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8 Celebrations as Armenian protest leader Pashinyan elected premier



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16 Kuwait SC lift Amir Cup for 13th time in history



Trump pulls US from 'defective' Iran nuclear deal, slaps sanctions

Rouhani slams 'psychological warfare' • Pompeo in N Korea, date set for summit

Planning council discusses education, financial reform



KUWAIT: First Deputy Premier, Defense Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Development and Planning Council Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah yesterday chaired the 10th meeting of the first term of the council. Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh said the meeting discusses various topics on the agenda including developing education and the challenges of economic and financial reforms. — KUNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump defied the pleas of his European allies and pulled the United States out of the Iran nuclear deal yesterday, vowing to re-impose crippling sanctions on Tehran and warning that Iranians deserve a better government. His decision itself came as little surprise - the US leader has long scorned what he called the "disastrous" 2015 accord - but his suggestion that the regime must change underlined the risks of a dangerous new escalation in the Middle East.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo promised that Washington will work with its friends to build a new agreement to curtail Iran's alleged quest for nuclear weapons - but there was no disguising that Trump's decision marked a stark diplomatic defeat for Europe, whose leaders had begged him to think again. "I am announcing today that the United States will withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal," Trump declared in a White House address, branding the landmark 2015 accord that was endorsed by Britain, China, Germany, Russia and Barack Obama's previous US administration "defective at its core".

Trump - who enjoys close ties with Iran's foes Saudi Arabia and Israel - said he had consulted America's friends in the Middle East and concluded "that we cannot prevent an Iranian nuclear bomb under the decaying and rotten structure of the current agreement". "America will not be held hostage to



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump signs a document reinstating sanctions against Iran after announcing the US' withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House yesterday. — AFP

nuclear blackmail," Trump vowed. "We will not allow American cities to be threatened with destruction and we will not allow a regime that chants 'Death to America' to gain access to the most deadly weapons on Earth." Trump's hawkish National Security Advisor John Bolton said that European firms would have a "wind down" period to cancel any investments made in Iran under the terms of the accord, after the world agreed to give Tehran

sanctions relief in return for it scaling back its enrichment program and placing its nuclear industry under international inspection.

But there was no disguising the dismay in European capitals, whose diplomats see the deal as the best way of keeping tabs on Iran's ambitions while heading off the risk of a destabilizing new arms race in the Middle East, where tensions are already soaring

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Ashour, Sabeeh spar over closed charity society

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Saleh Ashour claimed yesterday that Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh misinformed the National Assembly in a grilling last week, but the minister immediately denied the claims. The lawmaker challenged the minister to prove that a Shiite charity society - Al-Thaqalain Charity - has received any loan as she claimed during the debate of the grilling filed against her by Ashour himself.

The charity, which has close links to Ashour, was recently dissolved by the



Saleh Ashour

minister for committing financial and administrative violations. Ashour had said that the minister accused the charity of



Hind Al-Sabeeh

receiving a loan worth KD 100,000, which constitutes a breach of the law. The loan was one of the reasons for dissolving

the charity. Last week, Ashour said he will quit his Assembly seat if the minister can prove that the society took the loan.

The minister said yesterday that she did not say in the grilling that the charity took any bank loan and reiterated that what she said was that the society gave loans from donors' money to individuals, which is a violation of the law. The minister told reporters that the head of the society was cautioned not to give such loans and he pledged to respect the law. But he later continued with such violations, she said.

Sabeeh wondered why there has been such an emphasis on the alleged loan issue while other flagrant violations supported by documented evidence have been sidelined. These violations include transferring funds through money exchange companies and not through banks as required and hiding the sources of donations and ways of spending it, the minister said.

Continued on Page 11

Breakthrough with Manila near; state values Filipinos



KUWAIT: Information Minister Mohammed Al-Jabri meets former Philippine minister of information Francisco Tatad yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Philippines Minister of Labor and Employment Silvestre Bello will be in Kuwait today for talks with senior officials to discuss means of solving Filipino workers' problems and a relevant workforce agreement, the deputy foreign minister said yesterday. "The standoff with the Philippines is heading to a breakthrough," Khaled Al-Jarallah told reporters on sidelines of a reception by the Italian Embassy to mark the European country's national day.

Asked if a new Filipino ambassador to Kuwait has been nominated, Jarallah said the foreign ministry is awaiting such a nomination. Kuwait declared the Philippines ambassador persona non grata after acts committed by Filipino nationals in violation of Kuwait's sovereignty were deemed as interference in its internal affairs and even as violating relevant international agreements and treaties, especially Article 41 of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Earlier yesterday, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammed Al-Jabri said Filipinos form the third largest community in Kuwait and are very well cared for by the state. He made the remark yesterday after a meeting with visiting former Philippine minister of information Francisco Tatad and an accompanying delegation. According to a statement by the Kuwaiti information ministry, Jabri recalled during the meeting the initial stance by Philippines in the aftermath of the 1990 Iraqi brutal invasion of Kuwait. He highly appreciated Philippines' support of just causes.

Jabri noted that it is integral to the ministry's policy to build bridges of communication between the relevant state bodies and expats in Kuwait. This is obvious in the allocation of hours for Tagalog programs on Radio Kuwait. In a separate meeting, Jabri and the

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Erdogan blasts French call over Quran passages

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday hit out at a French manifesto calling for certain passages of the Holy Quran to be removed in response to rising anti-Semitism. An open letter, published on April 22 in Le Parisien newspaper and signed by nearly 300, argued that verses of the Quran calling for the "murder and punishment of Jews, Christians and disbelievers" should be removed because they are "obsolete". Signatories included former French presi-

dent Nicolas Sarkozy and former prime minister Manuel Valls as well as intellectuals and other public figures.

"Who are you to attack our scriptures? We know how vile you are," Erdogan retorted. "Have they ever read their books, the Bible? Or the Torah?" Erdogan asked, referring to the Christian and Jewish holy books, adding: "If they had read them, they probably would want to ban the Bible." The signatories in the letter said "Islamist radicalization" was to blame for what it described as a "quiet ethnic purging" in the Paris region, with abuse forcing Jewish families to move out. A third of France's record hate crimes target Jews, despite the community making up only 0.7 percent of the population.

But Erdogan also pointed to Islamophobia in the West, saying Ankara had warned its partners of "Islamophobia, anti-Turkish feeling, xenophobia, racism".

Continued on Page 11



Recep Tayyip Erdogan

NY attorney general latest #MeToo scalp

NEW YORK: New York state's top prosecutor, a public defender of the #MeToo movement and antagonist of Donald Trump, has become the latest public figure to resign over allegations of sexual misconduct. Eric Schneiderman, a 63-year-old progressive Democrat serving a second elected term as state attorney general, resigned late Monday hours after being accused of physically assaulting four women. It was a swift fall from power for the chief law enforcement official in the state, an outspoken Trump opponent whose office had

launched multiple legal challenges against the Republican administration.

"Gotcha," tweeted White House counselor to the president, Kellyanne Conway, although there was no immediate response from Trump. "While these allegations are unrelated to my professional conduct or the operations of the office, they will effectively prevent me from leading the office's work at this critical time," he said. "I therefore resign my office, effective at the close of business on May 8."

Two of the women spoke to The New Yorker on the record, alleging that Schneiderman repeatedly hit them, often after drinking, frequently in bed and never with their consent. Both say they sought medical attention after having been slapped hard across the ear and face, and also choked, the magazine said. The article was co-written by Ronan Farrow, who last month shared

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Eric Schneiderman

Local

His Highness the Amir leaves to Ukraine on a private visit

Crown Prince receives Sheikh Dr Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Sheikh Dr Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah departed the country yesterday heading to Ukraine on a private visit. His Highness the Amir was seen off at the airport by His Highness the Deputy Amir

and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, as well as senior state officials. Separately, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf received Sheikh Dr Mohammad



Chief of National Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah meets with Iraq's ambassador to Kuwait.

Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday.

In other news, Chief of National Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah received Iraq's ambassador to Kuwait. The meeting focused on means of

strengthening bilateral relations, the Bureau's public relations said in a press statement. The two sides also addressed regional and international issues of common concern, it added. — KUNA

Photo of the Day



IRBIL: Iraqis who lost their limbs in the government offensive to retake the city of Mosul from the Islamic State (IS) group, gather to play football in Irbil, the capital of the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq, during an event sponsored by the Kuwaiti government on May 7, 2018. — AFP photos

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AUB sponsors Int'l Islamic Finance Conference

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced the sponsorship of the International Islamic Finance Conference, which took place recently in Kuwait. The event, which was held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was one of the largest gatherings to have taken place of global leaders and local expertise in the Islamic finance industry.

On this occasion, AUB's CEO Richard Groves said, "We congratulate the Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Islamic Financial Services Board for hosting an excellent conference here in

Kuwait. We were delighted to participate in this event which undoubtedly assists in promoting and adding value to Kuwait as a leading center for Islamic banking. The conference agenda reflected industry discussions around important matters that are of interest to central banks, financial institutions, their clients and other stakeholders, and which operate in accordance with Islamic sharia. This is very much in line with AUB's priority in actively participating in and supporting the development of Islamic banking."

"AUB's commitment to develop the Islamic banking sector in Kuwait, and its belief in its strong potential, has been the cornerstone of the Bank's success and its ability to become one of the strongest Islamic banks in Kuwait. The Bank has been able to achieve notable successes since the onset of its operations as an Islamic bank in April 2010. AUB was able to solidify its leading position in



KUWAIT: Dr Anwar Al-Mudhaf, AUB Chairman, visits AUB's booth at the event with Richard Groves, CEO, and Tareq Muhmood, Senior Deputy CEO.

Islamic finance by developing innovative investment and financing instruments that accommodate clients' varied needs. The Bank's efforts were recently recognized when it was awarded the 'Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait' award in 2017 from the highly regarded Islamic Business and Finance mag-

azine," added Groves. Groves further remarked, "We look forward to participating in such important conferences in future. Our aim is to help further develop and expand the Islamic banking sector, which is witnessing commendable growth locally, regionally and internationally."

Local

Customs advisor received KD 20,000 bribe to facilitate illegal transaction

Passenger tried to smuggle 10,000 drug pills through airport

By A Saleh, Hanan Al-Saadoun, Meshaal Al-Enezi and Agencies

KUWAIT: Criminal investigators yesterday arrested an Arab man working as an advisor at the Customs General Department over charges of receiving a KD 20,000 bribe. The sources said that on being tipped about the advisor's illegal practices, undercover agents made an arrangement with him to illegally facilitate a certain company's transaction. The suspect was arrested red-handed while receiving the marked notes, said the sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity.



Beef imports banned from Zimbabwe, South Korea

Beef ban

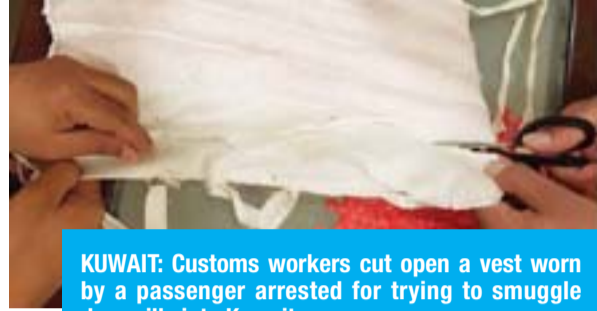
The supreme food safety committee recommended banning all beef imports from Zimbabwe and South Korea, where foot and mouth disease has been detected. The committee also recommended lifting previous bans on importing all types of poultry meat from UK, Denmark, Switzerland and from the US states of Missouri and Texas after they were proven free from bird flu. The committee's secretary Adel Al-Suwait said the recommendations were made in the committee's meeting number 3/2018, in which the committee also recommended lifting the ban on fresh, chilled and processed cow, sheep and goat meat from Kazakhstan.

Attempted murder

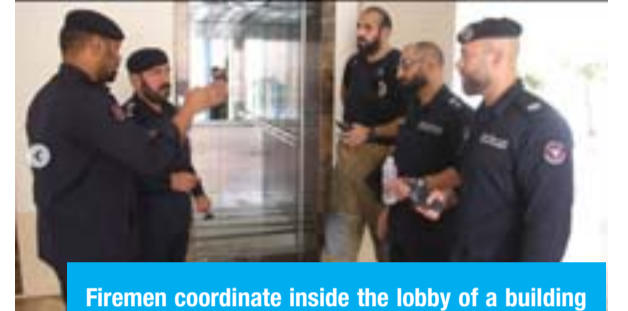
The Ahmadi prosecutor charged a female citizen, 24, with attempted murder after she rammed her car into a police sergeant, Al-Anbaa daily reported. A police source said the sergeant was taken to hospital for treatment of minor injuries. The incident took place in Mahboula as the girl was pulled over. When she was asked to get out of her car, because she was found wanted, she hit the sergeant and the patrol car, but was arrested.

Fake doctor arrested

Criminal detectives arrested an Egyptian man claiming to be a doctor, who had become well known for his ability to get sick leaves for government employees for KD 10 per day. A citizen met the head of criminal detectives Maj Gen Mohammad Al-Sharhan and told him many of her colleagues said whenever they want leave or to travel,



KUWAIT: Customs workers cut open a vest worn by a passenger arrested for trying to smuggle drug pills into Kuwait.



Firemen coordinate inside the lobby of a building where a fire was reported yesterday.

they get sick leaves for KD 10 per day. She said she made an appointment with the man and gave him KD 20 for a two-day leave slip. Sharhan ordered investigations into the matter, and detectives discovered the man is an air-conditioning technician and not a doctor. Doctors who signed the sick leaves for him were not aware of him charging money for them.

Fake cop in custody

A bedoon man was taken to Jleeb Al-Shuyukh detectives for questioning for posing as a policeman. He was arrested in a mall wearing a police uniform. When a police foot patrol approached him, the suspect attempted to escape, but he was caught. He said he wears the uniform only for showing off. He claimed to have a car rental office in the mall, adding that he never goes out of the mall in uniform.

Policeman questioned

A police lieutenant colonel is being questioned over allowing his brother to escape and beating a public employee. A security source said a police patrol in Aswaq Al-Qurain suspected a car, and when they checked the ID

of the driver, he was found wanted on a debt. The man made a phone call, and minutes later, a man came and claimed to be the brother of the wanted man. He said he is a lieutenant colonel, then insulted the two patrolmen, rammed the patrol car, and escaped.

Smuggling foiled

Airport customs officers foiled two separate attempts to smuggle around 14.5 kg of qat. Airport customs director Waleed Al-Nasser said roaming customs officers suspected an Arab man, and when his luggage was searched, 20 bags of tea were found filled with around 14 kg of qat. An African woman later arrived, and when her luggage was searched, 500 gm of qat were found with her.

'Sofex 2018'

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) is participating in the exhibition and conference of special operations forces 'Sofex 2018' which is currently being held in Jordan. KFS is participating with a delegation headed by Deputy Director General for Human Resources Development Maj Gen Eng Khalid Al-Tarkait.

10,000 pills

An Arab man was arrested with possession of 3.5 kilograms of drugs he tried to smuggle through Kuwait International Airport yesterday. The man was apprehended based on information that airport detectives received about an Arab passenger carrying a large amount of drug pills, who was on a plane that was on its way to Kuwait. The suspect was placed under arrest after police found a total of 10,000 pills hidden in a vest he was wearing.

Salmya fire

Firefighters tackled a blaze that broke in a Salmya building yesterday, while no injuries were reported. The fire started in a 20th floor apartment used as a gym for the residential building's tenants. An investigation was opened to determine the cause of the fire.

Ministry forms committee to implement VAT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait's finance ministry has formed a special committee to implement the value added tax (VAT), while its experts helped the committee frame the VAT law. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) said. PWC also noted that the Kuwaiti government is currently moving towards imposing VAT and that it had made a high-profile briefing of its transactions after fully studying VAT's impact on the national economy and evaluation of its implementation in Kuwait. PWC also said the IMF had urged Kuwait to move forward in terms of implementing VAT, after it was implemented in UAE and Saudi Arabia at the beginning of this year.

In collaboration with PWC, the Investment Companies Union (ICU) invited all concerned parties to a conference titled 'Problems and Best Practices on Implementing VAT'. Responding to criticism of VAT and doubts surrounding it, the taxation and planning manager at the finance ministry Osama Al-Qassar stressed that as part of a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) effort, the ministry has been working for 10 years on implementing VAT, adding that it would not be imposed immediately once the law is passed. "A six to 12-month grace period will be given," he assured, pointing out that the ministry had met with various economic sectors including banks, investment and oil companies, gold merchants and others to gauge their opinions and suggestions. Qassar stressed that once the law is passed, companies would have to comply to avoid the penalties and fines set by the law.

