiasts from all over the world.

## ABK recognized for innovative Fintech services by the Asian Banker

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK), with its banking technology partner Infosys Finacle, part of EdgeVerve Systems, the product subsidiary of Infosys, has won the prestigious 'Best Core Banking Initiative Application or Programme for Emerging Bank in Middle East' for 2018 at the Asian Banker Financial Technology Innovation Awards. The award was presented at a special ceremony held in Dubai, during the Future of Finance - Middle East and Africa 2018 conference.

The annual awards ceremony celebrates the region's best banking products and services and is widely respected by the banking industry. The award underlines ABK's positive approach towards business innovation and is a validation of the Bank's commitment towards digitization and setting new benchmarks for customer service.

The award was received by senior ABK executives led by Salem Husain CTO and Sridhar Kasisomayajula CIO of ABK, together with Sriranga Sampathkumar, Head of Business - Middle East and Africa, of Infosys Finacle.

Somnath Menon, Group Chief Operating Officer, ABK said: "We are very proud that our commitment to our customers is being acknowledged in this way. During 2017, our investment and successful implementation of a new, industry-leading, Finacle



core banking system has helped us to improve ABK's operational efficiency and allowed us to deliver further service improvements to customers. We are committed to delivering exceptional and seamless, world-class services across all our markets and our integration of new technology is key to achieving this.

Working closely with its banking technology partner, Infosys Finacle, ABK has been able to achieve greater operational efficiencies and accelerated business growth to its customers.

These efforts are in line with ABK's 'Simpler Banking' strategy and its commitment to deliver world-class services, exceed customer expectations and become

one of the leading banks in the region. Speaking on the occasion, Venkat Gosavi, Senior Vice President & Global Head of Sales, Infosys Finacle said: "Digital technology has evolved as a key driver for customer-centric approaches in banking. We designed ABK's core banking programme with the best practices and latest technology available in mind, so that ABK could offer its customers an enhanced safe and secure banking experience. We are delighted to receive this recognition with ABK. This underlines the effectiveness of Finacle's proven solutions in helping clients maximize the returns on their investment, while simultaneously providing the necessary support to drive business growth."



## Technology

# Kenyan herders turn to grazing app to cut drought risks

## Afriscout app uses satellite images to identify surface water

**ARKAMANA, Kenya:** During times of drought, herder Buchu Boru has to walk tens of kilometers in search of pasture for his animals - with no guarantee he will find it. "Somebody tells you by word of mouth that there is pasture but on arriving you don't (find) any," said the 60-year-old, who has had to walk from his home all the way across the Ethiopian border to find grass some years. But next time the rains fail - an increasingly common problem in northern Kenya - he hopes a new mobile phone app will help him move his livestock to fodder without too much cost or waste of time.

The Afriscout app, which uses satellite images to identify where there is grass and surface water, "is better than what we are used to", he said. As climate change brings longer droughts and more unpredictable rainfall, herders often need to travel further and to less-well-known areas to find grass and water for their animals. Technology that reduces the uncertainties associated with the journeys can help protect herds and incomes, making families more resilient to the harsher conditions, experts say.

### Wrong advice

Boru and his neighbors normally rely on

word-of-mouth to determine where to go, or they phone others in the region, or pay a scout to travel on a pasture-seeking mission. But the hunt is time consuming, and sometimes goes wrong. Boru vividly remembers, during a 2016 drought, traveling five days with his cattle, sheep and goats to Ambalo, 80 kilo-

“ There was no pasture. It was dry ”

meters away, where he had heard there was pasture.

But "on arrival at Ambalo, there was no pasture. It was dry. I lost 13 cattle in total, some on the way and others in Ambalo," Boru said. With the app, "we will not be gambling with our livestock," he said. "We will be very sure where the pasture and water is and we will just head there." Afriscout, developed by Project Concern International (PCI), a California-based development organization,

launched in Boru's area in February.

As well as providing detailed grazing maps showing water and grass conditions, herders can contribute information about livestock diseases, predators and conflicts. The app so far has about 3,000 users in Kenya, though PCI hopes to increase that to 4,000 once it finishes mapping Samburu County, home to the Samburu herding community. The app is already used in Tanzania and Ethiopia and PCI plans to deploy it in Niger soon, said Brenda Wandera, the organization's acting representative in Kenya.

Twenty kilometers north of Boru's village of Arkamana lies Kukub, where Liban Waqo lives with his 40 cattle, 30 goats and a dozen camels. The 57-year-old complains that drought is becoming more frequent and severe in his area. "We have tried digging boreholes, some even 290 meters deep, but we were not successful. Fifteen boreholes have been dug but we found water in only one," he said. Now he has installed the PCI app on his phone and hopes that it will come in handy when the next dry season starts.

### Few phones

The new app faces a few challenges, including limited mobile phone connectivity in some areas, and broad use of durable old-style mobile phones rather than more fragile smart phones. So far, few herders in the region own



ARKAMANA, Kenya: Herder Buchu Boru and Afriscout marketer Abdikadir Halkane look at the Afriscout phone application in Arkamana village, Marsabit County.—Reuters

smart phones - but that may change if they find the app useful, said Andrew Mude of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

"We have seen evidence of pastoralists accessing smartphones when they recognize the value it delivers," said Mude who helped

pioneer the use of satellite imagery to trigger insurance payouts for herders when forage is scarce. Mude says the app could be improved by including a broader range of information - including data about the market price of livestock.—Reuters

## 'Game-changer' phone app aims to end child marriage in Bangladesh

**LONDON:** A new phone app could be a "game-changer" in the fight against child marriage in Bangladesh, where more than half of all girls are married before they are 18, children's charity Plan International said yesterday. The impoverished South Asian nation has one of the world's highest rates of child marriage, according to UNICEF, despite laws that ban girls under 18 and men under 21 from marrying.

The mobile app being rolled out by Plan and the Bangladesh government aims to prevent it by allowing matchmakers, priests and officers who register marriages to verify the bride and groom's ages through a digital database. "If we could get the people involved in the initial stages of marriage on side as well, then there would be no one to solemnize, no one to register and no one to arrange a marriage for a child," said Soumya Guha, a director at Plan Bangladesh.

"The app could be the game-changer that we need," he said, adding that it stopped 3,750 underage marriages during a six-month trial. Campaigners say girls who marry young often drop out of school and face a greater risk of rape, domestic abuse and forced pregnancies, which may put their lives in danger. The app, which has an offline text messaging version for rural areas, gives the user access to a database that stores a unique identification number linked to the three documents.

When one of the numbers is entered, it shows "proceed" if the person is of legal age and a red "warning!" if not. All marriages in Bangladesh must be legally registered within 30 days of the ceremony, but many are not. A hard copy of a birth certificate, school leaving document or national identity card works as age proof, but often parents who want to marry off their children often forge them. The charity is training 100,000 officiants about the ill effects of child marriage and how to use the app, which it hopes to roll out nationally by August. "I believe this app will help us achieve the commitment by our honorable prime minister to eliminate child marriage before 2041," Muhammad Abdul Halim, a director general at the prime minister's office, said.—Reuters

## Cloud computing, artificial intelligence on Microsoft agenda

**SEATTLE:** Microsoft's annual Build conference for software developers kicks off on Monday, giving the company an opportunity to offer updates on its computing platforms and services. The three-day event in Seattle features sessions on cloud computing, artificial intelligence, internet-connected devices and virtual reality. It comes as Microsoft faces off with Amazon and Google to offer internet-connected services to businesses and organizations.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella spoke yesterday to more than 6,000 people, mostly developers who build apps for Microsoft's products. Facebook had its F8 developers' gathering last week. Google's I/O conference begins today. Apple's takes place in early June. This is the second year in a row that Microsoft has held its conference in Seattle, not far from its Redmond, Washington headquarters.—AP



WASHINGTON: This file photo shows Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella speaking at the annual Microsoft shareholders meeting in Bellevue, Washington.—AP

## New camera king Huawei P20 Pro powered by AI

Every year, smartphone cameras become more capable, more skillful and more professional: bigger sensors, more megapixels, wider apertures, better quality. Some of them are so advanced that the most amateur of photographers can snap like a pro. 2018 is the year of smartphone cameras, and in today's smartphone war, smartphone manufacturers have gone all in on their camera capabilities. However, one smartphone has stood out from the crowd: the HUAWEI P20 Pro, with the world's first triple camera co-engineered with Leica and powered by Artificial Intelligence. But most of all, it has achieved what is still a distant possibility for other manufacturers: superb low-light photography. The 'game changer' of the smartphone camera industry and a new smartphone camera king is born. How did Huawei P20 Pro make this happen?

### 40MP Leica triple camera

Huawei's flagship Huawei P Series devices are known for their design, cutting-edge technology and best-in-class camera. Continuing this illustrious tradition, the new HUAWEI P20 Pro fuses art with advanced mobile technology to offer a revolutionary, professional photography experience. The Huawei P20 Pro is the first smartphone on the market to offer a triple camera including a 40MP telephoto sensor (f/1.8), a 20MP monochrome sensor (f/1.6) for depth and texture, and a standard 8MP image sensor (f/2.4). The latter has Optical Image Stabilization (OIS), while the first two sport Artificial Intelligence Stabilization (AIS).

All three sensors are co-engineered by German optics giant Leica. Each sensor has a specific role. The 40MP sensor captures the colors in the scene, the 20MP mono-

## How to pick a new password, now that Twitter wants one

**NEW YORK:** Yet another service is asking you to change your password. Twitter said Thursday it discovered a bug that stored passwords in an internal log in plain text, without the usual encryption. Though Twitter says there's no indication that anyone has stolen or misused those passwords, the company is recommending a change as a precaution. Here are some tips on coming up with a new password and safeguarding your account - even if your password is compromised.

### Complexity counts

Don't even think of using "password" as your password. Picking any common word as your password should be avoided because it's easily guessed using software that tries out every word in the dictionary. However, you can get a good password by combining two or more words, such as "rocketcalendar." Sprinkle in some numerals and punctuation marks, and make some of those letters in caps, and you've got a strong password.

So "rocketcalendar" becomes "rocket44!calendar." (But don't use that one; the fact that it's in this article means hackers probably already have it in their databases.) Some services will even require your passwords to have certain characteristics. As you type a new password on Twitter, the service will tell you whether it's "Too Obvious" or "Weak." Go for "Very Strong."

### Keep passwords fresh

Each service should have its own



chrome sensor captures more detail, as well as texture and depth for a bokeh effect (if required), and the 8MP sensor is used for zooming. With the HUAWEI P20 Pro's revolutionary Leica triple camera, Huawei is once again raising the bar for smartphone photography. It boasts a record high DxOMark score of 109 points, scoring 114 for photo and 98 for video.

### Artificial Intelligence

Huawei has invested a lot to develop the Mate Series that debuted with the AI engine. The phone now recognizes 19 scenes and objects and adjusts the settings automatically to give you the best picture. The HUAWEI P20 Pro provides an AI-powered camera experience that intelligently assists users to take great photos by automatically optimizing the camera settings on the backend.

### Low-light photography champion

To shoot a proper photo in low-light conditions using a professional camera requires a keen eye and sometimes even tools such as a tripod. While smartphone cameras struggle with low-light photography, the HUAWEI P20 Pro comes to defy the norms. By packing hardware features such as large sensors and wide aperture lenses into



the stylish, compact Huawei P20 Pro aims to lower the entry barrier for high quality photos, so anyone can capture professional-looking images.

The Huawei P20 Pro delivers better detail and less noise, making it the smartphone of choice for any kind of photo or video shooting in low-light. The size of the aperture regulates how much light goes into the image sensor. The Huawei P20 Pro is equipped with f/1.8, f/1.6 and f/2.4 wide aperture Leica lenses, allowing more light to strike the sensor, and therefore, the brighter and clearer the image, even in low-light environments.

If you're looking for the best camera smartphone existing in the market, then the HUAWEI P20 Pro should be your number one choice. Its advanced technology and unbelievable capabilities will definitely make you leave your DSLR at home. The Huawei P20 Pro is available in Black, Blue and Twilight colors at a price of KWD 239,900 across Kuwait retail shops.

## China's ZTE seeks end to ban on buying American technology

**HONG KONG:** Chinese technology company ZTE says it has applied to the US Commerce Department asking it to suspend a seven-year ban on it doing business with US technology exporters. The company said in a statement late Sunday that it had "formally submitted" a request to the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security for a "stay of the Denial Order." It said it sent the bureau "supplemental information" following the ban. It gave no details in its brief statement.

ZTE Corp., which makes smartphones and telecoms equipment, was hit with the ban last month in a case involving exports of telecom gear to Iran and North Korea. The company has said that the ban threatens its existence by cutting off access to US suppliers of key components like microchips.

The suspension came amid worsening trade tensions between the US and China centered on technology-related intellectual property, though the case dates back to before President Donald Trump took office in January 2017. US officials met last week in Beijing to discuss trade issues with their Chinese counterparts.

During the meetings, Chinese officials said they also raised their objections to ZTE's punishment with the US delegation, who they said agreed to report them to Trump. US authorities imposed the penalty after discovering that Shenzhen-based ZTE, which had paid a \$1.2 billion fine in the case, had failed to discipline employees involved and paid them bonuses instead.—AP



HUBEI: In this file photo, a salesperson stands at counters selling mobile phones produced by ZTE Corp. at an appliance store in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.—AP



Health

# Artificial limbs give hope to Boko Haram amputees

## ICRC sets up limb-fitting workshop at Kano hospital

**KANO, Nigeria:** Njidda Maidugu breaks into a broad smile as he wobbles on his artificial leg with the support of crutches as a nurse walks alongside, helping him to keep his balance. Maidugu, 35, never thought he would walk on two legs again after he lost his right limb in a Boko Haram suicide bomb attack at a checkpoint in Maiduguri, northeast Nigeria, in 2016. "It feels like a miracle to walk with two legs again, I'm happy," the fuel station attendant said at the National Orthopaedic Hospital in the northern city of Kano.