Housing projects

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare's (PAHW) deputy director for design and planning Nasser Khoraiobot said the authority has made a substantial shift in its projects by shifting from the mere construction of regular areas to building integrated cities including commercial, investment and industrial zones. Khoraiobot said the authority is fully committed to its declared strategy of distributing 12,000 housing units a year, and stressed that this strategy managed to win citizens' trust after waiting times were reduced from 15 to only three years.

In addition, Khoraiobot said once this five-year plan is concluded, the new Nawaf Al-Ahmad City would be built during the following plans to the west of Mutlaa City, and it is expected to include 52,000 housing units. He also stressed that a housing plot will not be less than 400 sq m, especially after the authority stopped building houses and chose to provide citizens with land so that they could choose the designs they want.

Commercial licenses

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) is expected to issue a decision within the next few days on exempting citizens with disabilities from the fees of issuing commercial licenses.

Hajj convoys

Manager of the Hajj Affairs Bureau Mohammed Al-Mutairi announced that 49 hajj convoys had been approved for this year's season, and upon a directive issued by the Saudi hajj ministry, pilgrims' registration will start early this year. Mutairi said accredited hajj convoys will start receiving applicants to register them in the e-hajj program, which automatically files a hajj leave for employees. He also warned against using unregistered and unofficial hajj convoys, noting that those operating such convoys will be punished by up to one year in jail or up to KD 50,000 in fines.

Modern health systems based on trained staff

KUWAIT: Modern healthcare systems rely on qualified and well-trained human elements, as basis to provide high-quality services and achieve sustainable development, Minister of Health Sheikh Bassel Humoud Hamad Al-Sabah told a major conference yesterday. The minister's statement was delivered on his behalf by Head of the ministry's Directorate of Medical Laboratories Services Dr Doaa Al-Khaldi, to the opening session of the three-day gathering.

The ministry, represented by the Directorate of Medical Laboratories Services, has been keeping pace with medical and health care progress worldwide, to get acquainted with the latest techniques for viral diseases analysis and

treatment, Khaldi added. In addition, the ministry maintains contacts with the world's leading health organizations to update the relevant instructions and directives.

The conference comes at a time when the ministry is hard at work to promote the diagnostic and treatment services of these disease, the minister stressed. Conference President Dr Maamoun Al-Quseir, said that participants in the scientific event would discuss 19 papers through four sessions and four workshops. Leading specialists and experts from the UK, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia and Oman are taking part in the conference, he added.

In other news, Kuwait Municipality yesterday launched a cleanliness campaign themed 'contact us'. Municipality's Public Relations Director and Spokesman Abdulmohsen Aba-Alkheil added in a statement that the drive responded to citizens' complaints of encroachments on state property. These included tents, fences and other facilities, illegally set up on state-owned property in residential areas, he explained.—KUNA

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

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The sun rises above the Arabian Gulf waters at a beach in Kuwait. — KUNA photo

NBK announces charity social program for Ramadan

1,000 iftar meals to be distributed inside NBK tent

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is preparing for its charity social program for the holy month of Ramadan. Executive Manager of Public Relations Department at NBK Abdulmohsen Al-Rasheed said the program includes distributing 1,000 iftar meals inside the NBK tent, located at the opposite side of Souq Sharq. Meanwhile, 20 field tours will be organized to hospitals, mosques, public facilities and areas of heavy population, he added.

Furthermore, Rasheed said that bank employees will volunteer to serve those who are fasting and worshippers in mosques daily, adding that refrigerators will be provided in mosques to provide iftar meals.

Meanwhile, NBK will sponsor the 'Iftar Cannon Program' at Nayef Palace for the third consecutive year. In addition, the 'Help and be Happy' campaign will be organized to help low income families as per the strategic partnership with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society. NBK will also celebrate 'girgean' with children in hospitals. Rasheed concluded by saying that NBK will cooperate with Kuwait Fire Service Directorate to give awareness messages through social media.



Abdulmohsen Al-Rasheed



Center hails Madina Arabic Calligraphy Forum

JEDDAH: Kuwait's Islamic Arts Center's Director Fareed Al-Ali praised the first Madinah Forum for Arabic Calligraphy, currently held in the Saudi city of Madinah. In a statement following a workshop for Kuwaiti calligrapher Jassem Al-Mearaj, Ali expressed admiration of displayed works, the high level of organization, and remarkable turnout.

The Islamic Arts Center was delighted to partake in this event to promote Arabic calligraphy and show the Kuwait's contribution to the culture and arts, he said. He noted that the center participated in the 14-day forum with a collection of Arabic calligraphy works and a variety of its related publications. —KUNA



Kuwait's Islamic Arts Center Director Fareed Al-Ali attends the first Madinah Forum for Arabic Calligraphy.

Zain holds internal blood drive campaign

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, recently held internal blood drive campaign for its employees. The campaign, held at the company's main headquarters in Shuwaikh, came in strategic partnership with the Central Blood Bank of Kuwait.

Zain organizes this health initiative several times a year under the umbrella of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards the health sector through partnerships with major health organizations in the country, including the Central Blood Bank. The campaign also aims at encouraging Zain employees to donate blood and save the lives of those who are in most need of blood transfusion. The blood drive campaign witnessed immense positive participation from Zain employees, who continued to donate blood throughout a whole day with the presence of the Central Blood Bank's medical staff. Zain strives to contribute to the community through its numerous corporate social responsibility initiatives and is pleased

with the success this particular activity has achieved.

The company is keen to organize internal blood drive campaigns for employees in collaboration with the Central Blood Bank to encourage employees to donate blood and save lives, further reinforcing the company's keenness in having a productive role in social and health activities, especially those that contribute with saving

people that are in urgent need of blood like people with rare blood types.

Zain's solid Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy primarily focuses on the wellbeing of the entire nation. For this reason, the company has maintained its support of numerous initiatives that spread awareness and help make a difference to people's everyday lives.



KUWAIT: Zain employees participate in the blood drive campaign.

Local

GCC faces major challenges in energy transition: Expert

GCC economies still highly dependent on oil and gas revenue

BRUSSELS: The transition of a petroleum-based economy to green economy is much more challenging for the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) countries than anywhere else because of the lack of economic diversification, said a leading Arab energy expert late on Monday.

The economies of GCC are highly dependent on oil and gas revenue. They are making commitment to reduce their carbon emission in line with the global agenda. And at the same time the world is telling them, we are moving away from oil and gas, noted Dr Carole Nakhle, founder and CEO of Crystol Energy, an advisory, research and training firm based in London. Dr Nakhle, who is of Lebanese origin, was speaking at a seminar on "energy transition for the Arab oil producers of the GCC. How real, how likely and can we get there?" The event was organized by the Brussels Energy Club.

The six-member GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. "If oil and gas revenues are really squeezed, how will these countries find their energy transition? So where will the money come from for financing this transition?" asked Dr Nakhle.

"As long as these economies (of GCC) remain reliant on oil and gas revenues, then we are going to have a vicious cycle. In order to facilitate the energy transition you need to produce more, not less, oil and gas to finance that transition," she said. "When helping countries to transition to a greener energy future, first of all we have to ask whether and when the cleaner sources of energy can become independent of state support and even generate revenues for the government," stated Dr Nakhle. She said that when people talk about green future, they forget fossil fuels are a major generator of revenues not only for oil producing countries but also for the oil consuming countries.

"And the second big question is whether the GCC will be able to diversify their economies fast enough and create a sustainable source of income which goes beyond petroleum exports," she said and added that "the race is on so let us see which one will go faster." Dr Nakhle has worked on energy projects in more than 40 countries, written numerous articles in academic journals, newspapers and magazines and lectures on energy issues around the globe. —KUNA



BRUSSELS: Dr Carole Nakhle speaks during the seminar in Brussels. —KUNA

Current account records \$7.1 billion in 2017: CBK

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Current Account recorded a surplus of KD 2,152 million (about \$7.1 billion), against a deficit of KD 1,528 million (\$5.04 billion) in 2016, the CBK said in a press release yesterday. The surplus in the current account is due to the rise in the surpluses of balance on goods and the primary income on one hand, and the decrease in the secondary income deficit on the

other, it added.

According to the CBK, the surplus in the current account mainly reflects a surge in the value of oil exports at a greater rate than that of value of merchandise imports. This resulted in increasing surplus of the balance on goods (merchandise exports minus merchandise imports) to KD 7,769 million (\$25.6 billion) during 2017 as compared to KD 5,898 million (\$19.4 billion) a year before. Deficit in the Services Account (net value of services transactions between residents and non-residents, the most important of which are transportation, travel, communications and construction) increased by KD 877 million (\$ 2.9 billion), 14.5 percent to KD 6,925 million (\$19.9 billion) during 2017, compared to a deficit of KD 6,049 million during the previous year.

As for the Financial Account (that records transactions involving transfers of financial assets and liabilities between residents and non-residents) of the State of Kuwait's BOP during 2017, preliminary statistics indicate a net capital outflows of KD 6,522 million (\$21.5 billion) against a net capital inflows of KD 1,780 million (\$5.9 billion) during 2016.

Separately, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) also announced yesterday its latest issues of bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 240 million (\$792 million). The issuance is for three months with a rate of return 2.250 percent. The last similar issuance of bonds and related Tawarruq by the CBK, was on April 30, at the value of KD 200 million (\$660 million) for three months with rate of return 2.250 percent. — KUNA



The Central Bank of Kuwait.





China, North Korea leaders hold talks

Revolution sweeps Armenian opposition leader into power

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LONDON: Philip Barnard-Brown, Senior Coachman leads out a Windsor Grey, one of four horses that will pull the Ascot Landau carriage carrying Britain's Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle along the processional route in Windsor at the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace. —AFP

What do blacks think of Meghan-Harry marriage?

Markle's father is white and mother is African-American

LONDON: Lawyer Gaile Walters has no time for the British monarchy but still believes the wedding of American actress Meghan Markle to Queen Elizabeth's grandson Prince Harry marks an important moment for Britain's black community. "It has to be significant. The fact of someone black being married into the royal family represents a widening and a diversion and an inclusion that it's never had before," Walters told Reuters as she shopped in Brixton, south London.

"I'm still not pro-monarchy at all because I don't think anybody is born to rule. However, I do understand symbolism and this is very powerful." The upcoming marriage of the British prince, sixth-in-line to the British throne, to Markle, whose father is white and mother is African-American, has been heralded as demonstrating how Britain has become more egalitarian and racially mixed. Just 60 years ago, marrying a divorcee was considered unacceptable for a British royal, and only in 2013 did it become permissible to wed a Catholic without being removed from the line of succession.

So Markle's entry into an exclusively white royal family, who wield hugely emotional symbolic power in Britain, should not be underestimated, said Afua Hirsch, author of "Brit(ish): On Race, Identity and Belonging". "It represents a real change in the messaging to young people growing up in Britain and that idea that blackness and Britishness are mutually exclusive," she said. "I think for me when I was younger that would have made a huge difference to me psychologically in my sense of legitimacy and confidence that this is my country."

'Rivers of blood'

The wedding comes at a time race issues have been prominent in Britain. Last month saw the 25th anniversary of the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence by white racists which led to London's police force being labeled institutionally racist by an inquiry due to its botched handling of the case. It was also 50 years since

the infamous "Rivers of blood" speech by politician Enoch Powell in which he warned that "the black man will have the whip hand over the white man" if immigration was not stopped.

The British government has also found itself mired in a scandal about treatment of some descendants of the "Windrush generation" of Caribbean migrants who were invited to Britain after World War Two but have been left without documents and denied basic rights. Markle, whose maternal ancestors were slaves, and Harry attended a memorial service to mark the Lawrence anniversary and there has been much commentary about how attitudes have changed since the days of Powell. But others say the Windrush episode betrays the true picture.

"(The wedding) means nothing. It really is a non-event in terms of what it means for society," Kehinde Andrews, an associate professor of sociology at Birmingham City University and author on race issues. He described racism "as British as a cup of tea." "What on earth could we possibly be celebrating in the fact that there's a splash of coffee in the premier symbol of whiteness in the UK? "That's for me the problem with a lot of the coverage of this wedding. The monarchy is an institution. Adding a black face, one black face, one very light-skinned, pretty black face is not going to change the institution."

A survey for the British Future think-tank last month suggested most Britons would barely notice Markle's ethnicity and the vast majority welcomed it. However, 12 percent of those questioned thought someone of mixed race marrying into the royal family was bad and 25 percent would be uncomfortable with their child to having a serious relationship or marrying someone of a different race. It also found 33 percent of ethnic minority respondents thought racial prejudice was as high as when Lawrence was murdered. In a TV interview last month, London mayor Sadiq Khan, who is a Muslim, said most institutions in Britain had "problems with institutional racism".

'Straight outta Compton'

Ever since it was first reported the couple were dating, Markle's ethnicity has attracted attention, and by no means always positive. In late 2016, Harry issued a rare rebuke to the press, condemning the racial undertones of some articles. One story about the Los Angeles neighborhood where Markle's mother Doria Ragland lives carried the headline "Harry's girl is (almost) straight outta Compton: Gang-scarred home of her mother revealed" while Rachel Johnson, sister of British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, wrote she would bring "rich and exotic DNA" to the Windsors.

Asked about such focus in a TV interview to mark their engagement last November, Markle said such coverage had been "disheartening". "But I think you know at the end of the day I'm really just proud of who I am and where I come from and we have never put any focus on that, we've just focused on who we are as a couple," she said. In the street market in Brixton, where many Windrush immigrants settled and which has a large black population, the overwhelming view of the royal marriage was positive, some likening it to Barack Obama becoming America's first black president.

Those reactions echoed the warm reception the engaged couple received when in January they visited Brixton, an area that became synonymous with inner city deprivation following race riots in 1981. "I think it's good for the nation to see somebody like her marrying in the royal family," transport worker Noel Davis, 60 said. Rhianne Fleming, 23, said: "I think it's going to be exciting, especially the fact that she's mixed race. "It shouldn't be that important. But the historical context ... I guess it is a bit of a "Wow, oh my god this is happening" when it shouldn't be," she added.

Hirsch said younger people she had spoken to admired Markle. "They are interested in this royal wedding in ways they have never been in previous royal weddings," she said. "Because there is something there who looks like them, like somebody they are close to, whose mother resembles somebody they are close to." However, for Andrews and



LISBURN: Britain's Prince Harry and US actress and fiancée of Britain's Prince Harry Meghan Markle arrive at the Elkon Centre in Lisburn. —AFP

others, it just showed how bad the situation is. "Markle is not Britain's Obama moment and shouldn't be covered as such. Being chosen by a prince is not democracy," author Reni Eddo-Lodge wrote on Twitter after the engagement was announced.

"Because racism is so bad and so historic and so entrenched that we tend to look for things, anything," Andrews said. "So any symbol that could possibly be good we tend to over-celebrate. But when we sit back and actually analyze what's happened and what's changed, we'll realize it means nothing at all. "The serious issues of entrenched racism, unemployment, all these issues that really face us, the monarchy is part of the problem and she's now part of the problem not the solution." For many on the streets of Brixton though, race was ultimately not the main issue of the wedding. "If the people love each other, then it doesn't matter if they are royal or common," Walters said. "It's love that matters." —Reuters

70 years after the exodus, Palestinians still dream of return

AMARI REFUGEE CAMP: Thaer Sharkawi, 31, has never visited the place he calls home. The Palestinian was born and raised in the Amari refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, but for him his house is 50 kilometers away in the town of Kafr Ana inside what is now Israel. Kafr Ana hasn't actually existed for decades-demolished in the weeks after Sharkawi's grandfather fled in 1948 - yet he knows there was a boys' and girls' school and can vividly picture the orange groves his great-grandfather tended. "I haven't been there but I have heard about it," he said. "I studied about it and read about it on the internet." Sharkawi is one of around five million Palestinian refugees spread across Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Gaza and the West Bank.

The majority of them are descendants of those who left during the 1948 "Nakba"-or catastrophe-when more than 700,000 were expelled or fled their homes in the war surrounding Israel's creation. Like Sharkawi, most have never seen their historic homes, many of which were destroyed by Israel. Yet, as they mark seven decades since that mass displacement on May 15, Palestinian refugees are determined to maintain connections to the land they

still want to return to. Sharkawi sits with his father Nabil and grandmother Khadija, who at 85 remembers fleeing her home as Israeli fighters approached.

'Google helps them'

Nabil contrasts the open fields of his father's former home to the cramped conditions they have lived in for 70 years in the Amari camp, but said he wasn't worried the new generation would lose the link to their historical homelands. "There are (technological) developments now-there is Sheikh Google. They can open it and see 'here was Kufri Ana'," he said. "Google helps them to see the land that is theirs."

But Ali, a 19-year-old also in Amari but whose grandparents came from Al-Na'ani, said he knew "nothing" about the village, also destroyed in 1948. "My grandparents died when I was young and no one really talked about it." The so-called right of return for Palestinian refugees is one of the most difficult issues in the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Israel flat out rejects it, saying allowing even a fraction of them to return would mean the end of it as a Jewish state.

Facebook memories

But Palestinians see the issue as essential and refugees have passed on memories from generation to generation. They will rarely say they simply come from Palestine, instead naming a village, town or even street. In a field, Bakar Fahmawi points his camera at an abandoned Ottoman building, with rows of neat Israeli houses in the background. "Here there was a market for all kinds of trade," he says on

the video, pointing his phone at an overgrown field.

Every week for the past five years Fahmawi, an Israeli citizen whose Palestinian family remained inside the land that became Israel, has filmed an abandoned village or area and posted it on his Facebook page for Palestinians across the world to see. "Those that left have heard about their country, but they have never seen it," he said by phone. "I do it so they don't forget their country and for them to know they have a country, the most beautiful in the world."

'We will return'

In Gaza, run by Islamist movement Hamas and hermetically sealed by Israel and Egypt for years, the internet is often the only way for them to see the outside world. Since protests and clashes calling for the right to return began on March 30 along Gaza's border, more than 50 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire, mostly by snipers. No Israelis have been injured. Israel accuses Hamas, with whom it has fought three wars in a decade, of using the protests as cover for violence, but Palestinians say protesters are being shot while posing no threat.

The Nakba commemoration is likely to bring fresh bloodshed in Gaza, especially if Hamas encourages protesters to approach the border fence and with Israel determined to stop infiltrations. Shayma Aheed, 16, has known nothing but Gaza, yet she holds up the key to her grandfather's house in Al-Jiyya, a town 19 kilometers north of the Palestinian enclave and which was emptied in 1948. "(Grandad) used to love to tell us about Al-Jiyya, his friends, the farm work and our house that was warm in the winter and cool in summer," she said. "We will return to his house one day." —AFP

Back to school for Thailand's elderly

BANGKOK: Wearing crisp red-and-white uniforms, a group of 60-year-olds pile into a bus, smiling broadly as they make their way to a school in Ayutthaya, a province in Thailand. For this group, and others across the country, going back to school offers a way to fight loneliness at a time when changing demographics mean more elderly people are living alone.

"I've been looking forward to every Wednesday, when I go to school, dress up as a school student and meet friends. We get to talk and laugh together," said Somjit Teeraraj, a 77-year-old widow who is a student at the school for the elderly in Ayutthaya's Chiang Rak Noi sub-district. After the death of her husband of 40 years, with her children visiting occasionally, Somjit said it was the school that helped her recover from her loss. Somjit's story is emblematic of a larger problem in Thailand

a rapidly ageing population.

Thailand, together with China, is ageing faster than its regional neighbors. By 2040, it is expected to have the highest share of elderly people of any developing country in East Asia, according to the World Bank. Thailand has 7.5 million people aged 65 and over, a figure projected to swell to 17 million by 2040 - more than a quarter of the expected population. Traditionally, ageing Thais lived at home with their families and were cared for by their children. But with many leaving the countryside to work in the cities, parents and grandparents are increasingly being left alone.

Schools like the one in Ayutthaya, 80 km north of Bangkok, that offer weekly classes over three months are the government's way of offering older people relief from the stresses of living alone. "It's stressful just living day by day," 63-year-old Choochart Supkerd said. "I will probably go back to feeling lonely sometimes but I'm also proud of this, of gaining some knowledge in class," said Choochart, after posing for a picture with the class of 2018 in his gold-trimmed red graduation gown and a flower crown. —Reuters

International

China's Xi, North Korea's Kim meet ahead of Trump summit

Beijing is keen to avoid being left out in the cold

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping and Kim Jong Un met in China for the second time in six weeks yesterday, signaling their warming ties ahead of the North Korean leader's expected summit with US President Donald Trump. Shortly after the meeting was made public, Trump tweeted that he would speak to his "friend" Xi about North Korea later on.

Kim's trip to the northeastern port city of Dalian was his second visit to China since March, highlighting efforts by the Cold War-era allies to mend relations that have chilled as Beijing has supported UN sanctions over Pyongyang's nuclear activities. Beijing is keen to avoid being left out in the cold in a whirlwind of diplomacy that has led to Kim's historic summit last month with South Korean President Moon Jae-in and his expected meeting with Trump in June.

But Kim's second trip abroad in such a short time—after having never left North Korea since coming to power in 2011—shows that Beijing still has a central role to play in the diplomatic shuffle. "After the first meeting between me and Comrade Chairman (Kim), both China-DPRK relations and the Korean peninsula situation have made positive progress. I feel happy about it," Xi said, according to the official Xinhua news agency. North Korea's official KCNA news agency said Xi and Kim "exchanged warm greetings,

unable to hold back joy at meeting again". "The respected leader (Kim) also expressed pleasure at the bilateral ties that are enjoying a new heyday, and praised that the high-level exchanges and strategic com-

munication between the two countries have reached an unprecedented level," according to KCNA. For his part, Trump tweeted that "the primary topics" of his discussion with Xi "will be Trade, where good things will happen, and North Korea, where relationships and trust are building." Chinese state broadcaster CCTV showed Xi and Kim taking a seaside stroll and holding talks in a conference room with several officials, while Xinhua said the two leaders met on Monday and yesterday.

Japanese media had earlier shown images of an airplane normally used by North Korean VIPs flying out of Dalian, fuelling speculation that Kim had been in town. Kim's use of a plane shows that he did not inherit his father's fear of flying and suggests he could be willing to meet with Trump in a third country, with reports saying Singapore is a possible destination. Kim travelled to Beijing by train in March for his maiden official trip abroad and first meeting with the Chinese president. Xi said he was willing to meet Kim again, and backed North Korea's adherence to the denuclearization of the peninsula and the dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington, Xinhua said.

"China is willing to continue to work with all relevant parties and play an active role in comprehensively advancing the process of peaceful resolution of the peninsula issue through dialogue, and realizing long-term peace and stability in the region," Xi said. The Chinese leader also voiced support for North Korea "shifting its strategic focus to economic construction". Xinhua said Kim spoke "highly of Xi's profound vision and extraordinary wisdom" and "expressed his gratitude to China" for its contribution to the denuclearization and peace efforts.

Trump-Kim in Singapore?

At their summit last month in the Demilitarized Zone dividing the two Koreas, Kim and Moon agreed to pursue the complete denuclearization of the peninsula. According to Xinhua, Kim told Xi there was no need for North Korea to be a nuclear state "as long as relevant parties abolish their hostile policies and remove security threats against the DPRK".

Kim also expressed hope that the US and North Korea would take "phased and synchronous measures" to achieve denucleariza-



DALIAN, China: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (left) meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Dalian, in northeast China's Liaoning province. — AFP

tion and peace, Xinhua said, signaling Pyongyang's demands for a quid pro quo. Trump said last week that he was not envisaging a drawdown of troops in South Korea for now—something the regime in Pyongyang has long wanted—but he admitted it was a possibility in the longer term. North and South Korea have also agreed to hold talks with the United States, and possibly China, to reach a peace treaty by the end of the year. The Korean War, in which China fought on the North's side, ended in 1953 with an armistice rather than a peace treaty.

China would likely want to be part of discussions on a peace treaty, worrying that the diplomatic thaw may lead to a deal between Pyongyang and Washington that is not in its interests, according to experts. A divided Korea has played in Beijing's favor as the North serves as a buffer with the South, where US troops are stationed. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, meanwhile, will take part in a trilateral summit with Moon and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo today, with the North Korean issue high on the agenda. —AFP



Plane normally used by North Korean VIPs spotted in Dalian

Japanese media had earlier shown images of an airplane normally used by North Korean VIPs flying out of Dalian, fuelling speculation that Kim had been in town. Kim's use of a plane shows that he did not inherit his father's

Mystery plane

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Islamist youth leader accused of shooting Pakistan's minister

ISLAMABAD: The gunman accused of shooting and wounding Pakistan's interior minister is a youth leader of a hardline religious group that sees its mission as enforcing death for blasphemers and ridding government of secular influence, police said in a report. Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal was shot on Sunday as he was leaving a constituency meeting surrounded by supporters in Punjab province. He is in hospital and out of danger but the attack has shaken the political establishment ahead of a general election expected in July. The suspected gunman, arrested at the scene, is Abid Hussain, 21, a youth leader of the Islamist Tehreek-e-Labaik party, police said in an interrogation report seen by Reuters yesterday.

The party, known as Labaik, has made the emotive issue of blasphemy its rallying cry in a country where for years hardline Islamists have vied for power with civilian politicians and a coup-prone military. Hussain told police he was inspired by the teachings of founders of the Labaik and joined a party blockade of the capital, Islamabad, in November aimed at forcing out a government minister they accused of blasphemy over a change to an oath-taking law. According to police, Hussain said he had dreamt Ali Hajveri, an 11th century Muslim preacher revered in South Asia, "ordered me to kill Ahsan Iqbal".

Labaik denied that Hussain was a member of the party. "We have nothing to do with him," spokesman Ejaz Ashrafi told Reuters. But a founding member of Labaik, Pir Afzal Qadri, said Iqbal and his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party had invited trouble by committing blasphemy when they changed an election law in a way some said weakened an oath declaring Muhammad the last true prophet. "They have done so much wrong," Qadri said in a video message. "It is their fault, they themselves are responsible for this. These people are inviting attacks."

'Send them to hell'

Iqbal's shooting has stoked fears of a repeat of the pre-election Islamist violence that has blighted polls before, including the 2007 assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. It has also compounded unease about blasphemy. Even accusations of blasphemy can lead to mob killings and those convicted of blasphemy face the death penalty, though no death sentences for it have been carried out. Many clerics



LAHORE: In this handout photograph, injured Pakistan's Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal (center) is evacuated from a helicopter on their arrival in Lahore. —AFP

say even to suggest change to the blasphemy law is blasphemy. In November, Labaik blocked a main road into the capital for several days over the small change to the election law. The government explained the change as a clerical error and reversed it. The minister responsible resigned. Hussain joined the protesters determined to "send any blasphemer to hell", police said in their report.

Seven people were killed and 200 wounded when police tried to clear the blockade. Qadri said Iqbal, as interior minister, was responsible for the attack on him as he had ordered the police action. "It is regrettable that the whole world is making hue and cry just because he got one bullet, and not a single arrest has so far been made in the martyrdom of the seven people," Qadri said. Police said Hussain had cited the

example of Mumtaz Qadri, a bodyguard of the governor of Punjab who gunned down the man he was meant to protect in 2011 over the governor's call for reform of the blasphemy law.

Qadri, who was convicted of murder, sentenced to death and executed in 2016, has become a martyr for hardliners, and Labaik emerged out of a movement that lionised him. Hussain bought a pistol several months ago and later got hold of bullets, police said in the report. Two days before the shooting, he got a WhatsApp message from a resident of the town where Iqbal was shot, telling him the minister was due. Hours before the meeting, Hussain washed, put on smart clothes and went early to wait, police said. "When Ahsan Iqbal came down from the stage and was encircled with party workers, Abid stood up and fired." — Reuters

Malaysia ruling coalition losing ground in polls

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak's ruling coalition has lost more ground in the lead up to an election today, but will likely still win enough parliamentary seats to cling on to power, a survey by an independent polling firm said. Scandal-hit Najib, whose Barisan Nasional (BN) alliance has ruled Malaysia for more than six decades, is pitted in a fierce contest against his former mentor Mahathir Mohamad. The eve-of-poll survey published by pollster Merdeka Center on Tuesday shows Najib's coalition would win just 37.3 percent of the popular vote in peninsular Malaysia, which accounts for nearly three-quarters of the seats in parliament, down from the 40.3 percent the firm had predicted last week.

The Mahathir-led opposition alliance's support also fell slightly to 43.4 percent from 43.7 percent, it showed. The Islamist Parti Islam se-Malaysia (PAS), which is not part of Mahathir's bloc, saw support increase by 3.3 percentage points to 19.3 percent. The poll did not cover the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak, which have historically been pro-BN, although there have been recent signs of a swing away from the government in Sabah. The Merdeka Center survey predicted that Najib's coalition would win 100 of the 222 seats in parliament, while Mahathir's alliance would win 83 seats, with contests in 37 constituencies too close to call.

The winning party needs to get at least 112 seats to form a government. The ruling coalition won 133 seats in the 2013 election, despite losing the popular vote. Merdeka said in a statement that this would be "one of the most contested elections ever in the country's political history". "The high number of marginal seats (37), implies that voter turnout will be a critical factor in determining the outcome of many seats on election day," the pollster said in the statement, adding that it predicted BN would retain federal power. Najib's coalition failed to win the popular vote in the last election in 2013, getting 47.3 percent of the votes in what was seen as a setback for the ruling alliance even though it retained power.

Najib faces far greater risks this time than in any previous election, and analysts have warned a weak performance could trigger an internal revolt against the 64-year-old premier. —Reuters

Modi aims to win his BJP a southern foothold in polls

BENGALURU: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has thrown himself into a campaign to win a tight state election this weekend and secure a beachhead in the south, ahead of his own re-election bid next year. Karnataka state, home to India's Silicon Valley capital of Bengaluru, is the first big state electing an assembly this year to be followed by three others in the final test of popularity before a general election due next May. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, which has its core base of support in the north and west, has pinned its hopes on Karnataka because it has little presence in any of the southern states dominated by regional parties.

It has held power before in Karnataka and Modi is addressing rallies to win back the state from the main opposition Congress party and build momentum for the general election. "Now that the countdown has begun for 2019, a victory or defeat in Karnataka is bound to influence the battle of perceptions," said political

columnist Neerja Chowdhury. "The BJP has viewed Karnataka as a 'gateway to the south' and the Karnataka prize could help the party acquire a pan-India profile," she said.

Defeat, on the other hand, would re-energize Congress under Rahul Gandhi, the fifth generation scion of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, which is trying to exploit dissatisfaction over a lack of jobs for young people and rising fuel prices. Yesterday, Modi, by far the main vote-getter for the BJP, was back on the stump, addressing rallies across the state and vowing to make a militarily and economically strong India. Modi's supporters, many clad in scarves and caps in the saffron color of his party, chanted his name as they filled a street in Koppal district. The election is on Saturday and the votes will be counted on May 15 with the result declared that day.

Opinion polls have forecast no clear winner between the Congress and the BJP and suggested that a regional group, the Janata Dal (S), may emerge as kingmaker in the 222-member state assembly. A spokesman for the regional group said it urging voters to reject the two main parties and let it rule the state on its own. "We are going to the people telling them that they have seen both BJP and Congress in power for full terms. We are asking them to now give us a chance," he said. Political parties have campaigned on helping farmers and improving conditions in Bengaluru. — Reuters

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OBITUARY

We regret to announce the sudden and sad demise of
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International

Revolution sweeps Armenian opposition leader into power

Parliament elects Pashinyan as new prime minister

YEREVAN: Opposition leader Nikol Pashinyan was elected Armenia's prime minister yesterday, capping a peaceful revolution driven by weeks of mass protests against corruption and cronyism in the ex-Soviet republic. Moscow, which has a military base in Armenia, is wary of an uncontrolled change of power which would pull the country out of its orbit, but Pashinyan has offered assurances that he will not break with the Kremlin.

Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated Pashinyan on his election. The election of Pashinyan, a former newspaper editor who spent time in prison for fomenting unrest, marks a dramatic rupture with the cadre of rulers who have run Armenia since the late 1990s. Minutes after parliament voted to make him prime minister, Pashinyan travelled to a square in the capital, Yerevan, where tens of thousands of cheering supporters, many wearing T-shirts bearing his portrait, waited to greet him. "The people won," Pashinyan told the crowd.



Russian leader congratulates Armenia's PM

'Congratulations'

Throughout the protests, Pashinyan had dressed in a camouflage T-shirt and military-style cap, an outfit that became his trademark, but yesterday he changed into a suit and tie. Pashinyan, born in 1975, spearheaded a protest movement that first forced veteran leader Serzh Sargsyan to step down as prime minister and then pressured the ruling party to abandon attempts to block his election as prime minister, the country's most powerful post. In a vote in parliament yesterday, 59 lawmakers backed Pashinyan's candidacy, including some from the ruling Republican Party, with 42 voting against.

In Yerevan's Republic Square, Pashinyan's supporters watched the voting on huge television screens. When the result was shown, there were chants of "Nikol," white doves were released into the air and people hugged and

kissed each other. "We won! We made history today!" said Gurgun Simonyan, 22, a student in the crowd. Pashinyan's protest movement was sparked when Sargsyan, barred by the constitution from seeking another term as president, became prime minister instead. Many Armenians saw that as a cynical ploy by Sargsyan to extend his hold on power.