"These are my first steps on two legs in two years and I feel like a toddler learning to walk," he added, looking down at his new plastic leg outside a prosthetics workshop. Maidugu was one of about 130 people who lost limbs in Boko Haram attacks and have been fitted with free artificial replacements in a project run by the International Committee of the Red Cross. The ICRC set up the limb-fitting workshop at the hospital in August 2016 to provide prosthetics to amputees from the three northeastern states worst hit by the Islamist insurgency.

The jihadist violence, now in its ninth year, has killed at least 20,000 people and left thousands of others with life-changing injuries. "Half of the 262 patients we have fitted with prosthetics are (Boko Haram) war victims," said the head of the project, Jacques Forget. "The primary focus of the project is to cater for amputees from the conflict, women and children."

### Bombs and bullets

The Boko Haram conflict has destroyed the livelihoods of millions of people in a region that was already desperately poor even before the violence began. Most of the population in northeast Nigeria live on less than \$2 a day. That makes prosthetic limbs—which cost on average nearly \$700 (585 euros) — prohibitively expensive. As well as those injured by the bombs and bullets of Boko Haram, other beneficiaries include diabetics, victims of car crashes and industrial accidents. Babagana Habu, for example, hopped around with the help of a stick for 13 years after losing a leg in an accident with a grinding machine, until he heard about the project. "My parents were too poor to get me crutches to walk with," said the 25-year-old recharge card vendor,

from Damaturu, the capital of Yobe state. Most of the cases from the Islamist insurgency have been wounded by gunshots or improvised explosive devices, said Forget.

"Not many mines are used in the conflict, unlike in many conflict areas I have worked in," said Forget who has worked on artificial limbs for almost 50 years. Amputees are first assessed in the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, where the ICRC runs a medical clinic that caters specifically for victims of Boko Haram attacks. The clinic complements services provided by a handful of state-run hospitals in the city which has been overstretched by the sharp rise in emergency cases from the jihadist violence.

The conflict has seen an exodus of doctors and other health service personnel from Maiduguri, leaving a huge gap that other medical charities, are working to fill. The University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH), which treats the bulk of trauma patients, has only one consultant orthopedic surgeon. Once potential beneficiaries of artificial limbs are screened, they are then sent for a fitting in Kano, nearly 600 kilometers away.

### Huge demand

Forget works on an average of five amputees a week, which is just a fraction of the number of those seeking his services. "There is a massive number of people who need limbs and we would be flooded if we opened our doors to everyone of them," he said, surveying the stump from Maidugu's atrophied thigh. Maidugu heard about the free prosthetics project from a friend who convinced him to try his "luck" despite initial doubts.

With five staff, the workshop struggles to meet deadlines to allow patients to return home within a week. "It is a huge problem compounded by the conflict," said Forget. Despite setting up another limb workshop at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, in the town of Shika, in neighboring Kaduna state, the demand keeps increasing.

The ICRC plans to open a similar workshop in Maiduguri with construction work expected to start this year in its effort to meet the huge prosthetic demand. "We are trying to give them a sense of normality, we give them a little quality of life," said Forget.—AFP



**KANO, Nigeria:** A technician looks at unfinished artificial leg in the ICRC workshop inside the Dala National Orthopaedic Hospital.—AFP

“ It feels like a miracle to walk ”

## Toddler eaten by leopard in Uganda's national park

**KAMPALA:** Ugandan authorities were yesterday hunting for a leopard that snatched and ate the three-year-old son of a female ranger working in the popular Queen Elizabeth National Park. The boy had been left in the care

of a nanny at the unfenced staff quarters of a safari lodge in the park, when he was taken by the leopard on Friday night. Wildlife authority spokesman Bashir Hangi said the child had followed the nanny outdoors.

"The maid was not aware the child followed her. She heard the kid scream for help, she intervened but it was too late the leopard had vanished with it in the bush and a search was mounted until we got the skull the next day," he said. "The hunt is on with the intention of capturing the leopard and removing it from the wild because once it has eaten human flesh, the temptations are high to eat another human being, it becomes dangerous," he added.—AFP

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PAGE

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

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## What's On



# Turkish Airlines holds 7th annual travel agencies awards ceremony

The Turkish Airlines Office in Kuwait, recently held the 7th Annual Travel Agencies Awards ceremony honoring the dedication of their support and contribution to the growing demand for the national carrier of Turkey records an impressive growth of 45% in passenger traffic throughout 2017. The robust performance reiterates the brand's successful business model and resilience to market fluctuations.

Held for the seventh consecutive year, the annual gala dinner event was held at JW Marriott Hotel in Kuwait City amongst local dignitaries, corporate partners, employees, media and other key stakeholders. Fourteen travel agencies received plaques of appreciation for their substantial efforts in boosting passenger traffic from Kuwait across the airline's 302 worldwide destinations. Agencies were awarded on four different categories - 'Total Sales', 'Best Beyond Business Class Sales', 'Best Beyond Economy Sales' and 'Highest Sales Increase'.

Displaying outstanding performance, ten agencies received plaques of appreciation for 'Total Sales' where in Al Deera Travel agency ranked first place. Jumbo Travel agency ranked second and Eternity travel agency came in third place. 'Best beyond Business Class Sales' award was presented to Boodai Aviation and 'Highest Sales Increase' award was bagged by Kuwait Star Travels who ranked first followed by ITL Travels coming



in second place. Al Deera Travel agency was recognized again under the 'Best Beyond Economy Sales'.

Mr Sami Aydogan, General Manager for Turkish Airlines in Kuwait, said: "Turkish Airlines has become a leading choice for both business and leisure travelers from Kuwait and we continue to exceed customer expectations, strengthen our network and steadily grow our market share locally. Travel agencies are an

important partner for us and we come together every year to honor their contribution and celebrate our joint successes. This is also a fantastic opportunity to solidify our ties as we start yet another year of fruitful partnerships."

Owing to the significant increase in passengers from Kuwait on Turkish Airlines, there are now four flights daily from Kuwait City to Istanbul connecting Kuwaitis

to more countries than any other airline with 302 destinations across 121 countries. In 2018 alone, Turkish Airlines has inaugurated 3 new destinations to their flight network: Aqaba in Jordan, Freetown in Sierra Leone and Samarkand in Uzbekistan and is soon restarting direct flights to multiple sought-after destinations in Turkey including Izmir, Bodrum, Trabzon, Antalya and Samsun.

## UAE minister to debate findings from Arab Youth Survey

UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation and Director General, Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau, Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy and other leading experts will debate key findings from the 10th annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey that will be unveiled at the Armani Hotel, Dubai, on May 8, 2018.

In addition to Her Excellency, the high-profile panel will comprise of Dalia Khorshid, Former Investment Minister of Egypt; Turki bin Abdullah Aldakhil, General Manager of Al Arabiya News Channel; and Prof Tom Fletcher, CMG, Visiting Professor of International Relations at NYUAD and Visiting Professor and Special Advisor at the Emirates Diplomatic Academy. The panel will be moderated by Nadine Hani, Senior Business News Presenter, Al Arabiya News Channel.

Sunil John, Founder of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller and President of Middle East Bursan Cohn & Wolfe, said: "We're delighted to be hosting such a high caliber panel at



Reem Al Hashimy



Dalia Khorshid



Nadine Hani



Turki bin Abdullah Aldakhil



Tom Fletcher

this year's Arab Youth Survey and we anticipate a thought-provoking debate to follow the unveiling of the findings. The milestone 10th edition promises to be more insightful than ever as we look at how the events and developments from the past decade have impacted young people across the region and get a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

"The Arab Youth Survey is much more than just data, it is a platform for young Arabs to have their voices heard around the world. It reveals the hopes, aspirations and fears of the people who will shape the region's future. It

provides governments and businesses with actionable insights to make more relevant and effective decisions during times of great change."

Before the debate, the findings of the Survey will be unveiled by Sunil John and Curtis Freet, CEO, PSB Research. The event will be live streamed across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and at [www.arabyouthsurvey.com](http://www.arabyouthsurvey.com), where the results of this year's Survey will be made immediately accessible to governments, businesses, academics, media and the public.

The ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey is

the largest survey of its kind of the Middle East's largest demographic - its youth.

For the 10th annual survey, international polling firm PSB Research conducted 3,500 face-to-face interviews with men and women aged 18-24 in 16 Arab states, between January 21 and February 20, 2018. This year's findings, marking 10 years of the Arab Youth Survey, shed light on young people's attitudes on the past decade, which has encompassed the global financial crisis, the Arab Spring, the rise of Daesh (ISIS) and a fall in global oil prices, as well as their aspirations for the next 10 years.

## Oncost Cash & Carry announces Shuwaikh 'Mega Draw' winners

Oncost Cash & Carry, the first wholesale membership retail store in Kuwait, where members are offered products at wholesale prices in a retail environment, launched a 'Mega Draw' promotion to celebrate the opening of its first in Shuwaikh, and its largest and fourth branch in the country. The promotion, which was limited exclusively to the new Shuwaikh branch, ran from April 11 to 25, 2018.

During the promotional period, for every KD 10 purchase, customers received one coupon, which entered them into the Mega Draw. The winners of the draw received a host of fantastic prizes, with the first place winner Aliasger Juzar Daliwala received a cash prize of KD 1,000, while the second, third and fourth place winners, Kanakamahlakshimi

Nakka, Eifania Balanay Castillo and Maryam Fadel Al Handalare respectively became proud owners of a new iPhone X. The fifth place winner Mahmoud Abdulaziz Sharaf Aldeen won an Oncost gift voucher worth KD 100.

Oncost's Shuwaikh branch offers customers the benefits of wholesale shopping in a modern retail environment that prioritizes convenience and top-notch services, while ensuring significantly discounted prices to its customers. Oncost's pricing policy has been constructed to focus on competitive pricing by the unit and wholesale prices by the pack or carton, to pass on substantial savings to its loyal customer base. Moreover, there are the added benefits of weekly promotions that see customers shopping for household staples with great savings.



## Score Plus Kuwait Learning marks its 10th anniversary

Score Plus Kuwait Learning Center celebrated its 10 years of academic excellence in Kuwait with educational partners The Princeton Review, USA and Inlingua Language School, Switzerland. On this occasion, Michael Gamel, Vice President of The Princeton Review, USA, gave a seminar titled 'School Counselor's Tool Kit for International Applicants' on April 18, 2018. This seminar was designed to address common complex areas in advising students and parents for higher education abroad in the USA and UK and admissions tests such as SAT/ACT or IELTS/TOEFL/PTE.

This unique professional development and networking opportunity for school administrators was brought by Score Plus Kuwait Learning Center, in collaboration with The Princeton Review, USA and the Commercial Services division of the US Embassy in Kuwait, and co-hosted by the American University of Kuwait.

The welcome speech was given by Ritu Kalwani, Executive Director of Score Plus Middle East and India, alumnus of Babson College, Boston, USA and Maher Dabbouseh,

Director Of Undergraduate Admissions at American University of Kuwait. Michael Gamel and Andrea Al Adwani, Counseling Department Coordinator at Universal American School, gave an insightful presentation on how to decide best fit college and design a suitable career.

Keynote speaker Michael Gamel gave an engaging presentation and provided excellent insight into US College admissions committees' decision-making processes with role-play activity-based exercises, which gave high

school counselors the opportunity to assume the role of Admissions Officers.

A panel of US and UK experts on admissions and application process, comprising Carine Nassrallah, Education USA Adviser of the US Embassy in Kuwait, gave an insightful presentation on managing application components, such as essays and recommendation letters, and spoke about EducationUSA services. Dr Clifford Cheung, British School of Kuwait Sixth Form Coordinator, and Alan Smith, Assistant Head Teacher of Sixth Form at New English School, discussed the procedure for admission in universities of UK and components of university and college applications.

The seminar was a resounding success and was met with positive reviews from 20 counselors from 17 schools that participated. Dr Clifford said, "The counselor forum was a useful and informative event, where the speakers provided insightful advice on the university admissions landscapes in the US and UK, and also the management of applications through the Common Application and UCAS platforms respectively. I look forward to next year's forum."

The forum ended with a certificate-awarding ceremony and cutting of 10th anniversary cake. Overall, counselors came away from the event with their questions answered, and with a strong understanding of the college admissions decision making process for USA & UK destinations.