New script

Armenia is a country of about three million people nestled in mountains between Iran, Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Since it emerged as an independent state after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenia, a majority Christian country, has been locked in a territorial conflict with mainly-Muslim Azerbaijan, and under economic blockade from Turkey.

Its isolation led it to depend heavily on former colonial ruler Moscow. Putin has in the past resisted popular revolts in ex-Soviet states, particularly in Georgia and Ukraine, viewing them as a ploy by Washington to encroach on Moscow's sphere of influence. But throughout Armenia's wave of protests, Moscow has remained publicly neutral, and Pashinyan has consistently said he viewed Moscow as a vital ally. He said yesterday Armenia would stay in a regional collective security organization headed by Russia and that he hoped for a meeting with Putin.

The Kremlin said Putin sent Pashinyan a congratulatory telegram. "I hope your activities as head of the government will help further strengthen the ties of friendship and alliance between our countries," Putin said in the message. Thomas de Waal, a specialist on the region with Carnegie Europe, a think tank, said with the Armenian uprising, both Yerevan and Moscow had learned a new script. "Russian officials have insisted that they respect Armenians' right to peaceful change," he said. "For his



YEREVAN: Supporters of opposition leader and newly elected Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan celebrate in the streets of Yerevan yesterday. —AFP

part, Pashinyan and his fellow protest leaders told their supporters to avoid anti-Russian or pro-EU slogans."

Holdovers

Pashinyan faces tough challenges. The civil service and security apparatus are dominated by allies of his ousted predecessor. He has said his first step will be to hold an early parliamentary election. In the meantime, he said he would carry out root-and-branch reforms to cut out graft and cronyism. He said he would fire some holdovers from the ruling elite, among them the defense minister, but said there would be no "pogrom."

He must also reckon with a parliament where the Republican Party, allied to Sargsyan, holds a majority of seats and is sceptical about his revolution. Vahram Baghdasaryan, head of the Republican Party in parliament, said for the sake of unity it was backing Pashinyan for prime minister but it had concerns about his fitness to run the country. "I hope we are mistaken," said Baghdasaryan, an ally of Sargsyan. In his speech before the vote, Pashinyan called on Armenia's people to come together behind the new government he will lead. "The page of hatred should be turned," he said, adding: "May God help us." —Reuters

Bangladesh court sentences two Islamists to death

DHAKA: Two Islamists were sentenced to be hanged for the murder of a Bangladesh university professor who was hacked to death with a machete two years ago, a prosecutor said yesterday. The killing was among a spate of attacks in the Muslim-majority country on secular activists, religious minorities and foreigners blamed by authorities on homegrown extremists.

Rezaul Karim Siddique, an English literature professor and prominent secular

activist, was killed near his home in Rajshahi city in April 2016. One of the two ordered to be hanged yesterday was a student from Siddique's department at Rajshahi University, Shariful Islam, who is responsible for the murder but Bangladesh authorities blamed homegrown militants accused of carrying out similar attacks.

Siddique was the fourth professor from Rajshahi University to be killed by Islamists in recent years. Charges were pressed in 2016 against eight young men, including Siddique's English literature student, Prosecutor Entajul Haque said a fast track court in Rajshahi convicted five of the eight defendants of murder, ordering executions for two and life imprisonment for three others. —AFP

IAEA: Watchdog at the heart of Iran nuke deal

VIENNA: The UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has the delicate task of verifying the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between world powers and Iran over the country's nuclear program. The agreement was derided by US President Donald Trump as "the worst deal ever" and its existence will be thrown into doubt if, as expected, he withdraws the US from the accord.

The role of IAEA

Created in 1957 and based in the Austrian capital Vienna, the IAEA promotes peaceful uses of atomic energy - in scientific research for example - while at the same time overseeing efforts to detect and prevent possible nuclear weapons proliferation. Because of previous international concern over its nuclear program, in a 2003 agreement Iran allowed snap IAEA inspections of its nuclear facilities. However, co-operation broke down in 2006 with the IAEA referring Iran to the UN Security Council, which went on to impose sanctions, and Iran halting enhanced IAEA inspections. A renewed diplomatic push produced the JCPOA, under which the IAEA is charged with regular inspections of declared facilities in Iran such as uranium mines and centrifuge workshops for up to 25 years. The deal also includ-

ed an "Additional Protocol", which allows inspectors "to conduct complementary access to any location in Iran".

How do inspections work?

The IAEA insists the inspection regime put in place by the JCPOA is the world's toughest. In March the IAEA's Director General Yukiya Amano said: "Our inspection work has doubled since 2013. IAEA inspectors now spend 3,000 calendar days per year on the ground in Iran". He also pointed to the some 2,000 tamper-proof seals attached to nuclear material and equipment and to the "hundreds of thousands of images captured daily by our sophisticated surveillance cameras", the number of which has almost doubled since 2013. The IAEA has issued numerous quarterly reports certifying Iran's compliance with the deal, most recently in February. Amano has called the JCPOA "a significant gain for verification" and said its failure "would be a great loss for nuclear verification and for multilateralism".

Agency under pressure

Inevitably in such a charged geopolitical question, some countries have said the JCPOA does not hold Iran to a high enough standard. The deal has come under fire particularly from Iran's regional arch-foe Israel, especially over how it addressed the vexed question of the so-called historic PMD (Possible Military Dimension) of Iran's nuclear program. In 2015 the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors voted to close a 12-year probe into the PMD issue after the Agency concluded that "a range of activities relevant to the development" of a nuclear bomb took place in Iran until 2009 but that there were no credible indications they had continued after that date. —AFP

IAA celebrates its 80th anniversary by honoring three industry legends

NEW YORK: The International Advertising Association (IAA) announced the winners of its inaugural Golden Compass Awards, which honor legends in the marketing, advertising and media industries, in celebration of IAA's 80th anniversary. In a nod to its newly revealed value proposition, identity and logo centered on a twenty-first century compass, the IAA Golden Compass Awards celebrate visionary leaders in the marketing communications industry who have guided their organizations through the disruptions of our modern era and inspired the industry at large by their excellent achievements of global impact.

"We created the IAA Golden Compass Awards to honor industry legends that have shown ingenuity, creativity and perseverance throughout their careers, to advance professional quality standards and best practices in our industry which can enhance the value brands can have in consumers' lives," said IAA Chairman and Global President Felix Tataru. "IAA is looking forward to bringing together the global advertising community to celebrate these influential leaders."

The IAA Golden Compass Award honorees were selected based on the executives' impact on the marketing communications business in the three key sectors of the industry. Honorees will receive the Golden Compass Awards at a presentation ceremony at the IAA's 80th Anniversary reception on April 26 at Intersection HQ in New York.

The honorees of the 2018 Golden Compass Awards are:

Shelly Lazarus, Ogilvy & Mather

Shelly Lazarus has spent more than four decades and the majority of her career at full-service ad agency Ogilvy & Mather. She started when the agency's legendary founder

David Ogilvy still walked the halls, and personally preached that the purpose of advertising was to build great brands. Throughout her time at Ogilvy & Mather, Lazarus has risen through the ranks of the agency, assuming positions of increasing responsibility in the management of the company, including as President of O&M Direct North America, Ogilvy & Mather New York, and Ogilvy & Mather North America. She also served as Worldwide CEO of Ogilvy & Mather and Chairman, thereafter. In 2012, she was appointed Chairman Emeritus. Under Lazarus' leadership, the agency has attracted and created memorable campaigns for some of the world's largest brands including American Express, BP, Coca-Cola, IBM, and Unilever.

Paul Polman, Unilever

Under Paul Polman's leadership, Unilever has been moving to fully decouple its growth from an environmental footprint and increase its positive social impact. In his role as CEO, Polman actively seeks cooperation with other companies to implement sustainable, long-term business strategies and drive systemic change. He is a member of the International Business Council of the World Economic Forum, a member of the B Team and sits on the Board of the UN Global Compact, and the Consumer Goods Forum, where he co-chairs the Sustainability Committee. Additionally, Polman is the incoming Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce. His commitment to long-term, sustainable capitalism is also reflected in his membership of the Global Board of Directors of Financing Capitalism for the Long-Term and the Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism Embankment Project. He also played a signifi-

cant role in developing the UN Sustainable Development Goals and in promoting action towards its delivery.

Paul Rossi, The Economist Group

Paul Rossi joined The Economist 30 years ago in London to manage advertising sales for the Middle East and Africa. He held regional sales director positions in Singapore and New York, and then became Commercial Director of Economist.com, where he established the website as a profitable global business. Rossi was later named Publisher of The Economist in North America, responsible for all commercial aspects of the business, including advertising, circulation and marketing for The Economist magazine, Economist.com and other Economist brand businesses. Continuing his rise through the ranks, he then became Managing Director, EVP of The Economist Group with full responsibility for all Economist and CFO brand businesses in the Americas. Most recently, Rossi has been President of The Economist Group's global media businesses, which consist of The Economist, The World and 1843 magazines, as well as Economist events, Thought Leadership and Content Solutions, EuroFinance, Ideas People Media, the TVC Group and Signal Noise.

Following its 80th anniversary celebration and the Golden Compass Awards presentation, the IAA will be hosting its Global Marketing Summit on April 27 at Time Warner Center in New York. The annual conference brings together more than 200 of the world's leading members of the international advertising community to share best practices and share industry challenges. Visit the Global Marketing Summit site for complete details on the program.

Announcement from Ministry of Commerce & Industry Consumer Protection Department

Ministry of Commerce & Industry Consumer Protection Department, in accordance with Law No. 39/2014, and in cooperation with Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Est. Co

Toyota Motor Corporation announces recall on Lexus Models RC F (MY 2015 & 2016), GS F (MY 2016) and LC500 (MY 2017 & 2018) to inspect and replace fuel pump if necessary.

Models & Production dates:

- 1. Lexus RC F 2015-2016 MY**
Production from Sep 2014 to Mar 2016 (In Kuwait 40 units)
VIN: JTHHP5BCOF5000156 to JTHHP5BC2G5005201
- 2. Lexus GS F 2016 MY**
Production from Nov 2015 to Jun 2016 (In Kuwait 23 units)
VIN: JTHBP1B1LGA000223 to JTHBP1PLOGA001959
- 3. Lexus LC500 2017-2018 MY**
Production from Mar 2017 to Nov 2017 (In Kuwait 22 units)
VIN: JTHHP5AY7HA000162 to JTHHP5AY8JA004436

MOHAMED NASER ALSAYER & SONS EST. CO. W.L.L. will contact the owners of the involved vehicles You are also kindly requested to contact at 1830030. All the repairs will be free of charge for both Parts and Labor.

Project Manager
National Technology Enterprises
Company - Kuwait

You will be responsible to assist in planning and preparing budgets related to projects and monitoring it. Direct and execute projects and work with project team in all project phases. Prepare all reports related to all projects' phases for project stakeholders. Evaluate quality and effectiveness of company projects and identify areas for improvement.

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Alghanim Sons Group
Kuwait

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Career Hunters
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You will be responsible for managing the day to day contractual policies and procedures regarding the company's insurance policies. Plan and organize the work of the risk apatite in insurance section. Develop and maintain an effective framework for managing the co's assets and to promote, support and co-ordinate its implementation to ensure that sound risk control practice is accepted.

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Meme's Curry Restaurant
Kuwait

You will be responsible to provide reception/assistance to all callers/visitors, provide office and clerical support to Department Managers, Supervisors and all Department staff, arrange courier and co-ordinate meetings, plan and manage conference room bookings, responsible for answering phone lines, incoming and outgoing mail.

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Al Babtain Group
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You will be responsible to conduct tour visits on daily basis to the current prospective customers to check the products stocks availability, obtain new purchasing orders, and focus on new developing new business opportunity for OEM particularly. Emphasize product features based on analyses of customers' needs, and on technical knowledge of product capabilities and benefits.

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Se.Ma
KSA

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Purchasing Supervisor
United Cooperative Assurance
KSA

You will be responsible to research potential vendors, compare and evaluate offers from suppliers, negotiate contract terms of agreement and pricing, track orders and ensure timely delivery, review quality of purchased products, and enter order details (e.g. vendors, quantities, prices) into internal databases.

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GEDAC ELECTRIC
KSA

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Sales Representative
Luxe-law Investment
UAE

You will be responsible to greet customers and ascertain what each customer wants or needs. Keep a positive and welcoming environment within the workspace. Describe merchandise and explain use, operation, and care of merchandise to customers. Interact and Communicate with customers throughout the sales process.

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You will be responsible to design, prepare and compile qualitative and quantitative reports at group level, in a succinct format, for the receivers to quickly understand where business is and evolves along with the issues it faces. Prepare the agenda, documentation and the minutes of the, Executive committee, Financial Risk Committee, etc.

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Technical Support Administrator
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Al Mana
Qatar

You will be responsible for retrieving, analyzing, and concisely reporting market business trend data, conduct financial analysis of division brands, analyze sales reports, and make recommendations to address gaps, evaluate business key performance indicators and provide regular reports and information to Management to address risk areas and opportunities.

Apply Now [JB3797449](#)

Quantity Surveyor
Al Darwish Engineering
Qatar

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Analysis

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Victims of Japan's forced sterilizations demand justice after decades of silence

One day when Saburo Kita was 14, he was taken from an institution for troubled children to see a doctor. Despite protesting that his health was fine, he was ordered to strip, lie down on a table, and was given a local anaesthetic. Then the surgery began. He was left with a thick, v-shaped scar on his lower body and questions about what had happened. Months later, talking with a friend, he learned that he had been sterilized. So had two others from the same institution in Miyagi, northern Japan. "There was no explanation, ever," said Kita, now 75, who uses the pseudonym in media to avoid questions from his late wife's family. "I was left with a body that couldn't create children."

But he did not realize until January that his surgery was part of a government program to prevent the birth of so-called "inferior descendants" that saw tens of thousands sterilized, often without their consent, under a law not revoked until 1996. Most were physically or cognitively disabled. But others suffered from leprosy - curable, and now known as Hansen's disease - mental illness or simply had behavioral problems. Kita had been sent to an institution for fighting at school.

Now the victims, many of whom were in their teens or younger when they were sterilized, are fighting back, demanding justice from a government they say violated their human rights. A mentally disabled woman in her 60s has sued for an apology and 11 million yen (\$100,328) in compensation, and other suits may follow soon. All could embarrass the government, which insists the surgeries were done legally, and Japan, where attitudes about the disabled still lag other advanced nations even as it prepares to host the Paralympic Games in 2020.

"Right after the war, rebuilding the country and its people was paramount, so in the name of building better citizens for the nation, the law came into effect," said Keiko Toshimitsu, a bioethics researcher and head of an activist group supporting those who were forcibly sterilized. "It was to build a better Japan - along, of course, with prejudice against the disabled." Then in the 1960s and 1970s there was rapid economic growth so they needed people born who could keep the growth going."

An official at the Health Ministry, who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the issue, would not discuss the law or the lawsuits in detail. "It was an operation that was carried out according to a law that was in force at the time, so we are contesting it with the stance that it is not a matter for compensation," he said.

Embracing discrimination

Though the most notorious eugenics laws were imposed by Nazi Germany, Japan is not the only nation with similar programs in peacetime. Sweden sterilized 63,000 people under a 1935-1975 program, almost all women, in the name of racial purity. Thirty-two US states embraced eugenics at some point, with the number of sterilizations climbing after a 1927 Supreme Court decision upholding a Virginia law. In the majority opinion, Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes compared the state's duty to sterilize a woman to the need to protect the public against smallpox with compulsory vaccinations.

But laws overseas, by and large, were revoked in the 1970s: Sweden apologized and paid compensation after media reports brought the problem to light in 1997. The US states of North Carolina and Virginia have also offered compensation. Japan's "Eugenics Protection Law" came into effect in 1948 as it struggled with food shortages and rebuilding a ravaged nation. Sterilizations peaked in the 1960s and 1970s. The last surgery under the law was carried out in 1993, and the measure was revoked three years later.

Of the estimated 25,000 people sterilized during this time, at least 16,500 did not give consent - unneeded if a eugenics board signed off on it after an often cursory review. Few records remain. "It seems there were zealous doctors who took the law up systematically, promoting it as a truly noble way to save the nation," said Koji Niisato, a lawyer overseeing the lawsuits.