TV

AM MOVIES ACTION
01:20 Kung Fu Yoga
03:15 Street Fighter
05:00 Bad Company
07:00 Kung Fu Yoga
08:55 Street Fighter
10:45 San Andreas Quake
12:15 Bad Company
14:20 I Am Wrath
16:00 Lost & Found
17:40 Captain America: The Winter Soldier
20:00 Entrapment
22:00 Under Siege
23:50 REC 2

ANIMAL PLANET HD
00:45 Rugged Justice
01:40 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
02:35 Shamwari: A Wild Life
03:00 Shamwari: A Wild Life
03:25 Expedition Mungo
04:15 Shark Attack File
05:02 Wildest Middle East
05:49 Lone Star Law
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 Shamwari: A Wild Life
07:50 Shamwari: A Wild Life
08:15 Rugged Justice
09:10 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
10:05 Wildest Middle East
11:00 Shamwari: A Wild Life
11:28 Shamwari: A Wild Life
11:55 Expedition Mungo
12:50 Shark Attack File
13:45 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
14:40 Wildest Middle East
15:35 Lone Star Law
16:30 Rugged Justice
17:25 Pit Bulls & Parolees
18:20 Animal Cries
19:15 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
20:10 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
20:38 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
21:05 Pit Bulls & Parolees
22:00 Animal Cries
22:55 Wildest Middle East
23:50 Lone Star Law

BBC FIRST
00:25 Cold Feet
01:15 Prime Suspect: Tennis
02:05 The Level
02:55 Death In Paradise
03:50 Doctors
04:20 Father Brown
05:05 Call The Midwife
06:00 Casually
06:55 Father Brown
07:45 Doctors
08:15 Doctors
08:45 Last Tango In Halifax
09:40 Casually
10:35 Death In Paradise
11:35 The Corner
12:25 Last Tango In Halifax
13:25 Casually
14:20 Casually
15:15 Death In Paradise
16:10 The Corner
17:00 Last Tango In Halifax
18:00 Holly City
19:00 Death In Paradise
20:00 Prime Suspect: Tennis
20:50 The Durrells
21:40 Death In Paradise
22:35 Holly City
23:30 Prime Suspect: Tennis

crime & investigation network
00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
01:00 It Takes A Killer
01:30 It Takes A Killer
01:55 Britain's Darkest Taboos
02:50 Crimes That Shook Australia
03:45 Crimes That Shook Britain
04:30 It Takes A Killer
04:55 It Takes A Killer
05:15 The First 48
06:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
07:00 It Takes A Killer
07:20 Cold Case Files
08:05 Homicide Hunter
08:50 The First 48
09:35 Crimes That Shook Australia
10:30 Evil Up Close
11:25 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:15 Cold Case Files
14:10 Homicide Hunter
15:05 The First 48
16:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
17:00 It Takes A Killer
17:30 It Takes A Killer
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 It Takes A Killer
19:30 It Takes A Killer
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Evil Up Close
22:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
23:00 American Ripper In London

COMEDY CENTRAL
00:05 Teachers
00:30 DL Hugley: Shocked And Appalled
01:20 Inside Amy Schumer
01:45 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail
02:10 South Park
02:35 Tosh.O
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Tosh.O
03:50 South Park
04:15 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail
04:40 Brotherhood
05:05 Frankford
05:30 Disaster Date
05:55 Ridiculousness Arabia
06:20 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvage
06:50 Life Or Debt
07:40 Lip Sync Battle
08:05 Brotherhood
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Workaholics
09:20 Ridiculousness Arabia
09:45 Lip Sync Battle
10:10 Frankford
10:35 Friends
11:00 Key And Peele
11:25 Disaster Date
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:15 Friendszone
12:40 Brotherhood
13:05 Friends
13:30 Friends
13:55 Ridiculousness Arabia
14:20 Workaholics
14:45 Disaster Date
15:10 Friends
15:35 Lip Sync Battle
16:00 Key And Peele
16:30 Friendszone
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Life Or Debt

Discovery Family
19:00 Friends
19:25 Friendszone
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
22:00 This Is Not Happening
22:25 Workaholics
22:50 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family
00:05 Ali-As Superchargers
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds
01:20 How It's Made
01:45 How It's Made
02:10 Must Love Cats
03:00 Tanked
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 Finding Bigfoot
05:30 Ali-As Superchargers
05:55 Ali-As Superchargers
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds
07:25 Destroyed In Seconds
07:50 Must Love Cats
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Tanked
10:20 Ultimate Survival
11:10 Destroyed In Seconds
11:35 Destroyed In Seconds
12:00 How It's Made
12:25 How It's Made
12:50 Cliptastic
13:15 Cliptastic
13:40 Fail Army
14:05 Fail Army
14:30 Must Love Cats
15:20 How It's Made
15:45 How It's Made
16:10 Ultimate Survival
17:00 Must Love Cats
17:50 Tanked
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 Cliptastic
20:20 Fail Army
20:45 Fail Army
21:10 How It's Made
21:35 How It's Made
22:00 Ultimate Survival
22:50 Cliptastic
23:15 Cliptastic
23:40 Fail Army

ID
00:45 A Crime To Remember
01:40 Bride Killers
02:35 Betrayed
03:30 Blood In The Sand: People Magazine Investigates
04:25 Nightmare Next Door
05:20 I Almost Got Away With It
06:10 Gone
07:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
07:25 I Am Homicide
08:15 Nightmare Next Door
09:10 Gone
10:05 Betrayed
11:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
11:55 I Am Homicide
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
13:45 Gone
14:40 Betrayed
15:35 Gone
16:30 I Am Homicide
17:25 Nightmare Next Door
18:20 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 Gone
20:10 Betrayed
21:05 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
22:00 An American Murder Mystery: The Staircase
22:55 Baby Vanished: People Magazine Investigates
23:50 Betrayed

Disney HD
00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
00:50 Evermore Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Kitty Is Not A Cat
06:25 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:50 Tangled: The Series
07:20 Stuck In The Middle
07:45 K.C. Undercover
08:10 Bunk'd
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:25 Lolo
09:50 Lolo
10:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
10:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
11:05 Hank Zipzer
11:30 Alex & Co.
11:55 Alex & Co.
12:20 Lolo
12:45 Lolo
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
13:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
14:00 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
14:15 Bunk'd
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:10 Kitty Is Not A Cat
15:35 Elena Of Avalor
16:00 Tangled: The Series
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:50 Bizaardvark
17:15 Stuck In The Middle
17:40 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
18:05 K.C. Undercover
18:30 Bunk'd
18:55 Descendants Wicked World
19:00 Raven's Home
19:25 Liv And Maddie
19:50 Jessie
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
20:20 Tangled: The Series
20:45 Bizaardvark

Disney Junior
21:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
21:35 Stuck In The Middle
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:50 Lolo
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

Discovery Channel
00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks
00:55 Trulli Tales
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 The Hive
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdidoo
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Henry Hugglemonster
06:15 Calimero
06:30 PJ Masks
07:00 Trulli Tales
07:30 Jungle Junction
07:50 Handy Manny
08:10 PJ Masks
08:30 Vampirina
09:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
09:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
10:00 Trulli Tales
10:30 Puppy Dog Pals
11:00 Doc McStuffins
11:30 The Lion Guard
12:00 Sofia The First
13:00 PJ Masks
13:30 PJ Masks
14:00 Vampirina
14:15 Vampirina
14:30 Vampirina
15:30 Sofia The First
16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
16:30 Trulli Tales
17:00 Vampirina
17:30 PJ Masks
18:00 Sofia The First
18:30 Puppy Dog Pals
19:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Vampirina
20:30 PJ Masks
21:00 Trulli Tales
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 P-King Duckling
22:30 Puppy Dog Pals
23:00 Miles From Tomorrow
23:30 PJ Masks

Discovery Channel
00:15 Deadliest Catch
01:05 Impossible Engineering
01:50 Flipping Ships
02:35 What On Earth?
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Alaskan Bush People
04:50 Kindig Customs
05:35 Storage Hunters
06:00 The Liquidator
06:23 Property Wars
06:45 Storage Hunters
07:10 Storage Wars Canada
07:35 Alaskan Bush People
08:20 The Liquidator
08:45 Property Wars
09:10 Kindig Customs
09:55 Impossible Engineering
10:45 Flipping Ships
11:30 What On Earth?
12:20 The Liquidator
13:05 Storage Hunters
13:30 Storage Wars Canada
13:55 Kindig Customs
14:40 Deadliest Catch
15:30 Impossible Engineering
16:15 Flipping Ships
17:05 What On Earth?
17:50 Alaskan Bush People
18:40 Kindig Customs
19:25 Deadliest Catch
20:15 Hot Grease
21:00 Invisible Killers
21:50 Kidnap And Rescue
23:30 Alaskan Bush People

Discovery Channel
06:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
06:25 Lab Rats
06:50 Phineas & Ferb
07:05 DuckTales
07:32 Phineas And Ferb
08:00 Milo Murphy's Law
08:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
08:30 Phineas And Ferb
08:55 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
09:45 Phineas And Ferb
10:00 Kid vs. Kat
10:25 Kid vs. Kat
10:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
10:55 Marvel's Ant-Man
11:00 Counterfeit Cat
11:30 Randy Cunningham: 9th Grade Ninja
12:20 Gravity Falls
12:45 Milo Murphy's Law
13:00 Lab Rats
13:25 Lab Rats
13:50 Mech-X4
14:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
14:40 Milo Murphy's Law
15:05 Supa Strikas
15:32 Lab Rats
16:00 DuckTales
16:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
16:32 Big Hero 6 The Series
16:55 Two More Eggs
17:00 Milo Murphy's Law
17:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
17:32 Gravity Falls
18:00 Mech-X4
18:25 Lab Rats Elite Force
18:50 Walk The Prank
19:15 Phineas And Ferb
19:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
20:00 DuckTales
20:32 Big Hero 6 The Series
21:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
21:25 Star Wars Rebels
21:50 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:55 Two More Eggs
22:00 Phineas And Ferb
22:25 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am

ITV CHOICE
00:10 Alphabetical
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 Britain's Brightest Family
03:50 Britain's Brightest Family
04:20 Shetland
05:20 Alphabetical
06:15 Guess This House
07:10 The Chase
08:05 Britain's Brightest Family
08:30 Britain's Brightest Family
09:00 Shetland
10:00 Alphabetical
11:00 Guess This House
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Guess This House
15:10 The Chase
16:00 Murdoch Mysteries
16:55 Murdoch Mysteries
17:50 Alphabetical
18:50 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 Murdoch Mysteries
21:55 Murdoch Mysteries
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street

NAT GEO WILD HD
00:20 Incredible Fangs
01:10 Animal Fight Club
02:00 Man-Eater Of The Congo
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Wild Case Files
04:40 Jobs That Bite!
05:35 Man-Eater Of The Congo
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Wild Case Files
08:20 Jobs That Bite!
09:15 World's Deadliest Compilations
10:10 Savage Kingdom
11:05 America The Beautiful
12:00 When Sharks Attack
12:55 Hyena Coast
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Extreme Animals
15:40 Jobs That Bite!
16:35 World's Deadliest Compilations
17:30 Savage Kingdom
18:25 South Africa
19:20 Extreme Animals
20:10 Jobs That Bite!
21:00 World's Deadliest Compilations
21:50 Savage Kingdom
22:40 South Africa
23:30 When Sharks Attack

NICK HD
00:20 Milwaukee Blacksmith
00:45 Pawn Stars
01:10 American Pickers
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters
03:40 James Nesbitt: Disasters That Changed Britain
04:30 Milwaukee Blacksmith
04:55 Pawn Stars
05:20 American Pickers
06:00 Swamp People
06:50 Milwaukee Blacksmith
07:15 Pawn Stars
07:40 WW2 Treasure Hunters
08:30 James Nesbitt: Disasters That Changed Britain
09:20 Swamp People
10:10 Time Team
11:00 Milwaukee Blacksmith
11:25 Pawn Stars
11:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters
12:40 James Nesbitt: Disasters That Changed Britain
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18:30 Swamp People
19:20 Milwaukee Blacksmith
19:45 Pawn Stars
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Who Killed Tupac?
21:50 Battle 360
22:40 Milwaukee Blacksmith
23:05 Pawn Stars
23:30 Swamp People

NICK JR.
00:05 Max & Ruby
00:28 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:39 Kiva Can Do!
00:50 The Day Henry Met
00:55 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:40 Paw Patrol
01:52 Kid-E-Cats
01:57 Shimmer And Shine
02:03 Nella The Princess Knight
02:37 Paw Patrol
03:00 Max & Ruby

NAT GEO PEOPLE HD
00:15 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
00:45 What's For Sale?
01:10 One Man & His Campervan
01:40 Glamour Puds
02:05 Glamour Puds
02:35 Restoration Man
03:30 David Rocco's Dolce India
03:55 Migue's Feasts
04:25 Places We Go
04:50 Carnival Eats
05:20 United Plates Of America
05:45 United Plates Of America
06:15 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
07:10 Glamour Puds
07:35 Glamour Puds
08:05 Restoration Man
09:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
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01:57 Shimmer And Shine
02:03 Nella The Princess Knight
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03:00 Max & Ruby

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD
00:10 Chef On The Road
01:00 Mega Food
02:00 Mega Factories
03:00 Car SOS
04:00 Chef On The Road
05:00 Python Hunters
06:00 Innovation Nation
06:30 Innovation Nation
07:00 Genius
08:00 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey
09:00 Python Hunters
10:00 Yukon Gold
11:00 Wicked Tuna
12:00 Air Crash Investigation
13:00 Innovation Nation
13:50 Innovation Nation
14:00 Desperate Hours
14:30 Desperate Hours
15:00 Genius
16:00 Yukon Gold
17:00 Wicked Tuna
18:00 Air Crash Investigation
19:00 Genius
20:00 Yukon Gold
20:50 Wicked Tuna
21:40 Air Crash Investigation
22:30 Genius
23:20 Desperate Hours
23:45 Desperate Hours

NAT GEO WILD HD
00:20 Incredible Fangs
01:10 Animal Fight Club
02:00 Man-Eater Of The Congo
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Wild Case Files
04:40 Jobs That Bite!
05:35 Man-Eater Of The Congo
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Wild Case Files
08:20 Jobs That Bite!
09:15 World's Deadliest Compilations
10:10 Savage Kingdom
11:05 America The Beautiful
12:00 When Sharks Attack
12:55 Hyena Coast
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Extreme Animals
15:40 Jobs That Bite!
16:35 World's Deadliest Compilations
17:30 Savage Kingdom
18:25 South Africa
19:20 Extreme Animals
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23:30 When Sharks Attack

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NICK HD
00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Babbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 Rabbids Invasion
04:12 Rabbids Invasion
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 The Loud House
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
06:36 Harvey Beaks
07:00 Breadwinners
07:24 Breadwinners
07:48 Sanjay And Craig
08:12 Rabbids Invasion
08:36 The Loud House
09:00 Regal Academy
09:24 Winx Club
09:48 Hunter Street
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 School Of Rock
11:00 Henry Danger
11:24 The Thundermans
11:48 I Am Frankie
12:12 Rank The Prank
12:36 Massive Monster Mayhem
13:00 Hunter Street
13:24 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn
13:48 Toon Marty
14:00 Toon Marty
14:12 Harvey Beaks
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02:37 Paw Patrol
03:00 Max & Ruby

AM MOVIES COMEDY
03:23 Dora The Explorer
03:46 Sunny Day
04:08 Nella The Princess Knight
04:31 Shimmer And Shine
04:42 Shimmer And Shine
04:53 Wallykazam!
05:16 Zack & Quack
05:27 The Day Henry Met
05:32 The Day Henry Met
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Rusty Rivets
06:13 Paw Patrol
06:37 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Nella The Princess Knight
07:22 Kiva Can Do!
07:33 Kiva Can Do!
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:06 Paw Patrol
08:29 Shimmer And Shine
08:40 Shimmer And Shine
08:51 Nella The Princess Knight
09:14 Paw Patrol
09:38 Rusty Rivets
10:02 Wallykazam!
10:25 The Day Henry Met
10:31 Bubble Guppies
10:54 Team Umizoomi
11:16 Kid-E-Cats
11:22 Shimmer And Shine
11:45 Sunny Day
12:07 Max & Ruby
12:29 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:40 Kiva Can Do!
12:51 The Day Henry Met
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13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:42 Paw Patrol
13:54 Kid-E-Cats
13:58 Kid-E-Cats
14:04 Shimmer And Shine
14:26 Nella The Princess Knight
14:38 Paw Patrol
15:02 Max & Ruby
15:24 Dora The Explorer
15:47 Sunny Day
16:09 Nella The Princess Knight
16:32 Shimmer And Shine
16:42 Shimmer And Shine
16:53 Wallykazam!
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00:05 Dinofroz The Origin
01:40 Felix The Toy Rabbit And The Time Machine
03:15 Dinofroz Return To The Past World
04:55 Phantom Boy
06:30 The Elf Who Stole Christmas
08:05 Last Wizard
09:30 Dinofroz - An Island In The Sky
10:55 Quest For A Heart
12:30 Dinofroz Return To The Past World
14:10 Phantom Boy
15:45 The Emperor's Secret
17:20 Dinofroz - An Island In The Sky
18:45 Nur And The Dragon's Temple
20:05 A Doggone Adventure
21:50 The Emperor's Secret
23:25 Last Wizard

AM MOVIES COMEDY
00:15 How I Met Your Mother
00:40 How I Met Your Mother
01:05 Seinfeld
01:30 Seinfeld
01:55 Seinfeld
02:20 The Goldbergs
02:45 The Goldbergs
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 Grown-ish
04:25 LA To Vegas
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 The Michael J. Fox Show
06:05 Ti DeATH
06:30 The Mick
06:55 Mom
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 Grown-ish
09:25 LA To Vegas
09:50 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
10:15 Playing House
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15:15 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:40 Playing House
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 The Mick
17:30 Mom
18:00 How I Met Your Mother
18:30 How I Met Your Mother
19:00 Seinfeld
19:30 Seinfeld
20:00 Alex, Inc.
20:30 Great News
21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
22:00 Superstore
22:30 Superstore
23:00 You're The Worst
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers

AM MOVIES HD
01:00 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
03:00 The Little Mermaid 2: Return To The Sea
04:45 Pirates Of The Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest
07:30 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
09:30 Up
11:30 101 Dalmatians 2
13:15 The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning
15:00 Moana
17:00 Toy Story
18:45 Pirates Of The Caribbean: At World's End
21:45 The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning
23:30 Moana

AM SERIES HD
00:00 Girlfriends' Guide To Divorce
01:00 Time After Time
01:50 The Good Doctor
02:40 The Resident
03:30 Absentia
04:20 Girlfriends' Guide To Divorce
05:20 Suits
06:20 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
07:05 Good Morning America
08:00 The View
10:00 Absentia
11:00 The Good Doctor
12:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
13:00 How To Get Away With Murder
14:00 The Resident
15:00 The View
16:00 Live Good Morning America
18:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
19:00 The Good Doctor
20:00 How To Get Away With Murder

AM MOVIES HD
00:00 Fashion StartUp
02:00 Grey's Anatomy
03:00 Married At First Sight
04:00 House Of DVF
05:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker

AM MOVIES COMEDY
01:00 Boomerang
03:10 Christmas Eve
04:55 Fan Girl
06:40 Down With Love
08:25 Holiday Joy
10:10 Fan Girl
11:55 Down With Love
13:40 Holiday Joy
15:15 Are We Done Yet?
16:50 Aquamarine
18:40 Down To Earth
20:20 Bio-Dome
22:00 Middle Men
23:55 Someone Marry Barry

AM MOVIES FESTIVAL
00:30 Amistad
03:05 Convicts
04:50 Tini - El Gran Cambio De Violeta
06:30 Noble
08:20 The Challenger
10:10 Convicts
12:00 Newsies: The Broadway Musical
14:25 Meru
16:10 Roman Holiday
18:15 Dalia
20:25 Forsaken
22:00 Once Upon A Time In America

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17:20 Dinofroz - An Island In The Sky
18:45 Nur And The Dragon's Temple
20:05 A Doggone Adventure
21:50 The Emperor's Secret
23:25 Last Wizard

DISCOVERY SCIENCE
00:30 How It's Made
00:55 Food Factory USA
01:20 Invent It Rich
02:10 Mysteries Of The Missing
03:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
03:48 Mythbusters
04:36 How It's Made
05:00 Food Factory USA
05:24 Invent It Rich
06:12 Mysteries Of The Missing
07:00 How It's Made
07:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 Mysteries Of The Missing
09:50 How It's Made
10:14 Food Factory USA
10:38 Invent It Rich
11:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 How It's Made
13:26 Food Factory USA
13:50 Mysteries Of The Missing
14:38 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
15:26 Invent It Rich
16:14 Mythbusters
17:02 Mysteries Of The Missing
17:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 American Titans
20:20 How It's Made
20:45 Food Factory USA
21:10 Secrets Of The Underground
22:00 American Titans
22:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
23:40 Mythbusters

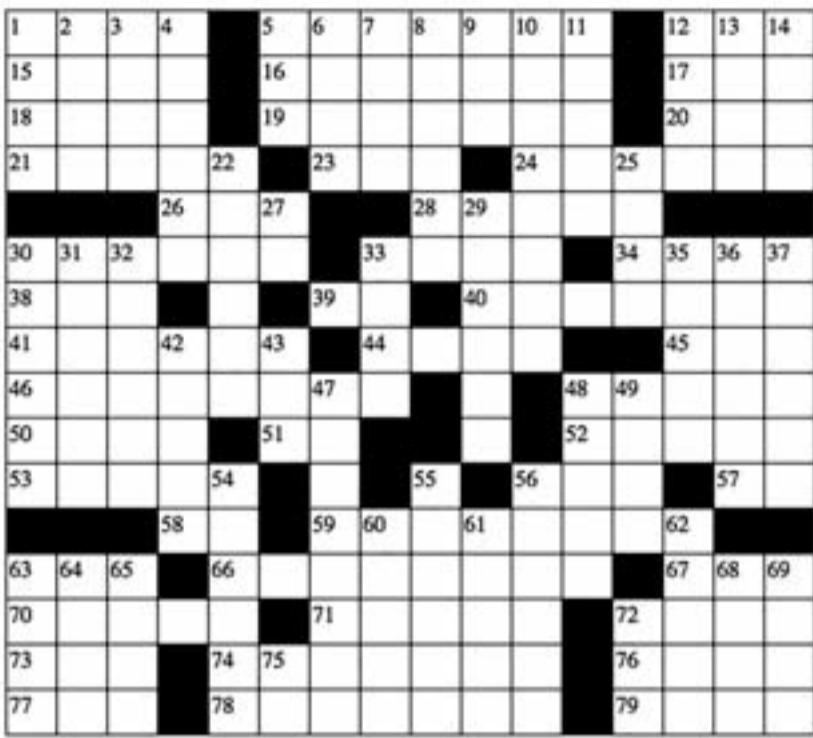
STAR GOLD
00:40 Bang Bang!
03:00 Bang Bang!
03:25 Dear Dad
05:00 The Front Row
05:25 Koffee With Karan
06:20 Raja Babu
09:05 Izaam
11:55 Namak Haraam
14:45 Matri Ki Bijlee Ka Mandola
17:25 Sardar Ji
20:00 Bivi No.1
22:45 Saat Uchakkey

STAR MOVIES



Stars

CROSSWORD 1903



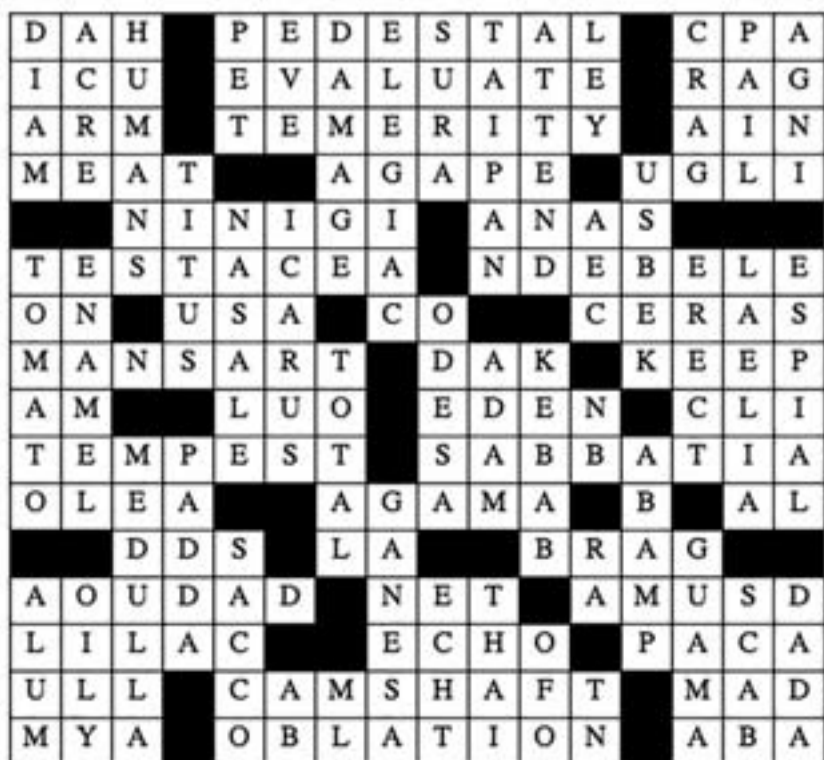
ACROSS

- Interface consisting of a standard port between a computer and its peripherals that is used in some computers.
- Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
- Someone who supports or champions something.
- A barrier constructed to contain the flow of water or to keep out the sea.
- A city in northwestern Syria.
- A regular patron.
- A type of submachine gun that is designed and manufactured in Israel.
- English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.
- A fixed number of lines of verse forming a unit of a poem.
- Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
- A member of the Nahuatl people who established an empire in Mexico that was overthrown by Cortes in 1519.
- A protein substance that remains when starch is removed from cereal grains.
- The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
- A local computer network for communication between computers.
- A brittle gray crystalline element that is a semiconducting metalloid (resembling silicon) used in transistors.
- United States collector and patron of art who built a museum in Boston to house her collection and opened it to the public in 1903 (1840-1924).
- Relating to bone or to the skeleton.
- A very light brown.
- A cgs unit of work or energy.
- North American evergreen with small pinkish bell-shaped flowers and oblong leaves used formerly for shimplasters.
- A small hard fruit.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- The sensation that results when olfactory receptors in the nose are stimulated by particular chemicals in gaseous form.
- Type genus of the Ardeidae.
- A Loloish language.
- A metric unit of volume equal to one tenth of a liter.
- Moth whose larvae are flour moths.
- A rapid escape (as by criminals).
- A genus of Fringillidae.
- Range of what one can know or understand.
- A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- A distinctive odor that is offensively unpleasant.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- A composition that imitates somebody's style in a humorous way.

DOWN

- Bony flesh of herring-like fish usually caught during their migration to fresh water for spawning.
- City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
- A person with unusual powers of foresight.
- The striking of one body against another.
- A hormone secreted by the anterior pituitary gland that controls the degree of pigmentation in melanocytes.
- South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
- (anatomy) A somewhat rounded subdivision of a bodily organ or part.
- Of the appetites and passions of the body.
- Standard time in the 6th time zone west of Greenwich, reckoned at the 90th meridian.
- French underwater explorer (born in 1910).
- A sharp narrow ridge found in rugged mountains.
- Goddess of spring and wife of Brahi.
- Harass with persistent criticism or carping.
- Type genus of the Amiidae.
- Of or relating to a creed.
- Harsh or corrosive in tone.
- In operation or operational.
- The capital of Croatia.
- A driver who urges the animals on with lashes of a whip.
- Not tied.
- Cattle that are reared for their meat.
- Administer an oil or ointment to.
- In an unnatural cery manner.
- Wild sheep of semidesert regions in central Asia.
- Having come or been brought to a conclusion.
- A unit of length of thread or yarn.
- A resident of Arkansas.
- Small shrubby African tree having compound leaves and racemes of small fragrant green flowers.
- Expel, as of gases and odors.
- Wool of the alpaca.
- Of or concerning the face.
- Used especially of feelings of defeat and discouragement.
- (KNO3) Used especially as a fertilizer and explosive.
- A Dravidian language spoken by the Gond people in south central India.
- Jordan's port.
- A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- God of death.
- Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
- A quantity of no importance.
- An informal term for a father.
- A colorless explosive liquid that is volatile and poisonous and foul-smelling.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have choices to either join in on emotional drama or not; consider the worth of this type of energy in your life. You feel off-kilter and shaky regarding personal relationships and commitment; have you entered into something on an impulse if you push your will you could make matters far worse; remember, we create our own karma. Someone finds you very attractive and says so. Your mind locks in on new methods and the results created. Someone close gives you a shoulder to lean on and agrees with the way you feel. You're capable of seeing the root of a problem; you must make a decision on what to do about this. An exotic dinner with friends and loved ones makes for a pleasant evening; let yourself be grateful for all that you have.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You want to be center stage, to touch as many people as you can; you're a giver but you also are willing to receive. Building relationships is important to you now as you find yourself in a creative mood; this could pertain to work or personal life. If you feel excluded take a look at the limits you have set; perhaps you have indicated disapproval of someone's living conditions or the work they have chosen. Your thoughts are clear and your words are quick; take care to hold your tongue when necessary. You can be most influential when explaining things to others; they pay attention when you speak. A creative situation arises that's perfect for you. Let your last thoughts be on the positive and not the negative as you drift off into a restful sleep.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