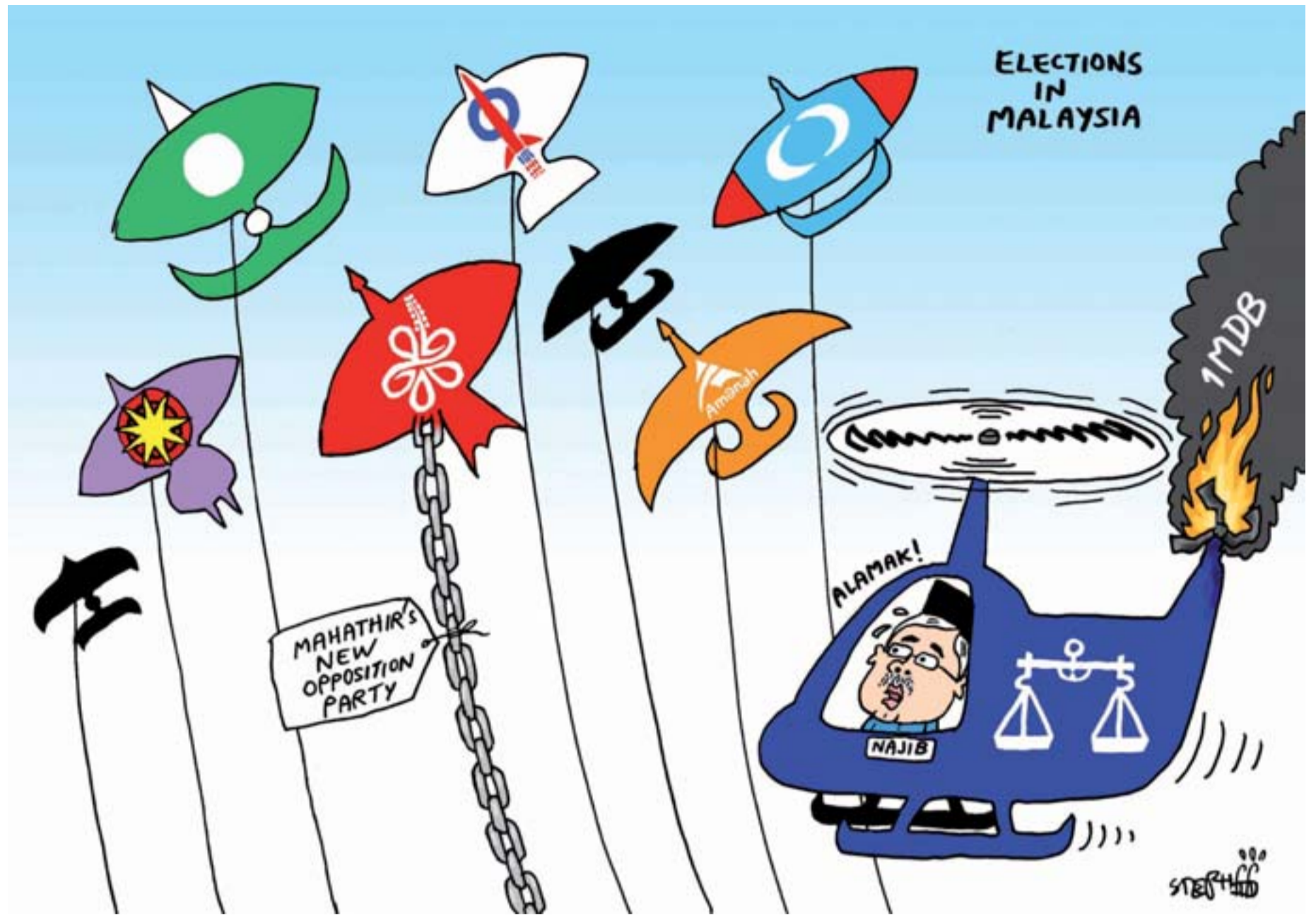
Methods varied. Hysterectomies were recommended for disabled women in institutions on the pretext they couldn't handle their menstruation. One woman born with cerebral palsy was subjected to high doses of radiation to her reproductive organs. The reasons varied as well, in some cases going beyond the scope of the original law. A woman now in her 70s known as Junko Iizuka in the Japanese media, who had limited schooling because of poverty, was given an intelligence test as a teenager and did badly. She was then diagnosed as "feeble-minded" and sterilized.

"When you look at lots of victims' statements, none of these are disabilities that were inheritable," said lawmaker Mizuho Fukushima, secretary-general of a multi-party lawmakers group working on the issue. "It was definitely due to prejudice, or poverty ... an accumulation of discrimination and black marks."

Legal framework

Fukushima hopes by next year to present a law proposing compensation for the victims, and lawyer Niisato expects more will come forward, emboldened by publicity around the court cases. "The idea they were sterilised because they were disabled isn't something anybody wants to bring up," he said. "They were afraid that if they did, people would say 'well, you're disabled, it can't be helped.'"

Though overt discrimination has fallen, attitudes toward the disabled lag those overseas, sometimes in harmful ways. In 2016, 19 people at a facility for the disabled were killed in their sleep by a man who had advocated euthanasia for the physically and mentally impaired. With the Paralympics rapidly approaching, the government has doubled down on public education, advocating kindness and urging people to offer help to disabled people they may see. —Reuters



Yemeni car traders cashing in

Wooden dhows crammed with second-hand Japanese cars have been sailing unhindered into Yemeni ports for the past three years despite rigid wartime controls on imports of aid and other vital supplies. Like many Yemeni traders, Ali Al-Mahry jumped at this chance to turn a profit by supplying customers at home with cars bought cheaply at auction in the United Arab Emirates. A Saudi-led military coalition, of which the UAE is part, has been battling Houthi rebels since 2015 with the aim of restoring the Yemeni government in exile.

The coalition has imposed controls to deny arms to the Houthis, fighters aligned with Iran who control the capital Sanaa and Hodeidah, the largest port. The measures have choked off supplies of fuel, food and medicine to Yemen, where millions face starvation and disease. Yet coalition forces appear to have turned a blind eye to the dhows that regularly carry cars from Port Khaled in the emirate of Sharjah to a small dock at As Shihri, a port in Yemen's Hadramout province controlled by UAE-backed forces. "I make this journey around 30 times a year," Mahry said, surrounded by 180 cars taking up every corner of a dhow he has chartered for the voyage. "I sometimes also ship food and other items, but they require different permits."

The cars have become a nice earner for traders in both the UAE and Yemen. Yemeni dealers gather daily at Dubai's Al-Aweer Auto Market to bid as a big screen flashes prices for Japanese cars, with as many as 80 sold in a day at one auction house. Once sold, the automobiles are taken to Port Khaled, where up to 200 vehicles are stacked onto each dhow. The vessels are searched at Port Khaled and on arrival at As Shihri but have not been required to obtain permits or pay customs duties for the past three years, in contrast to the obstacles faced by ships delivering other supplies to Yemeni ports. "The coalition would ask us for the cars' papers and clear them here," said Saleh Al-Ali, head of the port at As Shihri. "For the past three years there has been no need to

apply for a permit from Riyadh."

In March, however, the coalition changed the rules, requiring permits to be obtained from Saudi Arabia, according to Ali. He said he was told the new measures were introduced for security reasons. A coalition spokesman did not reply to requests for comment on why the car-laden dhows have been exempted for so long. Port officials said the dhows may have been simply an exception to the rule and in any case it had taken time to put the car trade on a more formal footing.



Thriving Japan used car trade has emerged

Good business

Mustafa al-Jaffrey, who used to send cars to Yemen overland through Oman before the war, said he had doubled his profits by using the sea route. "It is much cheaper for me to buy and ship," he said, adding that Japanese cars in particular were a good business for him. "The Japanese drive their cars only for about 50,000 km before they sell them and buy new ones. That's way less than the 150,000 km or more that people in the Gulf drive before they put a car up for sale, so the quality is better as well."

In Japan, strict safety and pollution regulations force many

drivers to sell their cars after a few years, so there are plenty of good quality vehicles available. Such cars can sell for as little as \$1,000 at online auctions in Japan. A Toyota can be bought by traders for around \$1,900 in Dubai and sell in Yemen for more than twice that. "I buy a Japanese used car from an auction in Japan, sometimes an online auction, and then ship it here," said Hammad Ali, marketing manager at Jan Japan (Cars 4 U), the top re-exporter at Al-Aweer in Dubai.

Ali has long imported such cars for re-export to places like Somalia and Afghanistan as many other countries that drive on the right, including the UAE, do not allow cars from Japan, where people drive on the left, on safety concerns. "It is a safety thing ... so most of them were going to Afghanistan and Somalia. Then three years ago, Yemen opened up," he said. Prior to 2015 in Yemen, where people drive on the right, cars with their steering wheel on the "wrong" side were banned for safety reasons, but road safety has been another casualty of a war that has killed more than 10,000 people.

As fighting continues, the Houthis control the north of Yemen, while coalition forces have seized the southern port of Aden and made gains along the southwest coast along the Red Sea. "Yemen is a big country and people need to move around. The cars are going into the south, where it is relatively safe, and from there onwards to the rest of the country," Mahdy Al-Mahry, another dhow operator and car dealer, said. "People can buy one of these cars and use them to earn money for their families. Others just buy them as a cheap and safe means of transport."

Not everyone has profited from the trade. The Yemeni government, which has a presence in Aden while the president is in exile in Saudi Arabia, has missed out on customs duties, although it now plans to regulate the car trade. "While it has largely been unregulated for the past three years, we are slowly coming to it and we will organize the trade as the government prepares to impose a fee," said Saleh Ali Busamir, head of the Arabian Sea Ports Corporation of Yemen. He did not say when this would happen or how much the fee would be. —Reuters

In India, boy victims of sex crimes don't get talked about

He was lured into a room near where he played cricket, a man then shut the door and window, and raped him. That's what a 14-year-old Mumbai boy told his mother from his hospital bed last July. The boy died soon after, killed by the rat poison he consumed after the assault, according to details described to Reuters by his parents and police. Inspector Balwant Deshmukh, the investigating officer, said police have all but given up hope of finding out who raped the boy. "We will revive the case if we get new clues, but as of now it's in cold storage," he told Reuters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government last month introduced the death penalty for rape of girls below 12 and increased the minimum punishment for those whose victims were under 16, after the rapes of an eight-year-old girl and a young woman in two states ruled by his party led to public protests. But the emergency order, known as an ordinance, did not mention boys, although a government survey has showed that male minors were more likely to be victims than female minors.

The ordinance lapses in six months and the government has to introduce legislation to convert it into law. At that time, the government plans to broaden the statute to make it gender-neutral, said a senior government official who declined to be named. "Whatever applies to girls will apply to boys," the official said. The government's chief spokesman did not respond to requests for comment. In the meantime, the

minimum punishment for raping a boy is 10 years in jail, compared with 20 years for assaults on girls under 16.

"Why this discrimination?" asked the father of the boy who was raped, sitting in his tiny first floor home in a teeming settlement near Mumbai's international airport, largely populated by migrant worker families from India's poor northern states. Between sobs, the mother recounted her horror at her son's condition in the hospital during his dying days. "Please get us justice," she said as the interview came to an end. The boy's medical reports, which were reviewed by Reuters, said their son had been "sodomized". Rape victims and their families cannot be identified under Indian law.

Hostility, ridicule

Insia Dariwala, who runs a foundation that raises awareness about child sexual abuse, said police generally lack the sensitivity to deal with cases of assaults on boys. "I have interacted with adult male survivors and social workers who have cited police hostility, ridicule and even lack of trust when it comes to believing that a boy was sexually abused," she said. "The most common perception dished out to male survivors is that they may have enjoyed it."

The Mumbai police investigating the boy's rape, however, said officers are regularly trained on how to handle sexual abuse of children of both genders. The federal government is also running workshops for police that cover all children, said Stuti Kacker, head of the government's National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, which advises on child-related policies. Some activists working for the safety of children say outrage over the gruesome gang rape and subsequent death of a young woman in New Delhi in 2012 succeeded in raising awareness about sexual violence against women in India, but far less attention is paid when the victims are male.

A 2007 survey by the ministry of

women and child development, which sampled 12,447 children in families, schools, at work and living on the street, found that more than half had faced sexual abuse, and 53 percent of victims were boys. For the capital Delhi, the figure was 60 percent. The government has not done any similar survey after that, although some activists and police say many cases of sexual abuse of boys go unreported because of the stigma attached to homosexuality.

The ministry of women and child development told parliament in March that only 467 male child abuse cases were lodged with police out of more than 36,321 such reported incidents in 2016. The government, nevertheless, last month ordered a study to be undertaken focusing on sexual assaults on boys. "Boys who are sexually abused as children spend a lifetime of silence because of the stigma and shame attached to male survivors speaking out," Maneka Gandhi, the minister for women and child development, said in a statement. "It is a serious problem and needs to be addressed."

'Boys not seen as victims'

In India's patriarchal society, girls typically have a more restricted upbringing than boys and spend less time outdoors, making it easier for predators to target boys, according to social workers and others who counsel victims of sexual abuse. A 22-year-old man in the western city of Pune, who said he was repeatedly raped by a man for two years starting when he was five, reported his ordeal to his parents only a year ago fearing he would be judged.

"I kept going back to the park where I would get raped by this man," said the young man, who was counseled by the child abuse awareness foundation's Dariwala and agreed to be interviewed by Reuters. "I was scared of him but did not want to stay at home and come across as lazy in front of my parents. I did not want to anger my mom." Reuters could not veri-

fy the details given by the man. Some researchers say parents often shy away from reporting abuse of boys, in the hope that victims would eventually overcome the psychological trauma.

The Pune man said his parents asked him to "move on and not let this incident define you". He declined to immediately share their contact details, saying it was a delicate matter for them. An article published last year in the Indian Journal of Psychiatry highlighted those attitudes. An unidentified father who was resistant to psychological care for his nine-year-old son after he had been raped, was quoted by the journal as saying: "He neither lost a hymen nor will get pregnant. He should behave like a man, not a sissy."

Vyjayanthi K S Subramanian, a senior psychiatrist in a Bengaluru hospital who co-authored the report, said she was in touch with at least eight adult men who were sexually assaulted as boys but never reported their ordeal to police. "Boys don't fit into the image of a victim. In a patriarchal society they are expected to take it in their stride," she told Reuters. "They think that as he grows up, he is going to become invulnerable, without any need to work on his psyche. That's ridiculous."

The officer in charge of the police station where the rape and suicide of the boy in Mumbai was registered said that current data under-estimates the scale of the problem as boys' parents are reluctant to come forward. "We don't discriminate on the basis of gender, but people come to us only in extreme cases," Senior Inspector Anil Pophale told Reuters. "This incident would not have been reported if the boy had not committed suicide."

The father of the dead boy agrees that he would never have gone to police had his son not decided to kill himself and says he now realizes his mistake. "It needs to change," he said, referring to the reluctance of parents to report abuse of male children. "This (tragedy) should not happen to anyone else." —Reuters

News

Erdogan blasts French call over...

Continued from Page 1

In a second speech later, Erdogan argued the signatories were "no different" from the Islamic State (IS) extremist group. "Our attitude should be a lesson for Islamophobic European politicians who protect those who attack Islam in the name of defending Western

values, who pat on the back those who burn mosques," Erdogan said. He added this message was directed "especially for Sarkozy". Relations between Turkey and the West have been tense following the July 2016 failed coup but ties with France have been further strained in recent weeks. Tension rose after French President Emmanuel Macron offered to mediate between Turkey and outlawed Kurdish militants, an offer furiously rejected by Erdogan in March. Despite the letter being published last month, the Turkish government first reacted at the weekend as the country

gets ready for parliamentary and presidential polls in June. Turkey's Europe Minister Omer Celik said on Sunday the letter was "the most striking example of intellectual violence and barbarity". Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdag said on Monday that the signatories were the "21st century's idiots". Main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) chief Kemal Kilicdaroglu also hit out at the manifesto saying it was like that of other extremist groups: "Your attitude supports Al-Qaeda... and ISIS (IS)," Hurriyet daily reported. — AFP

NY attorney general latest...

Continued from Page 1

The Pulitzer Prize for public service with The New York Times for reporting on the Harvey Weinstein scandal and sexual harassment. The New Yorker said none of the women classified the behavior as consensual. "It wasn't consensual. This wasn't sexual playacting. This was abusive, demeaning, threatening behavior," Tanya Selvaratnam, a Harvard-educated author, actor and film producer told the magazine.

The Sri Lankan-born woman said Schneiderman, whom she dated in 2016-17, called her "his 'brown slave,'" spat at her and choked her. "He was cutting off my ability to breathe," she said, accusing Schneiderman of drinking heavily, taking sedatives and pressing her to drink too, saying "drink your bourbon, Turnip". "We could rarely have sex without him beating me," she said.

Schneiderman, who had positioned himself publicly as a defender of women's rights, had inserted himself into the downfall of disgraced movie mogul Weinstein, launching legal action against his former production company in February for failing to protect staff. New York's state Governor Andrew Cuomo, who is facing a left-flank challenge for a third term from progressive "Sex and the City" actress Cynthia Nixon, was among

those who demanded Schneiderman go. "No one is above the law," he said late Monday. "Given the damning pattern of facts and corroboration laid out in the article, I do not believe it is possible for Eric Schneiderman to continue to serve." Yesterday, the Manhattan district attorney's office confirmed it had opened an investigation - as ordered by Cuomo overnight - into the allegations against Schneiderman. Ironically, until Monday Schneiderman was the one investigating the Manhattan district attorney, also at the behest of Cuomo, for failing to prosecute Weinstein for sexual misconduct in 2015.