In your quest to evolve and grow be certain you're not too harsh on yourself and others. Keep in mind change can be hard on everyone involved, not just the person undergoing it. There could be major upheavals on the work front; remember, disruptions can bring wonderful, positive results! You prefer to be in the limelight and paid the attention you feel you deserve. You make certain your suggestions and plans are heard by the right people; these should be accepted and praised as very valuable input. Be careful that your attempts to repair a troubling situation don't come across as bullying or overbearing; your intentions may be good, but the timing is definitely off. You pay special attention to someone dear by preparing an exotic meal and desert.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You enjoy the attention being paid you by friends and family. Your strength and peace are results of the love and laughter in your life. Creative energies touch your efforts in painting, writing or other inspired activities. You may experience difficulty in keeping your focus on the ordinary tasks of the day; someone could make a comment you find disturbing or perhaps even insulting. An elder could overstep their boundaries and create a problem. Wearing a new outfit lightens your mood. Keeping your thoughts to yourself in a meeting could keep the peace for a while longer while you figure out something to smooth this situation over. Vibrations of strong coping skills are in your favor as you wind down from a positive, very productive day.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You have been determined to eat, exercise and live an all around healthier life. You receive most encouraging results and stay even more on the path to a better body and mind. You need to be noticed and held in high esteem; if not you're hard to get along with and appear distant and angry. You're appreciated far more than you know; relax and keep doing what you do for others, this is excellent karma in the making. The new phase you've entered allows for much movement and progress in whatever directions you choose. Attitude and habits are everything; focus all you're will on creating more positive ones! You could join in on a fun escape that could verge on scandalous if you're not careful. Savor the joy you get from letting go of responsibilities.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You seem more attractive and positive than usual; you use this energy to achieve the goals you have set. Should you be interested in a new job or career change, this could be a golden time to go for it! Relationships become deeper and more meaningful for you as you enter a new phase of emotional energy. Though you may want to keep to yourself, make an effort to visit and work well with those surrounding you. A younger person looks to you for guidance and advice; use your best judgment on this. You could find yourself serving at a job fair or volunteering your services for those less fortunate. You receive compliments on your work and for representing your company so well. Don't just dream; put your thoughts and wishes into action.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You consider the things that are important to your life, their worth and what you would do to keep them. You could find the perfect furniture or other large purchase; improvements to your personal life are a priority at this time. You could receive shocking news about someone you're no longer close to. You likely encounter blockage in your attempt to push something unusual through at work; someone secretly opposes you. If someone seems distant it could be due to hurt feelings; have you done or said anything to offend this person we all make mistakes but we can ask for forgiveness, especially from those who love us. Being center stage is important to you at this time; you have come a long way in the last year, you should relax and enjoy for now.



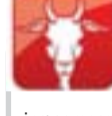
Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

You could become fussy and hard to deal with when something happens you're not happy with; not everything goes our way on this planet, but we grow from it. Your unrealistic expectations don't garner support from your friends who want you to be reasonable; your tendency to be in denial shows up at the wrong time. You feel that you should be tended to correctly and if you're not your mood drops quickly. Try to rekindle positive vibrations and an attitude to match. Creative energy surrounds your environment as you rearrange furniture or paint. Meeting someone for lunch or coffee reveals an interesting opportunity. Teamwork is lacking as everyone seems exhausted; sink into restful, recharging dreams tonight.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You enjoy being paid attention to; the energy of love and romance demand to be noticed. Some meaningful bonds are formed, and this applies to existing relationships. This phase is one you'll long remember with fondness as the changes that take place are significant. Without close ties, you become restless and difficult. This is one of those days when you just feel satisfied and fulfilled, regardless of what happens your energy is high. You may discover a new place to dine or shop that's a nice addition to your list of favorite places. You observe something touching that could actually cause a lump to form in your throat; the world does still have a few thoughtful people in it! Warmth and emotion this evening at dinner with loved ones.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Emotions are running high as you discover someone you love needs your help; think about this very well so that you don't do harm to yourself by helping someone else. Decisions made now could be unwise and need to be reversed at a later time; your tendency to be too giving is at work here. An event demands your attention to value and worth. Home and furnishings are important just now and you enjoy shopping for something new. If your thoughts stay on someone you haven't seen for some time a sense of blockage and frustration may return. Your desire to change the world or do something to show you were here grows. You enjoy time on the water later; you may consider purchasing a new home or other marine oriented property.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Much better energy today in the work place as you follow where your instinct leads regarding a customer or client. A lifestyle change is at hand regarding the food you eat; this could be a new way to eat that will last a lifetime and create a healthier existence. A day full of positive energy reveals boosts your confidence; you're certain you can conquer all! A mentor guides you in certain directions regarding finances. Excitement concerning romantic attraction and affection bubbles over; your joy is clear to see. Memories are made with new beginnings and hopes; you will consider this one of the best times of your life. Accomplishments are likely as you are fearless and determined. There is perhaps a relaxing massage later to recharge.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

There's an occasion to make personal decisions you shouldn't make now; arrange to do this at another time. Remember you can't starve yourself enough to feed anyone; now isn't the time to be noble or heroic. An event causes excitement when good news is delivered to the team. Your giving spirit needs acknowledgement; you could feel overly sensitive. You're tempted to meet someone for a quick cup of coffee or lunch that you should probably avoid just now. You seek wisdom in the ways of the world and not the actual experience in some areas. Smart move! The heavens indicate that you are struggling with an issue from the past; remember to live this day, not yesterday, for today is all we have. Clear your mind later caring for your plants.

Wordsearch Puzzle

More 1950's Songs

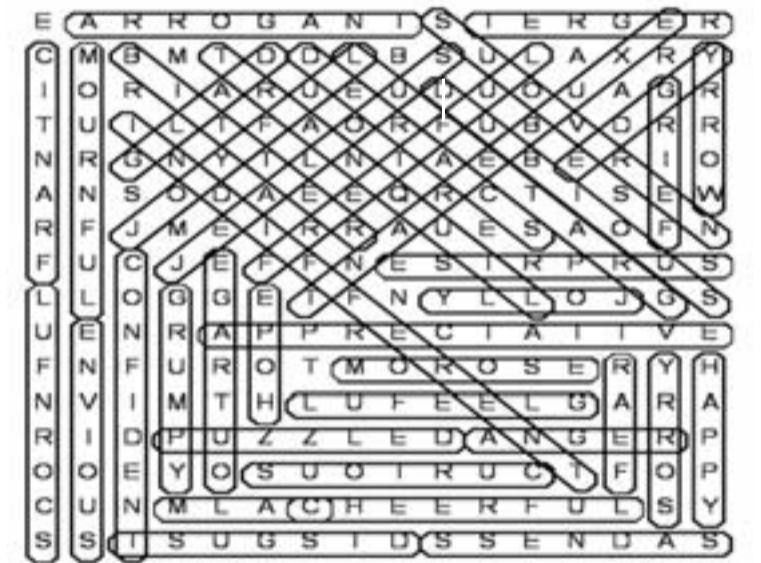
Find and circle all of the 1950's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional 1950's song.



- |                         |                 |               |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| ALL SHOOK UP            | FLAMINGO        | LUCILLE       | SOUL ON FIRE    |
| ALMOST GROWN AT THE HOP | GET A JOB       | MAYBE         | STAGGER LEE     |
| BIRD DOG                | GOODNIGHT IRENE | MONEY HONEY   | THE BELLS       |
| BLUE MONDAY             | I'M A MAN       | MR SANDMAN    | THE WIND        |
| CHANCES ARE             | I'M WALKIN'     | PERSONALITY   | TIPTINA         |
| CHANTILLY LACE          | JIM DANDY       | REBEL ROUSER  | TOM DOOLEY      |
| CRY                     | JUKE            | ROLLIN' STONE | TRY ME          |
| DON'T BE CRUEL          | LITTLE DARLIN'  | SEA CRUISE    | WHITE LIGHTNING |
| EL PASO                 | LONELY AVENUE   | SINCERELY     | YOUNG BLOOD     |
|                         | LOUIE LOUIE     | SO WHAT       |                 |

Yesterday's Solution

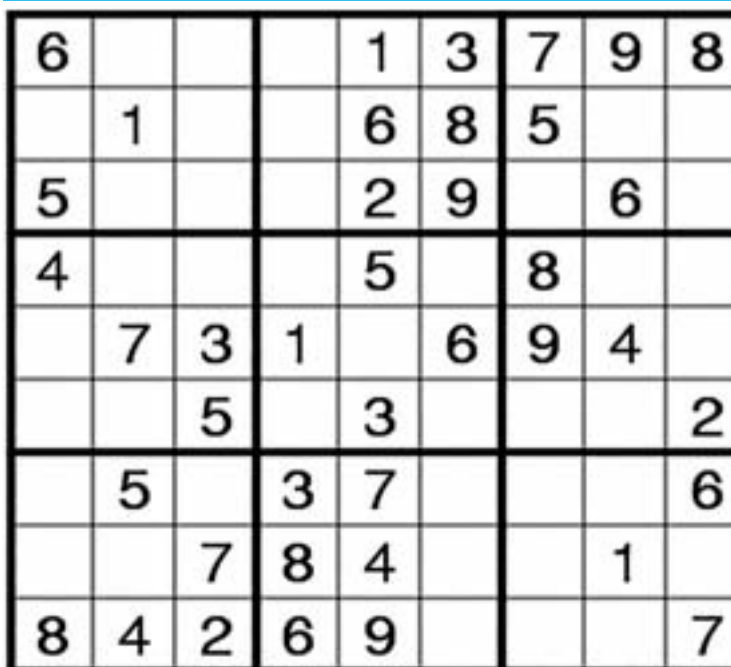
Moods & Emotions 3



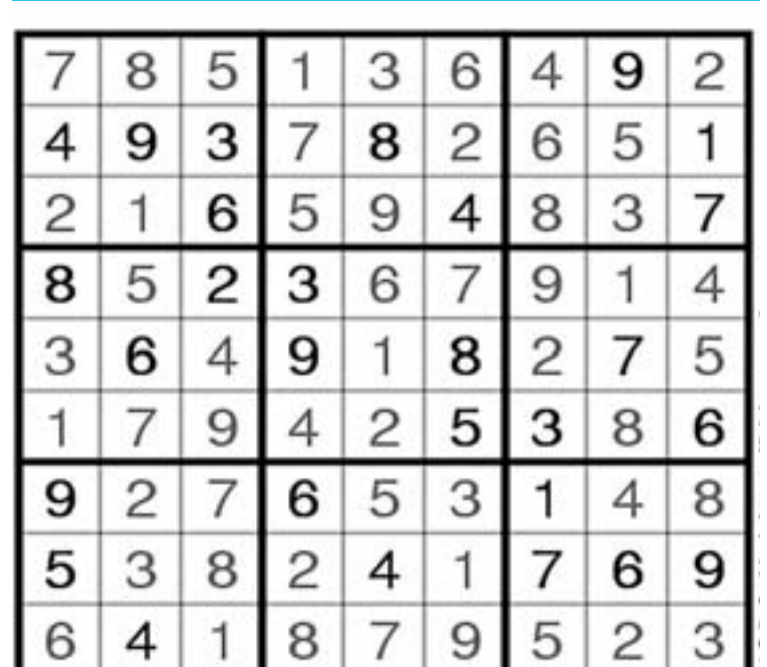
- |              |           |             |          |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| ANGER        | EDGY      | GRUMPY      | OUTRAGE  |
| APPRECIATIVE | ENVOIOUS  | HAPPY       | PUZZLED  |
| ARROGANT     | EXUBERANT | HOPE        | REGRET   |
| BITTER       | FEAR      | INDIFFERENT | SCADNESS |
| CALM         | FRANTIC   | JEALOUS     | SCORNFUL |
| CHEERFUL     | FRETFUL   | JOLLY       | SORRY    |
| CONFIDENT    | GLAD      | JOYFUL      | SURPRISE |
| CURIOUS      | GLEEFUL   | MOROSE      | TRANQUIL |
| DISGUST      | GRATEFUL  | MOURNFUL    | WORRY    |
| DUBIOUS      | GRIEF     | NERVOUS     |          |

The hidden word is: EMBARRASSMENT

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





# Classifieds

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

**Kuwait Times**  
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

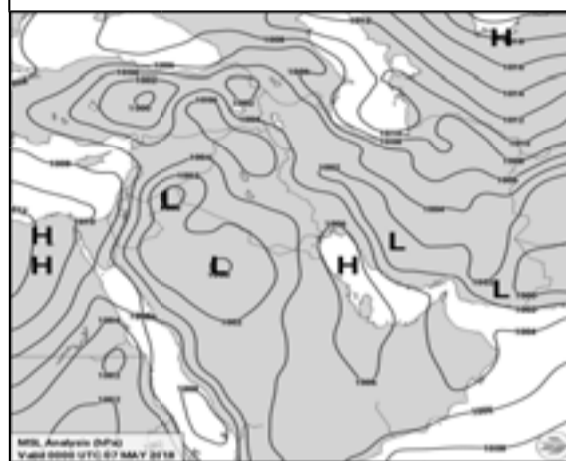
**BY DAY:** Hot and Clouds will increase gradually with light to moderate variable wind to northerly wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h.

**BY NIGHT:** Partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind to southerly wind, with speed of 12 - 40 km/h causing rising dust with a chance for scattered rain.

**WEATHER WARNING** No Current Warnings

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	40 °C	28 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	42 °C	25 °C
ABDALY	41 °C	24 °C
BUBYAN	33 °C	26 °C
JAHRA	42 °C	26 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	36 °C	25 °C
SALMIYAH	33 °C	26 °C
AHMADI	38 °C	28 °C
NUWAISIB	37 °C	25 °C
WAFRA	41 °C	23 °C
SALMY	40 °C	25 °C

**SFC. CHART 07/05/2018 0000 UTC**



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	05/08	Cloudy causing rising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery	35 °C	26 °C	SE	15 - 42 km/h
Wednesday	05/09	Partly cloudy causing rising dust with a chance for scattered rain	33 °C	24 °C	N-VRB	12 - 40 km/h
Thursday	05/10	Relatively hot and Partly cloudy with a chance for scattered rain at times with a chance for	36 °C	24 °C	VRB-NW	10 - 40 km/h
Friday	05/11	Mostly Sunny and Relatively hot	38 °C	25 °C	VRB-SE	12 - 38 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:35
Sunrise	05:02
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:27
Isha	19:52

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	38 °C
MIN. Temp.	26 °C
MAX. RH	46 %
MIN. RH	18 %
MAX. Wind	SE 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

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**CHANGE OF NAME**

**ACCOMODATION**

**I. Androose Chacko, S/o Late P.C. Chacko, Palackal Purayidathil, Ulickal PO, Iritty, Kannur District, Kerala State, Changed my minor son's name from Amal Palackal Purayidathil Androose (Passport No. L4531913) to Amal Androose. (C5397) 8-5-2018**

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**EMERGENCY 112**

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Kuwait Airways	22087426
Jazeera Airways	171
Jet Airways	177
FlyDubai	22924455
Qatar Airways	22414400
KLM	22423888
Royal Jordanian	22425747
British Airways	22418064/5/6
Air France	22425635
Emirates	22430224
Air India	22921555
Sri Lanka Airlines	22438184
	22424444

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## Flight Schedule

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

## DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 8/5/2018				Departure Flights on Tuesday 8/5/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	THY	767	Istanbul	13:40
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:00
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
MEA	400	Beirut	01:15	JZR	552	Alexandria	14:05
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	WAN	965	Tbilisi	14:45
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	FEG	342	Sohag	14:50
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	234	Riyadh	15:30
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	SWA	504	Jeddah	15:45
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:50	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	QTR	8512	Doha	17:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	FEG	242	Alexandria	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	04:45	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
MSC	403	Asyut	05:00	ETD	9890	SGN	18:00
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	SWA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	JZR	512	Amman	18:30
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	WAN	135	Doha	18:40
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	605	Ahmedabad	07:05	WAN	117	Bahrain	19:30
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	NIA	0162	Cairo	20:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	543	Cairo	21:20
SWA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
SAW	703	Damascus	10:30	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
JZR	325	Al Najaf	12:20	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	KAC	795	Madinah	23:00
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	PIA	240	Sialkot	23:35
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
WAN	312	Asyut	13:45	JZR	560	Sohag	23:45
FEG	341	Sohag	13:50				



## Lifestyle | Gossip

## Tiesto's travel inspiration

**T**iesto is inspired by the Northern Lights. The Dutch DJ loves to take a trip to see the aurora borealis when he's in need of new ideas, but he is also heavily influenced by the people around him and loves to take a collaborative approach to working. He said: "I get inspiration from a trip to Iceland or a trip to Norway when you see the Northern Lights. And also working with different people in the studio and different vocalists and different songwriters ... "Just working together with a bunch of people and we're talking about a track and it's going back and forward to what's good and what's bad and how to make it better. "It's not just one thing that inspires me, it's more all the people around me and the things that happen to me in my life." Tiesto will be playing an exclusive London show at the Steel Yard Weekender later this month and is looking forward to going "a little



deeper" with his set than he does elsewhere in the world. He exclusively told BANG Showbiz: "I like London a lot because it's a very educated crowd so you can really go a little deeper and play a little bit more edgy music than maybe other places." And the 49-year-old star is delighted to have been invited back to play the legendary Creamfields festival in Cheshire, North England, in August once again. He said: "I like Creamfields because I have so much history with the festival. When I first went there, it was probably 2000 or 2001 and it's an amazing crowd. There's a mix of things I can play there - some old stuff, some new stuff ... To stay relevant all those years, it's pretty impressive." Tiesto will be headlining the Steel Yard Weekender on Sunday 27th May at Finsbury Park for an exclusive London performance and back to close out the Arc Stage at Creamfields on Sunday 26th August.

## SILVERSTONE LOVES THAT CLUELESS HAS NEW FANS

**A**licia Silverstone thinks it's great that 'Clueless' has a new generation of fans. The 41-year-old actress - who portrayed the superficial school girl Cheryl 'Cher' Horowitz in the 1995 hit romantic comedy - has admitted she still has young



girls coming up to her in the street now asking her about the popular movie. Speaking to 'Entertainment Tonight', she said: "People still love 'Clueless'... and all the time I hear about it, and I'm happy to hear about it. It's such - Amy Heckerling [the director of 'Clueless'] is brilliant and I love that little, young children are learning about it from their parents, my generation who's showing it to them. "And then there's older people who are seeing it because they saw it with their kids... it covers every generation and I feel like, what a lovely thing." The blonde beauty is now starring in the film 'Book Club', in which she plays the daughter of one of four older women who read 'Fifty Shades of Grey' for the first time and decide to pursue life and pleasure differently from now on, and she loved that she could just let her hair down and play a "slightly terrible child." She explained: "We are slightly terrible children in this movie. And yeah, that's the fun of it, is that we are just ridiculous." But she only went for the role because Diane Keaton plays her mum. She said: "That's why I came to the party. Diane Keaton is just the best - I wanted to play with her. I got to spend seven days with her. She's amazing and she's hilarious. Right before we would do a take, she would usually say something horrible and funny to me and I'd be laughing so hard I couldn't hear. 'Action!'"

## Feig wants to make a Ghostbusters sequel

**P**aul Feig wants to make a sequel to 'Ghostbusters 2'. The filmmaker previously admitted he "regrets" the lack of success surrounding his remake of the hugely popular 1984 Ivan Reitman movie, which most notably swapped the main roles from male to female, and starred the likes of Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig and Kate McKinnon. However, he has since admitted he will go "to my grave so proud of that movie" and would love to do work with the cast again on a second installment. Speaking to Yahoo, Feig said: "We would love [to make another movie], it's really up to the studio. We had so much fun making that movie. "The movie's just really built an audience in the two years since it's been out. "I get contacted every day by people who are such fans of it, and so many women who are inspired by seeing women in science. "I will go to my grave so proud of that movie, and so proud of what that cast did in that film." Despite creating a buzz when it was announced, the 2016 feature didn't do as well as expected when it hit cinema screens, and Paul said at the time he believed the fact that the movie unintentionally



became a "cause" movie for gender equality, is the reason it didn't sell as well as it had hoped. He explained previously: "I think it kind of hampered us a little bit because the movie became so much of a cause. I think for some of our audience, they were like, 'What the hell? We don't wanna go to a cause. We just wanna watch a movie.'" Feig admitted the lack of success

the movie garnered is a "great regret" in his life, as he "really loved" the feature, and hoped it would do well. He said: "It was a great regret in my life that the movie didn't do better, because I really loved it. It's not a perfect movie. None of my movies are perfect. I liked what we were doing with it. It was only supposed to be there to entertain people."



## Willis to play Tyson trainer Cus D'Amato in Cornerman

**B**ruce Willis is to play Mike Tyson's boxing trainer Cus D'Amato in 'Cornerman'. The 63-year-old actor - who is best known for the 'Die Hard' franchise - is set to star in the Rupert Friend movie, which follows the retired manager as he makes a return to the game when a 13-year-old Tyson shows he has huge potential in the ring. Friend describes the feature as a "story about fighting for what you believe in", as D'Amato carries out a search to find the teenager a suitable opponent. Tyson was the undefeated heavyweight champion until 1990, when he was knocked out by outsider Buster Douglas in Japan. D'Amato - who also managed the careers of Floyd Patterson and Jose Torres; all of whom went on to become members of the International Boxing Hall of Fame - died in November 1985, at the age of 77. 'Homeland' helmer Friend joins Aimee Mullins on producing duties for Circus Florist Films, along with MadRiver Pictures' Marc Butan and Ara Keshishian. According to Screen Daily, production is due to commence later this year. Friend commented: "Ultimately, this is a story about a deep love between two ferocious talents, each brave enough to admit their fears to the other, and so spur one another to greatness. "It is a story about fighting for what you believe in, and a film that will make you question what strength really is." Willis is currently filming 'Motherless Brooklyn', in which he portrays Frank Minna, who is murdered in New York in the 1950s, and he's also working on a sixth 'Die Hard' movie. Willis stars as the wisecracking police detective John McClane in the movies - which are based on author Roderick Thorp's novel 'Nothing Lasts Forever' - and was last seen as the iconic character back in 2013 in 'A Good Day To Die Hard'. Two years ago a "part-prequel, part-sequel" was announced and Willis is back on board, but talk of the film quieted down. However, while appearing on 'The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon' in February, Willis confirmed the movie is still happening. When asked if it is still going ahead, he said: "I'm about to wing out to California to start to see what the script looks like. "So I think so, yeah." Half of the movie - known as 'Die Hard: Year One' - will see McClane as a rookie police officer in the early 1980s, with the rest of the movie being set in the present day. Casting is already underway to find a younger McClane and director Len Wiseman said last year: "The right casting for this role is crucial. Those bare feet have some very big shoes to fill."

## Brolin has crush on Reynolds



**J**osh Brolin developed a "crush" on Ryan Reynolds after watching him in 'The Proposal'. The 50-year-old actor has admitted he was inspired to join 'Deadpool 2' - in which he plays Cable alongside Reynolds' Deadpool - after seeing the talented star and Sandra Bullock portray warring fake lovers in the 2009 smash romantic comedy. Speaking to Entertainment Weekly magazine, Brolin said: "I was a secret fan of 'The Proposal', having watched it several times by myself. "I told Ryan, I was like, 'I don't know why this is, and I don't know what this means psychologically, behaviorally, emotionally, but I have kind of a crush on

you.'" However, Reynolds, 41, doesn't believe that Brolin has watched his romantic comedies and thinks it's "weird" that he keeps going on about his crush because he's so "tough." Reynolds - who is married to Blake Lively - said: "He's mentioned it many times, which is weird to me because he's so tough. I would just never imagine that. "Like, he pretends he's, like, all sort of New Agey sometimes and all this stuff, but deep down inside I just think his heart is made of some, like, jagged chunk of Yosemite granite. I don't buy that underneath all this textured skin is a sweet little angel that loves romantic comedies. I don't buy it. Not for a second."



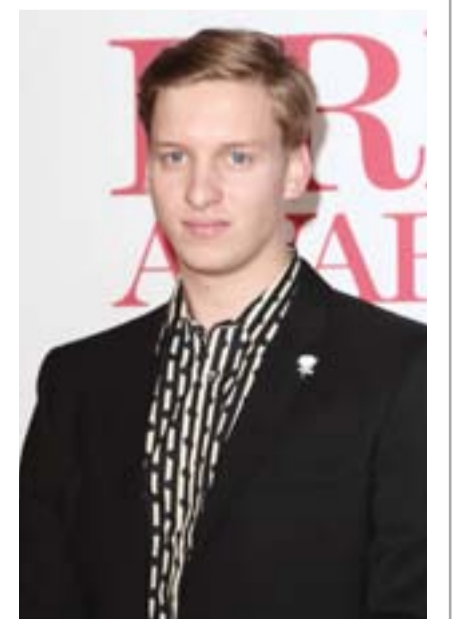
## MINOGUE DUMPED 'COUNTRY' SONGS FROM NEW ALBUM

**K**ylie Minogue dumped a load of songs from her album because she thought they sounded "too country." The 49-year-old singer released her 14th studio album 'Golden' last month but she has admitted, although she wanted to put a country spin on it, she felt like some of the tracks - which she recorded in Nashville, Tennessee - were a little bit too overboard and she wanted to stick to her pop roots. She explained: "We did some songs in Nashville that were a step too far for me. I've learnt a lot about songwriting... having two weeks in Nashville, that changed so much for me." Tennessee is the home state of country legend Dolly Parton - one of Kylie's biggest inspirations - so the pop princess couldn't resist soaking up everything to do with the blonde bombshell during her stay. Speaking to Australia's Vogue magazine, she said: "I actually bought a great T-

shirt in Nashville that said: 'What would Dolly do?' Because my love for her just grows and grows really. "I've met her once and my hands ended up around her waist. I don't know why, I was so starstruck, I didn't really know what I was doing. It was before seeing her perform at the Hollywood Bowl, and it was the first time I'd seen her live and it was like seeing the light." Kylie's new album came just months after she was left devastated when she split from her fiancé Joshua Sasse following allegations he was unfaithful, but she has admitted she was crushed for a while after. She said recently: "I try not to sound cheesy, but I am. I was not in a good place, I was in a place where I was kind of kidding myself. To be set free from that is so liberating. A little bit 'tail between my legs' at points. But I feel fortunate to be kind of racing, cantering, galloping towards 50 and feeling good about it."