A spokesman confirmed that the New York police department had no complaints on file against the former attorney general. Schneiderman initially denied assaulting anyone or ever engaging in non-consensual sex, and his office also released a statement from his ex-wife attesting to his "outstanding values". "In the privacy of intimate relationships, I have engaged in role-playing and other consensual sexual activity," he said.

But hours later he was the latest powerful man to fall in the wake of the avalanche of sexual misconduct allegations from women that have poured forth since the Weinstein scandal broke late last year and effectively ended the Hollywood movie producer's career. Schneiderman "has made a career railing against this type of abuse. Yet apparently he intends to revictimize these courageous women who have come forward by pulling out that age-old sexist trope that they wanted it," said Debra Katz, a lawyer for another of the women. — AFP

Trump pulls US from 'defective' Iran...

Continued from Page 1

between Tehran and both Israel and the Gulf monarchies. "France, Germany, and the UK regret the US decision to leave the JCPOA (Iran deal). The nuclear non-proliferation regime is at stake," France's President Emmanuel Macron wrote. "We will work collectively on a broader framework, covering nuclear activity, the post-2025 period, ballistic activity, and stability in the Middle-East, notably Syria, Yemen, and Iraq," he added.

The European Union's chief diplomat Federica Mogherini, who helped oversee the talks with Iran that led to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, insisted the accord "is delivering on its goal which is guaranteeing that Iran doesn't develop nuclear weapons". And she added: "the European Union is determined to preserve it."

In contrast, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who last week released a trove of intelligence on a pre-2003 Iranian plan to develop a nuclear weapon which Trump cited approvingly in his speech, was overjoyed. "Israel fully supports President Trump's bold decision today to reject the disastrous nuclear deal," Netanyahu said, in a televised address, even as his country opened bomb shelters and put the military on high alert in case of attack from the Iranian forces deployed in Syria in defense of Bashar Al-Assad's regime.

Saudi Arabia said it "supports and welcomes" Trump's decision. The kingdom, a key US ally, said it would work with the US and the international community to address Iran's nuclear program as well as its ballistic missile program and support of militant groups in the region. "Iran used economic gains from the lifting of sanctions to continue its activities to destabilize the region, particularly by developing ballistic missiles and supporting terrorist groups in the region," according to a Saudi foreign ministry statement. It confirmed "the need to deal with the danger that Iran's policies pose to international peace and security through a comprehensive view that is not limited to its nuclear program but also includes all hostile activities" in the region.

The United Arab Emirates also said it backed the US' decision and voiced support for Trump's strategy in dealing with Tehran. The UAE foreign ministry urged the international community "to respond positively to President Trump's position to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction", the state news agency WAM reported.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani - who some deal supporters see as a reforming moderate who will be undermined by any collapse in the deal - was furious, accusing Trump of "psychological warfare" and vowing to take the matter up with the agreement's other signatories, including Washington's rivals Moscow and Beijing.

Meanwhile, former Obama administration officials warned that the decision puts the US on a collision course with Iran, distances the White House from its key allies and put US citizens held in Iran at risk. Former deputy secretary of state Tony Blinken, who helped negotiate the accord, called it a "monumental mistake" and former senior diplomat Wendy Sherman told reporters Trump was putting international stability at risk for purely domestic political purposes.

"This has been a crisis that Trump has been precipitating himself to answer his base, to fulfill a campaign pledge that he made, without any sense whatsoever of what Plan B is," she told reporters. "It says that the United States is not a reliable partner," she added, insisting that the existing deal permanently prevents Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon. Blinken said ending the deal gives "hardliners in Iran an excuse to restart their pursuit of nuclear weapons, but without the united international coalition to oppose them or inspectors on the ground to expose them."

Trump had until May 12 to decide whether to continue to waive sanctions on Iran's central bank and its oil sector dealings, a key pillar of the 2015 agreement, but moved more quickly than expected and cancelled sanctions that were not yet up for review. For months, critics have been warning ending the waivers would unravel the carefully constructed deal, plunge Iran's already struggling economy into crisis and expose the biggest transatlantic rift since the Iraq War.

But some US officials close to Trump, as well as hawkish



TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani gives a speech on Iranian TV yesterday. — AFP

Washington lobbyists, argue that an Iranian economic collapse could lead to Tehran's Islamist regime falling - and that this would be a good thing. Ahead of Trump's verdict, diplomats shifted into damage limitation mode, hoping that beyond his inevitably harsh rhetoric, he stops short of immediately re-imposing sanctions.

In Brussels, officials are already working on "blocking" measures that would protect EU citizens and companies from US prosecution. "We are having conversations obviously and we are working on a number of proposals that could protect European companies and operators," a senior EU official told reporters.

Trump also announced yesterday that Pompeo is on his way to North Korea to prepare for a landmark nuclear summit, as a flurry of diplomacy with Pyongyang at the center gathered pace. Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un are expected to meet later this month or early in June for talks that would have been nearly unthinkable a year ago, when the two mercurial leaders were trading barbs and Pyongyang tested a barrage of missiles.

But after months of saber-rattling, and a historic summit between Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, the mood is decidedly more upbeat, and Trump has said a date and location are already set - though he did not divulge any specifics. "At this very moment, Secretary Pompeo is on his way to North Korea in preparation for my upcoming meeting with Kim Jong Un," Trump said in the televised address from the White House.

Pompeo, who met Kim in Pyongyang about a month ago while he was still director of the CIA, will arrive in the North in "virtually an hour", Trump said. "We have our meeting schedule. We have our meeting set. The location is picked. The time and date. Everything is picked. And we look forward to having a very great success," he said. "We think relationships are building with North Korea. We will see how it all works out. Maybe it won't. But it can be a great thing for North Korea, South Korea and the entire world."

In addition to planning the summit, Pompeo has been pressing the regime to release three detained US citizens. Trump has said to "stay tuned" on the issue. "We will be listening for signs from North Korea that things have substantially changed since Kim declared on New Year's Eve that he would mass produce nuclear warheads and the means to deliver them," a senior State Department official traveling with Pompeo said. — Agencies

Ashour, Sabeeh spar over...

Continued from Page 1

She said the law requires the society to spend raised funds on projects specified by the law and bans the societies from spending the money on projects not specified by the law. It also bans societies from entering into financial speculation.

Ashour however yesterday reiterated that the minister has misinformed the Assembly about the charity society by claiming it had taken a loan. He said he

wants to know from where it took the loan. He urged MPs to shoulder their responsibility during a highly-anticipated Assembly session tomorrow. The Assembly is scheduled to vote tomorrow on two no-confidence motions against Oil Minister Bakheet Al-Rasheed and Sabeeh. Each motion requires 25 votes to dismiss the minister.

Meanwhile, MP Khalil Abul asked National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem why the Audit Bureau, which comes under the speaker's authority, increased the salaries of expatriate employees in the bureau. He said the hike comes amid a replacement policy that calls to replace expatriates with nationals, and also cut spending.

Breakthrough with Manila...

Continued from Page 1

Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Takashi Ashiki discussed today means of boosting bilateral media, cultural and youth cooperation. They reviewed historical ties between Kuwait and Japan, generously cared for by leadership of both countries.

Separately, Manila yesterday announced that President Rodrigo Duterte has designated Secretary Abdullah Mama-o as special envoy to Kuwait. Roque said Mama-o, an incumbent presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) concerns, has been tasked to repatriate all 800 Filipinos who ran away from their employers.

He said three Filipino diplomats are under "restrictive movement" while four Filipino drivers were arrested by Kuwaiti authorities in the aftermath of the rescue operations of OFW's allegedly being abused by their employers. "So the mandate of Secretary Mama-o is to bring everyone home and possibly to normalize

ties with Kuwait," Roque told a press briefing.

With Mama-o designation as special envoy, Roque said government is hoping the labor memorandum of understanding (MOU) will also be finally signed between the Philippines and Kuwait. "The MoU is also part of what we want to achieve because the MoU will completely normalize our ties," he said.

Roque said Duterte is confident that Mama-o will be able to accomplish his special mission in the Gulf state. "I think the president noted that Secretary Mama-o, being a Muslim, has been effective in dealing with Kuwaiti authorities. So, it's like he is allowing a Muslim do the negotiations for the time being with the Kuwaiti authorities," Roque said.

Meanwhile, private recruitment agencies urged the Philippine government to allow the sending of Filipino household service workers (HSWs) to the United Arab Emirates (PAMA-UAE) believes that the Arab country is a good alternative market. She noted that the working conditions in UAE and Kuwait are the same, making it more suitable for Filipino workers. — Agencies

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Sports

Williams fulfils naked ambition to claim third snooker title

Oldest winner since his fellow Welshman Ray Reardon triumphed

SHEFFIELD: Mark Williams fought off a stunning comeback from John Higgins to claim his third world snooker crown on Monday and then fulfilled a pledge to appear naked at his press conference.

The Welshman won a gripping final 18-16 to add to his titles in 2000 and 2003. At 43 he became the oldest winner since his fellow Welshman Ray Reardon triumphed aged 45 in 1978.

Higgins, 42 and seeking a fifth title, fought back from a seven-frame deficit to draw level at 15-15, but Williams held on to take the sport's showcase.

It capped a remarkable late-career revival as he did not even qualify for the championships in 2017, and last reached the final 15 years ago, when he defeated Ken Doherty.

"Last year I watched this in a caravan having some beers. I just can't believe it. I was seriously thinking of giving up," Williams told the BBC.

He was 15-10 up, three frames away from the title, after Monday's afternoon session having started the day 10-7 in front. He stormed seven frames clear when taking Monday's first four frames but Higgins fought back in what six-time former champion Steve Davis commenting for the BBC described as "the best final ever".

Davis wasn't the only one left in awe at what he had witnessed with referee Brendan Moore taking to Twitter to declare: "Well I've reffed some great games in my time, but that was an absolute classic."

Higgins reflected: "Today I was 13-7 behind and I was worried if I would take it to the fourth session, I

didn't want to lose with a session to spare.

'HAND GRENADE'

"It was a good match to watch but obviously I'm disappointed. He is a great champion."

The two forty somethings received a standing ovation at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre as they emerged for the concluding evening session.

And Higgins had the captivated crowd on the edge of their seats as he compiled a stunning 131 break after a costly error by Williams to take the 27th frame to make it 15-11. That was the Scot's fourth century in the final.

And he clawed back to within three frames when taking the next.

Williams seemingly had it for the taking, but a mistake at 58-1 saw Higgins return to the table with a clearance of 67.

Davis said Higgins had "thrown a hand grenade into Mark Williams' brain" with those two quickfire frames. And so it proved as he rattled a red around the jaws of a pocket to let Higgins in with a chance at 47-0.

Showing nerves of steel Higgins nicked the frame with a break of 82. A pensive Williams, biting his lip, could only sit and suffer, his lead now cut to two.

Higgins steamrolled the next 91-0 to leave the final tantalisingly poised at 15-14 as the players took a 10 minute time out.

After a much needed cuppa the two veteran stars of the green baize resumed hostilities, with ice-cool Higgins drawing level at 15-15.



Scot's fourth century in the final



SHEFFIELD: Wales's Mark Williams celebrates with his partner and children after beating Scotland's John Higgins in the World Championship Snooker final match against at The Crucible in Sheffield, England on Monday. — AFP

Williams finally stopped Higgins's miraculous march to take the 31st and 32nd frames to leave 'the Welsh potting machine' just one shy of the greatest prize in the sport.

Williams was one pot away from victory but he missed a pink in the next. Higgins, 63-0 behind, yet

again defied the odds to steal the frame with a clearance of 65 and get back to within one.

But Williams wasn't to be denied, sealing the championship in the next frame and after the trophy presentation duly kept his promise - or threat - to strip off for the media. "Cold in here innit" he beamed. — AFP

Gatland names Hill, Jenkins co-captains for Wales tour

LONDON: Dragons lock Cory Hill and Cardiff Blues flanker Ellis Jenkins were yesterday named as co-captains for Wales's Test matches against South Africa and Argentina next month. Wales head coach Warren Gatland has rested all but two players - wing George North and back-row forward Ross Moriarty - who were original British and Irish Lions selections in New Zealand last summer.

It means the likes of regular Wales skipper Alun Wyn Jones, number eight Taulupe Faletau, flanker Justin Tipuric, fly-half Dan Biggar, wing Liam Williams and full-back Leigh Halfpenny are among those who have been given a break.

Gatland, whose side finished as Six Nations runners-up, has named one uncapped player, Cardiff Blues scrum-half Tomos Williams, in a 31-man squad. Wales face the Springboks in US capital Washington on June 2, then travel to South America for appointments with the Pumas on June 9 and 16.

Experienced Bath lock Luke Charteris has earned a recall, while it is a major opportunity for Jenkins, who is considered by many as a future Wales skipper, to make his mark. Gatland said: "We have picked Cory and Ellis as co-captains. They are both leaders and have experience captaining at regional level, so this is an opportunity for them to build on that. "This summer is another step on our 2019 World Cup path and a great opportunity to build on recent campaigns."

Wales squad Backs (13)

Aled Davies (Scarlets), Gareth Davies (Scarlets), Tomos Williams (Cardiff Blues), Gareth Anscombe (Cardiff Blues), Rhys Patchell (Scarlets), Hadleigh Parkes (Scarlets), Owen Watkin (Ospreys), Scott Williams (Scarlets), Josh Adams (Worcester), Hallam Amos (Dragons), Steff Evans (Scarlets), George North (Northampton), Tom Prydie (Scarlets).



Wales coach Warren Gatland

Forwards (18)

Rob Evans (Scarlets), Wyn Jones (Scarlets), Nicky Smith (Ospreys), Tomas Francis (Exeter), Samson Lee (Scarlets), Dillon Lewis (Cardiff Blues), Elliot Dee (Dragons), Ryan Elias (Scarlets), Adam Beard (Ospreys), Bradley Davies (Ospreys), Seb Davies (Cardiff Blues), Luke Charteris (Bath), Cory Hill (Dragons, co-captain), James Davies (Scarlets), Ellis Jenkins (Cardiff Blues, co-captain), Ross Moriarty (Gloucester), Josh Navidi (Cardiff Blues), Aaron Shingler (Scarlets).

Meanwhile, Gregor Townsend has named six new faces in his Scotland squad for their summer tour of the United States, Canada and Argentina. Edinburgh hooker Stuart McNally will captain the squad, which features the uncapped Lewis Carmichael, Matt Fagerson, Adam Hastings, George Horne, James Lang and Jamie Ritchie.

Hastings, the 21-year-old Glasgow fly-half, is the son of ex-Scotland captain Gavin Hastings and the nephew of Scott Hastings. "There are twin goals for this tour - the first is to build on the work we've done so far this season and finish with improved performances," said head coach Townsend. "We also have the Rugby World Cup in our thoughts, as this will be our last tour before we leave for Japan next year. "Touring and staying together for four weeks and experiencing different environments will be very informative - seeing how players get on with each other, how much they improve and how they rise to each challenge we face on tour." Scotland finished third in this year's Six Nations championship after wins against France, England and Italy. — AFP

Burgan Bank crowned champions of 21st bowling tournament

KUWAIT: Making a mark in the history of bowling organized by Kuwait Banking Club, Burgan Bank, one of Kuwait's most progressive banks, recently won first place in four categories. Owing to the dedication through extensive training and persistence demonstrated by the Burgan Bank bowling team, the participating team members have previously won top positions in many tournaments and recently this season Bowling Tournament and the cup of the Banking Club last year.

With participants from eight banks, the annual tournament was held under the patronage of the Board Chairman of the Kuwait Banking Club, Fadhel Abdul-Mandi, Director General of the Kuwait Banking Club Abbas Al-Bloushi and the coordinator of sports activities Hussein Abdul-Said

Giving rise to stars from within the bank, Ali Qasem took first place in the master category, while Ali Qasim and Faisal Al Rumaideen won first place in the doubles category followed by Ali Qasim, Faisal Al Rumaideen & Feras Al Mohareb grabbed first place in the Trio category. Karim Kouz, Rami Bashour, Mohammad Al Ebaidli, Michael Hamza, Lucas Simon, Ali Qasim, Faisal Al Rumaideen & Feras Al Mohareb came out Champions in this year's tournament.

Representing Burgan Bank proudly and bringing continuous success in the past, the players through their outstanding performance and team work have reflected the foundation of real values by which the brand stands by - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression.