## Ezra 'really sympathizes' with Malik's tour anxiety

**G**eorge Ezra "really sympathizes" with Zayn Malik for pulling his solo tour dates in 2016, due to anxiety. The 'Paradise' singer has openly discussed his own battle with his mental health, and though he's been able to get to the bottom of his issues, the 24-year-old singer can relate to what the former One Direction star was going through when he axed a number of performances two years ago. Speaking to the Daily Star newspaper, George said: "Having experienced anxiety myself a little bit, and I was very fortunate to be able to work out what the issue was and I wasn't touring thankfully, I really sympathise with anyone experiencing it. "If you were to walk in here with a broken arm I know to be careful, whereas anyone can be going through anything and it's very easy to cover those things up, so I understand why it's hard and I do feel for anybody." However, as for Justin Bieber axing the final dates of his 'Purpose World Tour' in 2017, the 'Budapest' hitmaker thinks the pop megastar should have continued for the sake of his fans. He said: "Personal issues need to be handled carefully. I think if you book a whole world tour and then go: 'Oh I can't do it', I don't think that's right to let all them people down." Zayn recently promised fans that a tour is



"definitely on the cards" for his second album, from which so far he has released lead single 'Let Me'. The 'Pillowtalk' hitmaker didn't head out on the road in promotion of his debut solo record, but now he has more material under his belt with the new LP on the way, he's "excited to start rehearsing" his live show.



Lifestyle | Gossip



## Rowland can't remember her mother's voice

**K**elly Rowland can't remember what her late mother's voice sounds like. The 37-year-old singer was reduced to tears during this weekend's episode of 'The Voice Australia' when she recalled the sudden death of her mum Doris back in 2014. The brunette beauty had been trying to offer some support to her contestant Hannah Pearce - whose father was killed by a roadside bomb while he was serving in Afghanistan - but struggled to hold it together when she thought back to her own life. She said to camera: "I've grieved now for three years, it's the greatest loss of my life. I'm sorry I'm crying 'cause you just said something so profound. Oh, I miss my mum's voice. That's so true. I've forgotten the sound of her (mother's) voice. She [Hannah] just made me think about that. You do forget the sound of their

voice!" Kelly tragically lost her mother to an unexpected cardiac arrest just three weeks after she gave birth to her first child Titan, whom she has with her husband Tim Witherspoon, and previously said the grief was starting to get easier. She said: "It was hard because I'd just watched my son come into this world and I actually watched her go. There's not a day that goes by I don't think of her. At first, it would just tear me apart, and day by day, it gets easier." And the 'Motivation' hitmaker said she isn't "ready" to talk about the last thing she said to her mother, as she says the conversation is one of her "greatest regrets". Asked what she last said to her mother before her passing, Kelly said: "That's a tough question. It's one of my greatest regrets. It's something I'll carry to my grave ... or eventually talk about, but I'm not ready now."



## Gabrielle hopes new album inspires 'strong' females

**G**abrielle hopes her new album 'Under My Skin' inspires fellow females to be "strong". The 'Out of Reach' hitmaker's first record in 11 years includes the tracks 'Stronger' and 'Put Up A Fight', and the 90s R&B star hopes that the lyrics are relatable and encourage women to speak out if they've ever suffered at the hands of others, following the sexual misconduct scandal in Hollywood, which led to the #MeToo movement. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, she said: "The whole #MeToo campaign, which has gathered momentum in god knows how many months now, it's the quiet after the storm. "Everyone is more aware and I think, although initially when I was writing these songs it hadn't quite been underway, it is so relatable now with songs like 'Stronger' and 'Put Up A Fight'. "Although when you start dissecting the

song it might not necessarily relate, but in terms of the attitude and especially as I am a strong woman and in my experiences as a woman and the things I've gone through and how you conduct yourself, if you can allow people to hear from your point of view, maybe you people can gather their strength and positivity and maybe inspiration to deal with what is happening in their life. "I've had things happen to me and through my songwriting, people have told me how they've been inspired by me being very vocal about what I had been through in my personal life to address certain things in their own life. "I've got a song called 'Every Step', if you are talking about relating to the power and strength of woman, I like to think my songs can inspire." 'Under My Skin' is released on August 17 via BMG, lead single 'Show Me' is out now.

## ED SHEERAN HASN'T SMOKED FOR A WHOLE YEAR

**T**he 'Happier' hitmaker took to his Instagram account over the weekend to celebrate the fact that he'd managed 365 days without puffing on a cigarette after he vowed to give up the habit back in 2017 because he wanted to shed a few pounds. Alongside a professional black-and-white photograph of him performing on stage, he wrote: "Celebrating one year being a non smoker today (sic)" The 27-year-old singer took a year-long hiatus from the limelight back in 2016 after he'd finished touring because he wanted to travel without a schedule and spend time with his loved ones, but admitted that his time out had made him gain weight. He said at the time: "I chain-smoked. I drunk a lot of alcohol and ate very unhealthy and I just kind of cut 39 percent if that out. I still do all those things, but



my dad said, 'Everything in moderation'. I just basically needed to moderate." Although he's had no qualms binning the cigarettes, the flame-haired hunk has probably had less luck on the alcohol front as he's built a pub inside his mansion.

He explained: "I've built a pub. Like, I had a bar before, a bar where you could pour beers but now this has like a selection of beers, which is cool. So, basically, there's an underground tunnel to get there that you can close off. So

if I have a party, everyone goes in the pub and no one can get in the house so you get no one raiding the cupboards or smashing anything. You have to go underground to get to the pub." However, Ed doesn't mind indulging in the odd alcoholic beverage from time to time because he tries to work out for at least 10 minutes a day in order to stay in shape. He previously said: "I didn't realize how active I was on tour. My diet was pizza and beer, but because I was doing two hours a night I was really in shape. "I stopped touring and carried on my diet of pizza and beer. Suddenly I didn't fit in anything. I was like, 'All my clothes have shrunk'. "I did ten minutes a day without fail - intervals of 30 seconds sprinting and 30 jogging. The key is to not miss a day, so you don't have to do an hour."

## Adele throws Titanic-themed 30th birthday bash

**A**dele threw a 'Titanic'-themed 30th birthday bash on Saturday. The 'Hello' singer recreated scenes from the classic 1994 movie by dressing up as leading lady Rose (Kate Winslet) to celebrate reaching the milestone age. The British star thanked her friends and family for "entertaining her super fandom" for the movie and admitted she was a little worse for wear. Alongside a series of black and white photographs, including one of Adele recreating the iconic scene of Rose walking down the grand staircase of the cruise liner to meet her lover Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio), the star wrote on Instagram: "Dirty 30! I'm not sure what I'm going to do for the next 30 years as I've been blessed beyond words in my life so far. Thank you to everyone for coming



along for the ride the last 11 years with me. My family and friends for entertaining my super fandom of the Titanic movie. Last night was the best night of my life. Here's a couple pics. I'm not sure I'll make it out the house again! (sic)" Another picture showed Adele dancing with friends with a lifejacket over her gown, and the other sees her arriving in a classic car like the one Rose and Jack get intimate in. The 'Chasing Pavements' hitmaker - who has five-year-old son Angelo with Simon Konecki - added that after acting out the movie, she has no idea how Donald Glover keeps up his music alter ego Childish Gambino. She added: "Ps Childish Gambino how the hell do you have time to offer us so much greatness on so many platforms. I adore you x (sic)" Adele's 'Titanic' party comes after she cheered up Celine Dion - who wrote and performed the soundtrack for the movie, 'My Heart Will Go On' - by wearing a hoodie with Celine's face on it from the movie backstage at her Las Vegas residency gig in January at AXS Caesars Palace, The Colosseum, after she was forced to axe several concerts due to a throat irritation.



## Markle's mom set to do a tell-all interview with Oprah

**M**eghan Markle's mother is reportedly set to do a tell-all interview with Oprah Winfrey. The former 'Suits' actress' mum Doria Ragland was reportedly spotted leaving the chat show host's home in California last week after the pair spent the afternoon brainstorming ideas for their impending interview on the long-running talk show. It's believed Doria will address the racial abuse Meghan suffered after it was announced that she was dating, and subsequently, engaged to Prince Harry. A source told the Mirror Online: "Oprah and Doria spent a long time chatting and they got on really well. The most important and significant issue they spoke about was race and how badly some people had reacted to Meghan and Harry. What happened to Meghan and Harry was disgusting and they and all of their families were horrified. It's an issue

close to both Doria and Oprah, who have both suffered racism." However, the interview will need to be approved by the 36-year-old actress, her soon-to-be husband and Buckingham Palace before anything is recorded. Prince Harry, 33, released a statement back in 2016 when his relationship with Meghan became public knowledge condemning the abuse she was receiving. He said via a spokesperson at the time: "His girlfriend has been subject to a wave of abuse and harassment. Some has been very public - the smear on the front page of a national newspaper; the racial undertones of comment pieces; and the outright sexism and racism of social media trolls and web comments." The couple - who have been dating since the beginning of 2016 - are set to tie the knot at St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, Windsor, on May 19.

## Adam Levine's baby daughter has his feet



**T**he Maroon 5 singer welcomed his second child - a little girl called Gio - into the world with his wife Behati Prinsloo three months ago and has admitted the little one has unfortunately inherited his big toes which, he says, is a "bummer for her." Speaking on 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show', which will air on Monday he said: "Gio is her name, she's so cute, we've only posted pictures of her feet. She has my feet which

is a bummer for her. Well, for now, maybe they'll change." The couple - who got married in 2014 - also have 20-month-old daughter Dusty and they've been pleasantly surprised by how quickly she's adapted to a new sibling. He explained: "She's obsessed with Gio to the point every morning when she wakes up, she says: 'Gio, Gio, Gio' and runs into her room. "She's totally in love with her. She's a little rough with her because she doesn't understand that thing yet and she's up in her face and doing crazy things. It's so much fun, being a dad is the greatest thing in the world." The 39-year-old hunk loves being a father so much that he would love to add to his brood in the future - but he's letting the 28-year-old model decide when. He said: "At this rate, I think I'm definitely going to let my wife be in control of the timing of the next one. We both want more, we want a lot. Like, at least, five." Meanwhile, Adam recently admitted he doesn't "fully support" the idea of his children chasing their showbiz dreams at a really young age. Asked if he'd ever judge The Voice Kids, he said: "I don't know if I fully support the idea of having little kids be on TV singing. I never have. I think you should get to grow up a little bit, a little bit. I'm talking like a little bit before teens."

## Dame Joan Collins thinks her husband is 'such an amazing man'



**D**ame Joan Collins thinks her husband is "such an amazing man." The 84-year-old actress has been married five times throughout her life but she believes her marriage with her current spouse Percy Gibson - who she wed in 2002 - works because they enjoy each other's company and appreciate each other. Speaking to HELLO! magazine, she said: "You won't always agree about everything, but you need to enjoy each other's company. "Percy is such an amazing man, he is so kind and so caring. People get married on the crest of lust. Once that's gone, they look and think: 'What the hell? Who is this person?' There has to be something to fall back on. If there isn't, they start looking." Although Joan is 33 years older than Percy, she recently admitted that she is in much better shape

than he is and she is always telling him to exercise more. She said recently: "I tell my husband, who's 51 - I think, I never remember! - that he's got to exercise more. Because I exercise more than he does. "People need to take better care in their youth and middle age so that they don't fall apart when they turn 65 or 70." And Joan revealed she doesn't feel any different than she did 40 years ago and is thrilled to still be working in her 80s. She said: "I don't feel any different physically to when I was 45. Taking care of your appearance is very important. Other than that I managed to raise three children - none of whom became drug addicts or committed suicide or became alcoholics, which is what a lot of children of famous people do - I'm most proud of the fact that I'm almost the longest-working actress in film."



Lifestyle | Music &amp; Movies

# Bollywood's Khan dodges limelight in jail appeal hearing

Indian movie star Salman Khan managed to avoid the spotlight when he returned to court yesterday over his five-year jail sentence for killing endangered wildlife. Khan, one of the world's highest-paid actors, was convicted last month of shooting dead two rare antelopes known as black bucks on a 1998 hunting trip. He spent two days behind bars before being granted bail. The Bollywood icon was ordered to appear in court yesterday and an early-morning hearing was held in Jodhpur, in the western state of Rajasthan. Khan arrived in a white SUV and slipped into court around 8:00 am (0230 GMT) surrounded by minders, catching Indian media and his army of fans off guard. Court sessions generally start much later in India.

The judge, Chandra Kumar Songara, quickly adjourned proceedings after Khan's defense team requested more time to prepare their appeal. Khan, who is not allowed to leave the country without permission but has been filming a new movie in India, returned directly to Jodhpur airport after the hearing. "We will begin arguments on the appeal against the five-year sentence from July 17," said defense counsel Mahesh Bora. Prosecutors said they would oppose the appeal bid and were ready to present their case.

Four other actors were acquitted last month's verdict and Khan has repeatedly denied killing the creatures-accusing Rajasthan's forest department of trying to frame him. His lawyers claim the black bucks

died of natural causes such as overeating, insisting there was no evidence they were shot. Throughout the multiple cases, eyewitnesses have stated they saw Khan firing a gun. The 52-year-old enjoys a cult-like status in star-obsessed India and is one of Bollywood's biggest draws, despite a host of controversies. Khan was in a vehicle in Mumbai in 2002 when it mounted the curb and killed a homeless man sleeping on the pavement. He was found guilty of culpable homicide and sentenced to five years in prison, but the verdict was overturned by a higher court in 2015. His acquittal is being challenged in the Supreme Court. — AFP



Indian Bollywood actor Salman Khan arrives at a court in Jodhpur yesterday. — AFP



Ukrainian presenter Lesia Nikitiuk (center), German comedian Anke Engelke (third right) and Lebanese actress Raya Abirached (second right) pose yesterday during a photocall for the animated film *Hotel Transylvania 3: A Monster Vacation* on the eve of the opening of the 71th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

## Bollywood star Siddiqui takes 'free speech' hero to Cannes

When Indian actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui walks the red carpet at Cannes he may take a moment to ponder just how far he has come and where he is headed. In just over a decade, Siddiqui has gone from a struggling bit-part actor worried about finding food to an acclaimed international star coveted by directors for his versatility across all genres. "When your film gets selected in a good category, you feel confident that you are on the right track and your choice of films is good," Siddiqui told AFP in an interview.