Farwaniya Education Zone honors senior supervisors, teachers



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The General Technical Physical Education supervisor Waleed Al-Salameen, represented Director General of Farwaniya Education Zone Jassim Buhamad attended the closing ceremony of Farwaniya Education Zone physical education activities.

Technical supervisors from all education zones, school principals and physical educa-

tion teachers of the three educational stages also attended.

The ceremony patronized senior supervisors who were later honored. Members of the Information Committee presented reports on all activities and participations of the area schools, particularly cooperation with girls physical education.

The ceremony also witnessed the honoring of retirees including senior technical supervisor Saleh Al-Qattan for his contribu-

tion and dedication in many fields.

Supervisor Eman Al-Failakawi spoke on behalf of supervisors in thanking him for his efforts to enhance the work. Al-Failakawi herself was honored, as well as Adel Al-Nasser in recognition of their efforts.

Shields and cups were distributed to schools, Abdulmohsen Al-Saqlawi Elementary School, Saleh Al-Ruwayeh Intermediate School and Al-Shujaa bin Al-Aslam Secondary School for ending on top.

Sports

Red Sox, Yankees to play MLB games at London Stadium in 2019

‘We hope this series will be the beginning of relationship with London’

LONDON: The Boston Red Sox and the New York Yankees, two of baseball's iconic franchises, will bring one of sport's greatest rivalries to Europe with two regular-season games at the London Stadium next year, Major League Baseball (MLB) said yesterday.

Boston will play as the home team in the first MLB games to be staged in Europe, on June 29 and June 30, 2019, as the two famous adversaries meet for the first time outside either Boston or New York at the stadium that hosted the 2012 Olympic Games.

MLB also confirmed it is committed to playing in London in 2020 as it tries to “establish a long-term footprint in the city.” Baseball is following in the footsteps of American football, which has regularly held NFL games in London since 2007, and basketball, with NBA matches having become a regular fixture in the capital since 2011.

“Because this is our first foray into Europe, it's really important that we make as big a splash as possible,” MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred told a news conference in London. “In order to do that, we're going to bring you one of the best rivalries in baseball, maybe one of the best rivalries in all of sport—the Red Sox and the Yankees.”

Describing the teams as “two of our most storied franchises”, Manfred said the historic fixtures would take place in a stadium specially reconfigured to

stage baseball in front of 55,000 fans. The news represents a coup for the mayor of London Sadiq Khan, who has been pushing to make his city the “capital of world sport.”

His enthusiasm to bring big-time baseball to the capital even saw him two years ago throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at a game between the New York Mets and Minnesota Twins.

“We hope this series will be the beginning of a relationship with London that will persist,” said Manfred, explaining that an agreement was in place for baseball to also return to London for two matches in 2020 with teams yet to be announced.

Boston Red Sox Principal Owner John W. Henry, who also owns English Premier League soccer club Liverpool, said: “There were significant challenges that had to be overcome. “This series will surely be the most significant international event to date for Major League ball. “I can't wait to hear someone shout ‘play ball’ at London Stadium.”

Britain will now join other international venues to have hosted regular-season games, along with Mexico, Japan, Puerto Rico and Australia. “All the hard work has paid off,” said Khan, describing it as an “historic” partnership.

“There is no better way to start the London Series and the first Major League Baseball fixture in Europe than a clash between two heavyweights of international



NEW YORK CITY: File photo taken on August 31, 2017 Mookie Betts #50 of the Boston Red Sox is safe at second base as Starlin Castro of the New York Yankees makes the throw to first base during the third inning of a game at Yankee Stadium in New York City. The New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox will clash in two regular-season games in London in 2019 — the first ever Major League Baseball matches played in Europe. — AFP

sport.” A test of the appetite for the London venture is that the two fixtures will clash with key World Cup cricket matches, with Australia and New Zealand play-

ing a day-nighter at Lord's, also in London, on June 29, before England meet India at Edgbaston in Birmingham the following day. — Reuters

“Historic fixtures would take place in a stadium”

Kuwait Sports Club defeat Qadisiya to win Association Cup

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Sports Club became champion of Kuwait Basketball Association Cup by defeating Qadisiya Club 86-81 during their match that was held earlier in the week. Jahra Club took third place after defeating Nasser Club by the score of 88-87.

President of KBA Dhari Al-Barja, and Vice President Ali Al-Khalifa distributed medals and prizes to the play-



ers of the top three places.

The final match was of an average level during which teams exchanged scoring, until Kuwait Club began to get control midway during the first quarter through players Hamad Adnan and Abdullah Al-Shimmari scoring from outside, while Qadisiya Club players were hasty and rushing things allowing Kuwait to go up by 28-16.

Qadisiya regained its balance in the second quarter through Fahhad Al-Subaiee penetrations and scoring, while Nasser Al-Hajras and Saleh Al-Yousuf were outstanding in rebounding, while Kuwait Club players were not able to penetrate Qadisiya's zone defence, which had control over rebounds and fast breaks ending the second quarter with a score of 46-46.

The third quarter saw the two teams exchanging scores and ended at 63-61 in favor of Kuwait Club.

The fourth quarter was not different to a large extent, while Mushari Buduhoum was scoring from outside for Qadisiya while his teammate Saleh Al-Yousuf was shooting at random given to Kuwait the opportunity to go ahead in the final 3 minutes ending the match with the score of 86-81.



Wellens wins Giro fourth stage as Froome loses time

CALTAGIRONE: Belgian rider Tim Wellens won the fourth stage of the Giro d'Italia yesterday, the first on Italian soil in this year's race, while Chris Froome's hopes of a third straight Grand Tour victory took another hit.

Wellens won a sprint on an uphill finish, holding off Canadian Michael Woods and Italy's Enrico Battaglin following the 202km ride between Catania and Caltagirone in Sicily. Australian Rohan Dennis retained the overall leader's pink jersey after the first of three days on the Mediterranean island, after the race had started in Jerusalem followed by two stages in Israel.

Britain's four-time Tour de France winner Froome lost up to 20 seconds on his

rivals on the final climb. The race was built around a five-man breakaway—Enrico Barbin, Jacopo Mosca, Quentin Jauregui, Maxim Belkov and Marco Frapporti—who opened up a four-minute lead before being caught 13km from the line and the climb towards Caltagirone.

In the final push, Italy's Valerio Conti showed his ambitions up front but was reeled in with three kilometres to go. For 26-year-old Lotto rider Wellens it was a second career win in the Giro two years after his first. The Belgian has claimed one-day race wins such as the Montreal GP in 2015 and stage races including the Eneco Tour and the Tour of Poland. Today's fifth stage will cover 153km between Agrigento and Santa Ninfa. — AFP



SICILY: Belgium's rider of team Lotto Tim Wellens celebrates on the podium after winning the 4th stage of the 101st Giro d'Italia, Tour of Italy cycling race, between Catania and Caltagirone (Sicily), yesterday. Wellens won a sprint finish ahead of Canadian Michael Woods following the 198km ride between Catania and Caltagirone in Sicily. — AFP

Williams fails to have Baku F1 decisions reviewed

LONDON: Williams failed yesterday in a bid to overturn a three-place grid penalty imposed on Russian Sergey Sirotkin for this weekend's Spanish Formula One Grand Prix. The former champions had sought a review of five incidents at the April 29 Azerbaijan Grand Prix, arguing that significant and relevant new elements had emerged.

The stewards unanimously rejected that, however. Sirotkin had crashed into the back of the Force India driven by Mexican Sergio Perez, who ultimately finished third in a chaotic race in Baku, on the opening lap with the Russian retiring immediately.

The stewards said the incident “was not similar to other first lap incidents where cars were side-by-side. The penalty was similar to other penalties for similar collisions and was consistent with the minimum grid penalties given previously.”

Williams had questioned the stewards' decision in relation to other collisions. They had also referenced the response to McLaren's Fernando Alonso, who was hit on the first lap and limped back to the pits with two punctures before rejoining with a badly-damaged car and finishing seventh.

That was one place ahead of Williams' Canadian teenager Lance Stroll. Race director Charlie Whiting, who was present in the meeting convened by teleconference, noted that Alonso returned to the pits while the Safety Car was deployed.

He had also taken care to avoid the racing line and keep clear of following traffic. The stewards said Williams were well aware of what was going on at the time. “The team on the pit wall would have seen the driver of car 14 (Alonso) enter the pits, as it had to drive past them. Therefore it cannot be argued that this is a ‘new element’,” they declared.

Williams had also argued that a 10 second penalty imposed on Haas driver Kevin Magnussen for a collision with Toro Rosso's Pierre Gasly was ‘inconsequential’. Stewards reminded the team that, since 2013, the consequences of penalties were not taken into account.

“In relation to other penalties, since the beginning of 2016 there have been a total of 87 incidents involving alleged ‘causing a collision’ in the Formula One Championship,” the statement noted.

“Of these, as a result of the ‘let them race’ policy, 55 have resulted in No Further Action. Fourteen have resulted in 10 second penalties and nine have resulted in three grid position penalties for the next race.” “Therefore the penalties imposed...were entirely consistent with previous practice and with the penalty guidelines.” — Reuters

Sports

Washington Capitals oust Pittsburgh Penguins in overtime thriller

Advance to NHL Eastern Conference finals

LOS ANGELES: Evgeny Kuznetsov scored an overtime winner as the Washington Capitals ended Pittsburgh's dream of a Stanley Cup hat-trick on Monday to advance to the NHL Eastern Conference finals.

Kuznetsov's overtime strike sealed a dramatic 2-1 win for the Caps as the 2017 and 2016 champion Penguins bowed out before their home fans at the PPG Paints Arena. The win handed Washington a 4-2 series win and sees them advance to a showdown against the Tampa Bay Lightning for a place in the Stanley Cup finals. After a scoreless first period, Washington took the lead through Alex Chiasson early in the second. Kris Letang levelled for Pittsburgh with a long-range effort which deflected off a stick and past Braden Holtby. After a nerve-wracking third period which saw both sides fail to break the deadlock, the game went to overtime. The decisive moment came at 5:27 when the Penguins coughed up possession cheaply to leave the Caps with a breakthrough.

Russian star Alex Ovechkin slipped the puck to Kuznetsov, who darted through the Penguins defence

before beating goaltender Matt Murray with a clinical finish. "We believe in each other," Ovechkin said afterwards. "It doesn't matter what happened in the past. We have to stick together."

"We knew it was there. We just had to battle, and we just had to fight through it. Again, great feeling right now and we're going forward," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said his team would learn from the loss.

"I think sometimes we all learn more from our failures than we do our successes," Sullivan said. "I think this group knows how hard it is to win in the playoffs."

"All the teams are really good. There's a fine line between winning and losing. We haven't tasted this in a long time, and that's a credit to the group of players in

that dressing room." In the night's other game, Nashville scored a series-levelling 4-0 win over the Winnipeg Jets to set up a decisive game seven in the Western Conference. Predators goaltender Pekka Rinne made 34 saves while Viktor Arvidsson and Filip Forsberg scored two goals apiece. Game seven takes place in Nashville tomorrow. — AFP



PITTSBURGH: Tom Kuhnhackl #34 of the Pittsburgh Penguins tries to control the puck in front of Dmitry Orlov #9 of the Washington Capitals during the second period in Game Six of the Eastern Conference Second Round during the 2018 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at PPG Paints Arena, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. — AFP

“It doesn't matter what happened in the past”

Langer taps Paine as ODI skipper as new Aussie era starts

SYDNEY: New Australia coach Justin Langer yesterday named Tim Paine as one-day captain for next month's tour of England as they look to open a new era after a damaging ball-tampering scandal.

Langer, who has been entrusted with restoring Australia's battered reputation, was widely expected to select Paine in his first major decision as coach.

The 33-year-old wicketkeeper has already been appointed Australia's Test captain after his predecessor Steve Smith received a 12-month ban for his part in the ball-tampering affair.

The five-match ODI series in England will be the Australian team's first outing since the disastrous South African tour and the players are sure to face intense scrutiny.

Chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns said Cricket Australia had faith in Paine's ability to lead the 15-man squad in England, with Aaron Finch as his vice-captain.

Despite Australia's woes it has been a heady rise for Paine, who only returned to the national set-up in November after several years on the sidelines, during which he considered retirement.

"Tim is a strong leader and will captain the side for the series, supported by Aaron," Hohns said.

"A decision on a permanent one-day captain will be made in due course."

World champions Australia will open the series against England at Lord's on June 13.

Hohns said the tour would help players test themselves on English pitches ahead of the 2019 World Cup in England.

"Obviously, these are the conditions we will face during the tournament, so now is a perfect chance to give these players an opportunity to press their case for selection," he said.

Cricket Australia also named a 14-man squad for a one-off Twenty20 match in England, followed by a tri-series tournament in Zimbabwe also featuring Pakistan.

Finch was named to lead the squad, with Alex Carey as vice-captain.

Meanwhile, Smith's fellow international exiles David Warner and Cameron Bancroft are reportedly considering returning to cricket in the Northern Territory as early as July.

Warner and Bancroft received 12 and nine-month bans respectively, but the sanctions do not apply to club cricket.

NT Cricket chief Joel Morrison told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that the pair were considering playing in the Territory's limited-overs Strike League.

"The opportunity for us is to be able to have the likes of a Bancroft or a Warner around town to be able to pass on some of their knowledge to our local cricketers would be fantastic," he told the broadcaster.

Australia

ODI: Tim Paine (capt), Aaron Finch (vice-capt), Ashton Agar, Alex Carey, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Nathan Lyon, Glenn Maxwell, Shaun Marsh, Jhye Richardson, Kane Richardson, D'Arcy Short, Billy Stanlake, Marcus Stoinis, Andrew Tye.

T20: Aaron Finch (capt), Alex Carey (vice-capt), Ashton Agar, Travis Head, Nic Maddinson, Glenn Maxwell, Jhye Richardson, Kane Richardson, D'Arcy Short, Billy Stanlake, Marcus Stoinis, Mitchell Swepson, Andrew Tye, Jack Wildermuth. — AFP

Rahane to lead India against Afghanistan in Kohli's absence

MUMBAI: Ajinkya Rahane will lead India against Afghanistan, who play their maiden test in Bengaluru in June, in the absence of regular captain Virat Kohli, the country's cricket board (BCCI) said yesterday.

Kohli will represent Surrey in June after signing a one-month contract with the English county side to prepare for the test series against England later this year. He will return to lead India in the limited-overs series in Ireland in June before they head to England for three T20 internationals, three ODIs and a five-test series starting in August.

Afghanistan will play their inaugural test match from June 14 in Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium. The South Asian country and Ireland joined the ranks of full member nations of the International Cricket Council last year, taking the total number of test-playing countries to 12.

India also decided to manage the workloads of other test regulars, opting to rest batsman Rohit Sharma and pace duo Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Jasprit Bumrah for the Afghanistan test.

Batsman Karun Nair, seamer Shardul Thakur and left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav were drafted in. Thakur is yet to play in the five-day format for India. The world's top-ranked test side last played the longest

format in January in South Africa, where they lost a hard-fought three-test series 2-1.

Uncapped medium-pacer Siddarth Kaul made it into both India's T20 and 50-over sides for the tour of Ireland and England after impressive performances for Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League. Batsmen Lokesh Rahul and Ambati Rayudu were also rewarded with spots in the ODI side after strong showings in the IPL.

Meanwhile, Australia have been forced to scrap a day-night Test and will hold the game in normal hours instead after India refused to play, cricket officials said yesterday.

Cricket Australia had pencilled in the December 6-10 Test in Adelaide as a pink-ball match but India balked at playing under floodlights. "We can confirm that we have received advice from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) that it is not prepared to participate in a proposed day-night Test in Adelaide this summer," CA chief James Sutherland said in a statement.

"As a result, we can now confirm this Test match will be a day format." CA believes day-night Test cricket is a more television-friendly format and perhaps the only way to save the five-day version of the game following the rise of the quickfire Twenty20 format.

But India, who are the world's top-ranked team, said they didn't want to play their first day-night Test during such a high-profile series. "Yes, it's pretty clear that we are not playing a day-night Test in Australia, no doubt about it," BCCI administrator Vinod Rai told AFP earlier this month.

The Australians have played four day-night Tests since 2015, three of them in Adelaide, winning all of

them. India have not yet played a pink-ball Test and would be reluctant to give the hosts any advantage as they seek a first Test series win in Australia. "I think everyone in world cricket knows that, to be frank, I think (India) want to come out here and beat us," Sutherland told Australia's SEN Radio in early May. Sutherland said Australia would still play a day-night Test against Sri Lanka in Brisbane in January. "We are committed to hosting at least one day-night Test each home summer as part of our continued focus to grow Test cricket," he said.

INDIA TEST SQUAD AGAINST AFGHANISTAN:

Ajinkya Rahane (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Murali Vijay, Lokesh Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Karun Nair, Wriddhiman Saha, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Hardik Pandya, Ishant Sharma, Shardul Thakur.