His latest film sees him play the lead role in "Manto", a biopic about the troubled life of Indian-Pakistani writer Saadat Hasan Manto. The movie, directed by Nandita Das, has been selected for the Un Certain Regard category of the film festival which opens today. "I enjoy Cannes because it is such a big and prestigious platform. It's a whole world revolving around films," said Siddiqui. Manto (1912-1955) is considered to be one of the Indian subcontinent's greatest ever short story writers. He was lauded for being bold and progressive and a proponent of free speech, writing truthfully about the brutal violence that followed the partition of British India. To others he was a subversive troublemaker whose stories featuring pimps and prostitutes broke too many taboos. Manto was charged with obscenity a total of six times by authorities in colonial and independent India.



Indian Bollywood actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui poses during an interview with AFP at his office in Mumbai. — AFP

### Breakthrough

He died from organ failure caused by excessive alcohol consumption aged just 42. "Manto was an honest man who wrote what he saw. He was transparent and there was no hypocrisy in his life," said Siddiqui, who is 43. "He thought about things in the 1940s which we fail to see or think

about even today. He spoke and wrote the truth, and truth never gets old. To play him you have to be truthful too," he added. Siddiqui is one of Hindi cinema's great success stories—a poor man, who from humble beginnings in a village in Uttar Pradesh state, defied the odds to make it big in Bollywood after moving to Mumbai in 2000.

By his own admission the chances were stacked against him: "I'm a five-foot six-inch, dark, ordinary-looking man. People didn't imagine I would make it," he told AFP in 2015. But after years of playing small parts Siddiqui achieved his breakthrough in 2012 with "Talaash", "Gangs of Wasseypur", "Miss Lovely" and "Bajranghi Bhaijaan". He has not looked back. "I spent 10-12 years struggling. My lowest point was to find food and survive. Now I can do the work according to my choices," he said at his office, a collection of posters from his biggest hits hanging on a wall behind him. Siddiqui has held his own with superstars like Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan and also successfully crossed over into Hollywood, appearing in the 2016 hit "Lion".

### Playing a Hindu hardliner

He is considered to be one of the few actors who can straddle both commercial Bollywood and independent film genres, putting him in high demand. After "Manto", Siddiqui will be seen in the Netflix adaptation of Vikram Chandra's novel "Sacred Games". It releases on July 6 and will be the site's first original Indian series. He is currently shooting for what he describes as his "most difficult" character yet—divisive Mumbai politician Bal Thackeray, who died in 2012. Thackeray founded and led the Hindu far-right Shiv Sena party, which has campaigned against Muslims and sought to bar migrant "outsiders" from Mumbai. Siddiqui is both.

"Credit goes to the family and the producer who must have realised I could do justice to this complex and difficult role," he said. Siddiqui will be in Cannes from May 13-15 before returning to India to finish shooting "Thackeray" which releases in January 2019. He has become a fixture on la Croisette since debuting with "Gangs of Wasseypur" (2012), walking the red carpet more than half a dozen times. "The Lunchbox" was screened there in 2013 while "Raman Raghav" followed in 2016. A suit that Siddiqui had made by an Indian tailor for his first visit has been a feature of all of his appearances. This time, however, he is ditching it for a stylish tuxedo fashioned by one of India's top designers—symbolic perhaps of how far he has come. "The suit has its own story. But there should be change. We can't hold onto the past," said Siddiqui. — AFP

## Italian cinema 'giant' Ermanno Olmi dies aged 86



In this file photo Italy's director Ermanno Olmi poses with his Golden Lion for lifetime achievement at the 65th Venice International Film Festival in Venice Lido. — AFP

Palme d'Or winning director Ermanno Olmi has died at the age of 86 after a long battle with illness, the Italian Culture Ministry announced yesterday. The Italian director, most famous for his film "The Tree of Wooden Clogs" which won at the Cannes Film Festival in 1978, passed away in Asiago, near Venice. He had long suffered from Guillain-Barre syndrome, a muscle-weakening condition that can immobilize people for extended periods of time. "The death of Ermanno Olmi deprives us of a giant, one of the great maestros of Italian cinema," Culture Minister Dario Franceschini said. "He was a deep intellectual who explored the mysteries of man and recounted, with the poetry that characterizes his work, the relationship between man and nature."

Born in Bergamo in northern Italy in 1931, Olmi was a self-taught neo-realist filmmaker who produced a host of short films, documentaries and features. His most acclaimed, "The Tree of Wooden Clogs", was a depiction of the life of four poor peasant families in Lombardy at the end of the 19th century and is considered an important work of Italian cinema. Al Pacino named it when asked by the American Film Institute about his favorite films of all time in 2010. — AFP

## CANNES GOLDEN COUPLE BARDEM AND CRUZ RETURN TO OPEN FESTIVAL

It was where Javier Bardem memorably declared his love for Penelope Cruz in 2010 — now the golden couple of Spanish cinema will open this year's Cannes film festival together today. The Oscar-winning actors both star in Iranian master Asghar Farhadi's Spanish psychological thriller "Everybody Knows", which will kick off the festival and is up for the top Palme d'Or prize. The fiercely private couple's glowing return to the spotlight in Cannes comes after Bardem emotionally proclaimed his feelings for Cruz there eight years ago as he accepted the best actor award for "Biutiful".

"I share this joy with my friend, my companion, my love, Penelope. I owe you a lot and I love you so much," he said as Cruz blew kisses to him from her seat and her eyes welled with tears. Cruz has also won at Cannes, sharing the 2006 best actress prize with five other women for their work in acclaimed Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar's drama "Volver".

### First Spanish Oscar-winners

Bardem, 49, and Cruz, 44, have two children together and married in 2010 on an island in the Bahamas owned by their friend, US actor Johnny Depp. They also share a notable distinction—they are respectively the first Spanish man and woman to win an acting Oscar. Bardem won his best supporting actor Academy Award in 2008 for his role as a determined murderer in the Coen brothers' "No Country for Old Men". The following year Cruz took home the best actress Oscar for playing a fiery artist in Woody Allen's "Vicky Cristina Barcelona". But the couple live discreetly in a Madrid suburb, where they try to keep the spotlight away from their son Leo, seven, and daughter Luna, four.

They have starred in nine films together, including last year's "Loving Pablo", by Spanish director Fernando Leon de Aranoa, in which Bardem plays Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar and Cruz a journalist who falls in love with the infamous narco. After filming a particularly difficult scene, Bardem joked that Cruz "did not want to see me anymore". "She told me: 'Get rid of the moustache. Shave and go sleep in the living room,'" he recalled in an interview in March.



Spanish actor and actress Javier Bardem (right) and Penelope Cruz pose during a photocall to present the film "Loving Pablo" in Madrid. — AFP

### 'Passion for everything'

Bardem was born in 1969 on Spain's Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. His mother, actress Pilar Bardem, raised him after she separated from his father. Bardem dedicated his Oscar to his mother and her line of the family, which includes many actors. Cruz was born in 1974 to a modest family in a working class suburb of Madrid. Her father owned a store and her mother ran a beauty salon, where Cruz said she learnt to act by observing how clients behaved.

Both stars often say that they owe everything to the late Spanish director Bigas Luna, who brought them together for the first time in his 1991 movie "Jamon, Jamon". Cruz was just 17 at the time, and Bardem 22. In the film, their characters have a famous sexual encounter on top of a pinball machine, one of the most torrid scenes in Spanish cinema. The two then crossed paths in several other movies, but only began dating after shooting "Vicky Cristina Barcelona" in 2007 in Barcelona.

While Cruz usually avoids mentioning her husband in interviews, Bardem has spoke of his wife's passion to the media. "She feels passion for everything. It's what I find attractive in her. You have to have beauty and know how to be sexy. Penelope has both," Bardem told GQ magazine last year. Both declare themselves leftwing and were criticized in Hollywood in 2014 for their fierce condemnations of Israeli bombings in Gaza. This year they took part in a campaign by a Spanish NGO which rescues migrants at sea. — AFP





# Russian Embassy in Kuwait organizes 'costumes in focus'



The Russian Embassy in Kuwait recently organized a unique theatrical show entitled 'Cultural Diversity' at Abdulsussein Abduredha Theater in Salmiya. The jam-packed venue witnessed performances from the Russian State Kostroma

Drama Theater Group, who demonstrated and paraded the biggest collections of their national costumes in a concert. Several dignitaries were among the capacity crowd who attended and enjoyed the event.

—Photos By Joseph Shagra





# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018



A picture shows a view of an installation by German conceptual artist, Ottmar Hoerl, made of 500 smallscale sculptures featuring German-born physicist Albert Einstein on the Muensterplatz square in Ulm, Einstein's birth city. — AFP

## Lego-obsessed crowd packs convention every June near Chicago

If you think five straight days of Lego are for the kiddie set, think again. Brickworld Chicago is a convention aimed at adults. Teens are welcome. So are tweens. But better nab a grown-up, boys and girls, if you want to hang with this Lego-obsessed crowd. Children under 18 must be accompanied by adults. And no skateboarding, please, on the exhibition floor. No need to ask why, what with hundreds of painstakingly crafted Lego creations filling the hall.

Every June, Lego enthusiasts from around the world descend on this northwestern Chicago suburb to build Legos, display Legos, play Legos, talk Legos, swap Legos and win Legos. They watch Lego mini-figure films produced by fellow enthusiasts, and play Lego bingo using cards with mini-figure characters instead of numbers and letters. They see who can build the most mini-figures in two minutes flat. This year's convention is slated for June 13-17. The theme is "Seasons."

In the Dirty Buildster competition, participants exchange random Lego pieces, grab-bag style, and try to outdo each other with their concoctions. In hopes of setting a GBC (Great Ball Contraption) world record, they line up GBCs one after the other - some relatively simple, others crazy complicated - to funnel the mini Lego soccer balls from device to device. Last summer, the continuous circuit covered 26 long tables. Lego machines battle, Lego flowers bloom, Lego trains chug, Lego spacecraft hover, Lego bridges loom. Lego superheroes pose, Lego tables and stools actually function, along with Lego TV consoles and Lego refrigerator cases.

### 'Lego of My Chick'

A Lego bellman even greets guests staying at the Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center Hotel, an hour's train ride from downtown Chicago, while a restaurant there offers "Lego of My Chick" chicken-and-waffle sandwiches. Local university student Casey McCoy will be back for his eighth Brickworld Chicago, this time to help to run its film festival. Last year, he showcased a self-portrait made of more than 3,000 Lego bricks that took him three weeks to build. For the upcoming Brickworld, he created a 3,000-plus-brick portrait of character Eleven from the Netflix series "Stranger Things." It took him 13 hours. "The very best part of Brickworld is meeting new people, getting to know their life stories, what makes them tick, why they love building," McCoy, 22, said via email. Putting a face to an online avatar - "meeting someone from the online world" - is especially satisfying, he wrote.

If you go, you'll need to know some Lego acronyms. MOC stands for My Own Creation, as opposed to a standard-issued Lego kit. AFOL is shorthand for Adult Fans of Lego, TFOL for Teen Fans of Lego, NLSO for Non-Lego Significant Other. I fell into that last category when my 11-year-old son and I attended last summer's "Lights, Camera, Bricks" convention at the Schaumburg Convention Center, not long after the release of "The Lego Batman Movie." The staff assured me that my Lego-loving tween would fit in, but warned that late-night socials were strictly for those of legal age and that it was my responsibility, as mom, to remove him from mature conversations or situations.

### 'How many pieces are in this?'

No worries there. We were back in our hotel following the mostly G-rated evening receptions, speeches and charity auctions. And except for a mild curse word or two, conversations were pretty tame. The 2017 convention attracted approximately 1,000 registrants. Weekend days, open to

Try answering "How long did it take you to build this?" and "How many pieces are in this?" again and again and again. Even worse: "Did you glue the pieces together?" Kragle is an evil word among this crowd. (That's a contraction for Crazy Glue for those of you who didn't see 2014's "The Lego Movie.") Smile and be kind when reminding



Photo shows Chicago-area college student Casey McCoy and the self-portrait he created from more than 3,000 Lego bricks.



Photo taken at Brickworld Chicago in Scaumburg, Ill, shows some art knockoffs, Lego-style.

the public, attracted 10,000 people. Interestingly, while AFOLs live to build and love showing off their MOCs to other AFOLs, they can get agitated when the public arrives. They worry a youngster will bump and destroy the creation, thus the sudden appearance of guide rails in the aisles come Saturday morning. There also are the dreaded questions.

the crowd not to touch, AFOLs were advised in the private opening ceremony. So if you really want to impress these Lego masters of the universe, do NOT ask them how long it took to build their creation, how many pieces there are, and whether their masterpiece is glued. And whatever you do, don't touch. — AP



Photo shows a picnic, Lego-style, complete with ants.



Photo shows a Lego-created scene from the movie "Toy Story."



Photo shows part of the long lineup of Great Ball Contraptions built from Legos for funneling mini Lego soccer balls from device to device.— AP photos

## 'Day to remember' for art-loving nudists in Paris

No shoes, no shirt, no problem: A Paris gallery gave nearly 200 people a rare chance for a clothes-free visit this weekend, the latest opportunity for the city's flourishing nudist scene. The Palais de Tokyo, a contemporary art museum in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, offered the guided tour before opening to the general public on Saturday. "What a day to remember. A new chapter in naturism is opening," the Paris Naturists' Association said on

Twitter after the visit, which the museum called the first of its kind in France. The participants, who snapped up the tickets in just two days after the event was announced last March, were able to take it all off for the show "Discordia, Daughter of the Night".

They were then treated to a private cocktail party on the museum's roof. "An incredible moment, what a success! Mindsets are changing and naturism is becoming commonplace," the nudists' association said.

The French capital has become increasingly attentive to fans of baring their all, with the city last year setting aside a designated patch for nudists in the Bois de Vincennes park to the east of the city. They can also enjoy a meal at their own restaurant, named O'Naturel. —AFP