INDIA T20 SQUAD AGAINST IRELAND AND ENGLAND:

Virat Kohli (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Lokesh Rahul, Suresh Raina, Manish Pandey, MS Dhoni, Dinesh Karthik, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, Siddarth Kaul, Umesh Yadav.

INDIA ODI SQUAD AGAINST ENGLAND:

Virat Kohli (captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Lokesh Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Ambati Rayudu, MS Dhoni, Dinesh Karthik, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, Siddarth Kaul, Umesh Yadav. — Agencies



Simona Halep

Halep sails past Mertens at Madrid Open

MADRID: Reigning champion Simona Halep edged closer to a third consecutive Madrid Open title by beating Belgium's Elise Mertens yesterday.

Halep, the winner here in 2016 and 2017, was made to work harder in the second set on Manolo Santana but the world number one's 6-0, 6-3 victory was never in doubt. Kristyna Pliskova of the Czech Republic will now await Halep in the last 16 as the Romanian continues to prepare for the French Open, where she has twice gone the distance only to finish runner-up. Halep won the first eight games in a row to lead 6-0,

2-0, with her clay-court counter-attacking too strong for the 22-year-old Mertens to handle. Mertens offered some late resistance as her opponent's concentration wavered, but a double fault confirmed Halep's victory in a brief one hour and 11 minutes.

Earlier, Petra Kvitova battled to a 6-3, 7-6 (10/8) victory over Puerto Rico's Monica Puig to register her seventh consecutive win. Kvitova's hard-hitting game lends itself more to the faster surfaces but after the lifting the title on clay in Prague at the weekend, she has maintained her momentum here.

A tight second set was decided by a tie-break and Kvitova almost threw it away when she served two double faults. The first came on her own match point and the second after a malfunction with the court's sound system meant music played just as she was about to serve.

But the world number 10 recovered her composure to seal a place in the next round, where she will meet either Estonia's Anett Kontaveit or Aliaksandra Sasnovich of Belarus. — AFP

Porterfield hopes conditions favour Test debutants Ireland

LONDON: Ireland captain William Porterfield hopes a combination of local conditions and English county cricket experience will work in his side's favour when they make their Test debut at home to Pakistan later this week. Both the Ireland and Afghanistan teams were elevated to Test status last year, making them eligible for the five-day format. But it is Ireland who will become the 11th men's cricket Test nation when they face Pakistan in a one-off match starting in Malahide, near Dublin, on Friday.

No side has enjoyed a victory in its first Test since Australia beat England in the foundation Test at Melbourne back in 1877 and it would be an upset were Ireland to get off to a winning start.

Ireland, however, did spring a huge surprise when they knocked Pakistan out of the 2007 World Cup in the Caribbean, although that was in a one-day international tournament. But what encourages Porterfield ahead of Friday's game is that early season conditions in Ireland, which can aid swing bowling and present a particular challenge to batsmen, could prove tough for a Pakistan side brought up on slower, lower and more spin-friendly pitches in the sub-continent.

Pakistan, however, have been acclimatising with two warm-up matches against English county clubs Kent and Northamptonshire. "It's in Ireland, it's in May, so it's in our own conditions," Porterfield told the Irish Independent. "Historically, when subcontinental teams come to conditions like those, it has taken them a bit of time to adjust," he added. Porterfield is also one of several players in the Ireland squad to have played first-class county cricket giving them high-level experience of a long-form game, albeit that County Championship matches last for a maximum of four days rather than five. "You face Test bowlers in Championship games in England, and in white-ball cricket," said Porterfield, a former Gloucestershire and Warwickshire batsman. "The biggest difference I found is that they are just a bit more relentless, they don't give you as many bad balls," he added. — AFP

Sports

Guangzhou held by Tianjin, Buriram surprise Jeonbuk

Khoukhi double gives Al Sadd edge on Al Ahli

SINGAPORE: Guangzhou Evergrande were held to a goalless draw by fellow Chinese Super League side Tianjin Quanjian in the first leg of their Asian Champions League round of 16 clash yesterday as Thailand's Buriram United edged Jeonbuk Motors in a five-goal thriller.

Buriram will take a one-goal advantage into the second leg in South Korea against the two-time winners following a 3-2 win at the Thunder Castle, but Son Joon-ho's late goal ensured Jeonbuk will go into the second leg confident of advancing.

The Thai Premier League leaders took the lead in the sixth minute when Edgar Silva headed home Yoo Jun-soo's floated cross but Ricardo Lopes levelled five minutes into the second half. Diogo curled his free kick home from 25 yards out to restore Buriram's lead on the hour mark and Edgar Silva scored his second when he slalomed through the Jeonbuk defence from the halfway line before slotting past Song Bum-kuen.

But just seconds into stoppage-time Son smashed the ball into the roof of the net from eight yards to give Jeonbuk a lifeline. Tianjin, meanwhile, squandered several opportunities to take an advantage into the second leg against two-time champions Guangzhou Evergrande as Alexandre Pato and Anthony Modeste

were denied by Evergrande goalkeeper Zeng Cheng.

"We created a lot of chances and led on every statistic but unfortunately we didn't score," Evergrande head coach Fabio Cannavaro said.

"Our opponents had a few opportunities and their most skilful players, like Modeste and Pato, had some decent efforts but our goalkeeper performed very well and saved them all." In the west Asian half of the draw, Boualem Khoukhi scored twice in the opening 28 minutes as Qatar's Al Sadd handed Al Ahli of Saudi Arabia a 2-1 defeat in the first leg in Doha.

Mohamad Aseri's goal two minutes into the second half ensured the Jeddah-based Al Ahli remain in contention for a place in the quarter-final draw.

Al Jazeera of the United Arab Emirates will take a 3-2 lead into the second leg of their meeting with last year's semi-finalists Persepolis of Iran. Ali Alipour put the Iranians in front with a header before goals from Ali Mabkhout and Romarinho took Al Jazeera ahead, only

for Godwin Mensha's re-taken penalty six minutes from time to level the scores.

Khalifa Al Hammadi's deft header of Mbark Bousoufa's free kick six minutes into stoppage-time means Al Jazeera will take a one-goal lead into the second leg in Tehran next week. — Reuters



TIANJIN: Tianjin Quanjian's Kwon Kyungwon (L) fights for the ball with Guangzhou Evergrande's Ricardo Goulart (R) during the AFC Champions League round of 16 football match between China's Tianjin Quanjian and Guangzhou Evergrande in Tianjin yesterday. Guangzhou Evergrande nullified the twin threat of Alexandre Pato and Anthony Modeste to earn a 0-0 draw at Chinese rivals Tianjin Quanjian in the Asian Champions League last 16 yesterday. — AFP

“ We created a lot of chances but didn't score ”

Ferguson 'showing signs of recovery' after haemorrhage

LONDON: Former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson was sitting up and talking to his family, reports said yesterday, as he recovers from emergency surgery following a brain haemorrhage.

The 76-year-old, who suffered the haemorrhage on Saturday, remains in intensive care and there has been no official update on his condition from the Premier League club. But Britain's Mail Online said the Scot, who retired in 2013, was out of a coma and showing promising early signs of recovery. "Surgery went very well and the 76-year-old's response to treatment has given encouragement and cautious optimism to those close to him," the report said. "However, they recognise it will still be a slow road to full recovery as he continues to be assessed." "The prognosis is good and his closest friends in football are being kept abreast of any developments," a source told The Sun newspaper.

One of the greatest managers in football history, Ferguson won 38 trophies in more than 26 years in charge of United, including 13 Premier League titles and the Champions League twice. Support has flooded in from the football world and from those outside the game and United midfielder Michael Carrick said that the response shows the esteem in which his former boss is held. "The whole football world is incredible but outside of that as well, from all corners of the globe and different walks of life, people have shown their support," he told MUTV. "That's the effect he had on people. It was the effect he had on everyone. He means a lot to me, as he does to this club.

"We were all praying for him and thinking of him, Cathy and the family. It's a tough time for everyone but I'm thinking positive and hoping he will pull through."

GIGGS TRIBUTE

Wales manager Ryan Giggs, who was part of all of Ferguson's 13 Premier League title-winning teams after being given his debut as a 17-year-old in 1991, told the



MANCHESTER: File photo taken on May 12, 2013 Manchester United's Scottish manager Alex Ferguson holds the Premier League trophy at the end of the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Swansea City at Old Trafford in Manchester, northwest England. —AFP

BBC: "I know the operation has been a success—but he is a fighter and that is what makes me think he will be able to make a recovery.

"Now is the time to pray and hope he can make a full recovery. He has been the biggest influence in my career, both on and off the pitch." Defender Phil Jones, one of a handful of players signed by Ferguson who is still at the club, added: "I know his character. I know he has that fight in him. Hopefully he'll recover well. "He has got all his family and friends around him, the support from all the players and staff at Man United and football around the world."

United have thanked the many well-wishers, including Premier League managers Arsene Wenger, Pep Guardiola and Jurgen Klopp, who have spoke of their admiration for Ferguson.

his way back into Guardiola's plans and was rewarded with a one-year contract extension last summer.

'MAYBE I WAS WRONG'

This season, Toure has so far been limited to nine substitute appearances although Guardiola, rightly, believes he should not be judged on one season alone. "I am not going to judge Yaya for what happened this season," he said.

"Maybe I was wrong in my decision this season, I don't know. We have to analyse a career, not just in Manchester, in Russia, in Barcelona and Monaco. "He is a player with a huge personality. Sometimes it doesn't matter about his physical condition, he doesn't feel the pressure, it doesn't matter where he plays. He loves to play football.

"Of course the decisions I took this season depended on what I saw every day in the training sessions and, from what I saw, from what I saw about him, nothing changed my opinion. "He was the only guy last season we extend the contract. His behaviour was good. Hopefully he can stay in football and come back maybe here." Guardiola stopped short of predicting whether Toure will look to continue his career although the City manager is in no doubt that he could continue to play at the Premier League level should he so choose.

The City manager still has two games remaining— Brighton and the visit to Southampton on Sunday—and was in no mood to discuss the future prospects of players or his coaching staff, with his coach Mikel Arteta one of the names to have been linked with the soon to be vacant Arsenal job. "I don't know what is going to happen," he said. "In football today maybe a player comes and says I want to play more and we have to find a solution. We will have to see. "We are going to play these two games, try to win points and finish well. After, we will see what happens." — AFP



Yaya Toure

Southampton and Swansea ready for relegation Cup final

LONDON: It is not a Cup final but Swansea City's critical Premier League relegation dogfight with Southampton at the Liberty Stadium yesterday has taken on the feeling of something just as important for the two teams.

A 50 million pounds (\$67.6 million) incentive is potentially at stake for the winners because three points, while not guaranteeing riches from another year in the lucrative Premier League, could prove decisive in securing safety.

With two games each left and West Bromwich Albion hot favourites to be relegated along with Stoke City, either the Swans or the Saints, locked on 33 points, look likely to be the third side for the drop. Carlos Carvalhal's Swansea are third bottom in the relegation zone, only because of their inferior goal difference to 17th-placed Southampton.

Yet Carvalhal is convinced that home advantage will make all the difference in turning around this parlous situation with Swansea enjoying their last two matches at the Liberty Stadium against Southampton and doomed Stoke on Sunday. Southampton too have a home game on the final Sunday but it will be against champions Manchester City, who, should they beat Brighton & Hove Albion on Wednesday, will be pushing to complete the Premier League's first 100-point season. Even though Swansea are on a dismal run, having not won in seven Premier League games, Carvalhal is convinced the Liberty Stadium factor could make all the difference as they have lost only to Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea in the league since his arrival at the end of 2017.

"Since we arrive, all the games we play at home, we perform really well in all of them," said Carvalhal, whose only other home defeat was against Spurs in the FA Cup. "Possibly the Cup game was the game that was hard for us. All the others, we dominated and were better than our opponents...I don't have any reason to doubt we can do it."

Southampton's players were dealt a cruel blow by the 96th-minute equaliser they conceded at Everton in a 1-1 draw on Saturday which, manager Mark Hughes conceded, demonstrated a lack of composure under pressure.—Reuters

Guardiola dedicates Brighton game to departing Toure

MANCHESTER: Pep Guardiola has dedicated Manchester City's final home game of their championship-winning season to Yaya Toure, a player he has described as one of the most important figures in the club's history.

The Ivory Coast international, who turns 35 on the final day of the season on Sunday, will start a Premier League game for the first time in the current campaign when City play Brighton at the Etihad. It is the manager's way of allowing Toure to bid farewell to a club he joined when Guardiola sold him to City from Barcelona for £24 million (\$32 million, 27 million euros) in 2010.

Since then, Toure has been an integral part of City's success, fuelled by the wealth of their Abu Dhabi owners, and has collated three league titles, two League Cups and one FA Cup winner's medal. That body of work has led Guardiola to describe Toure as "an extraordinary person" and guarantee him an emotional farewell on Wednesday.

"He has been big," said Guardiola. "Football players make the clubs bigger and bigger and bigger and without doubt he was, is, one of the most important players in our history. "He helped this club make a step forward and hopefully we can make a good game for him.

"We dedicate it to him. Tomorrow we are going to play for Yaya." Guardiola's early relationship with Toure when they were reunited in Manchester was not an easy one, with the manager angered by comments from the midfielder's outspoken agent Dimitri Seluk. However, Toure played



Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Chelsea v Huddersfield Town	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Leicester City v Arsenal	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 4	
Tottenham Hotspur v Newcastle United	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Manchester City v Brighton & Hove Albion	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 6	
SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA	
Barcelona v Villarreal	21:00
beIN SPORTS HD 7	
Sevilla v Real Madrid	22:30
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
ITALIAN CUP	
Juventus v Milan	22:00
beIN SPORTS	

12 Williams fulfils naked ambition to claim third snooker title



13 Red Sox, Yankees to play MLB games at London Stadium in 2019



15 Guangzhou held by Tianjin, Buriram surprise Jeonbuk



Kuwait SC wins Amir Football Cup

Club lifts trophy for 13th time



KUWAIT: HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah presents the trophy to Kuwait SC players after the team won the HH the Amir Football Cup after beating Al-Arabi SC 3-0 at Jaber International Stadium yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait SC won His Highness the Amir Football Cup after beating Al-Arabi SC 3-0 in a clash held at Jaber International Stadium yesterday, bagging the championship for the 13th time in the club's history. The match was sponsored by HH the Amir Sheikh

Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who was represented by HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Kuwait's first goal was in the 5th minute and the lead was extended by Jumaa Saeed's header in the 33rd

minute. Al-Arabi tried hard to narrow the gap in the second half, but Hussain Al-Harbi of Kuwait SC nailed the third goal in the 88th minute. This is Kuwait SC's third title this year after winning the Super Cup and VIVA premier league.

The Amir Cup was launched in the 1961-62 season. Qadsiya SC have won the cup 16 times, Al-Arabi 15 times and Kuwait 12 times. Kazma SC won the title seven times, while Salmiya and Yarmouk have won the title twice. Fahaheel won it once. — KUNA

FIFA fines Russia over racist chants at France friendly

MOSCOW: World Cup hosts Russia have been fined 30,000 Swiss francs for discriminatory chants by fans, FIFA said yesterday, after racist abuse was directed at French players during a friendly in St Petersburg in March. A Reuters photographer at pitch level for France's 3-1 win over Russia heard monkey chants directed at French players on several occasions, including when midfielder N'Golo Kante came to the touchline for a throw-in.

FIFA said it had conducted a "thorough investigation" of video evidence of the match in reaching its decision. World soccer's ruling body said it recognised the gravity of the incident but added that only a limited number of fans were involved.

The Russian Football Union (RFU) referred questions to its anti-discrimination inspector Alexei Smertin, whose assistant declined to comment when contacted by Reuters. Russia has pledged to crack down on racism as the country faces increased scrutiny ahead of this year's World Cup, which it will host from June 14 to July 15 in 11 cities including Moscow, St Petersburg and Sochi.

There have been other reported cases of racist abuse, however, in the run-up to the tournament. Alexei Sorokin, chief executive of Russia's local World Cup organising committee (LOC), was reported by TASS news agency as saying that such incidents were rare. "It is a shame that such discriminatory incidents take place here, but thankfully they are very rare and do not constitute a trend," he said. "We have gone quite a long way to isolate this problem. It is impossible to control such human reactions in any country in the world." — Reuters

LeBron leads Cavs sweep, Sixers stay alive

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James led the way as the Cleveland Cavaliers wrapped up a series sweep with a ruthless demolition of the Toronto Raptors on Monday to book their place in the NBA Eastern Conference finals. James, the buzzer-beating hero of Cleveland's epic victory in game three on Saturday, scored 29 points as Toronto's bid to avoid the ignominy of a 4-0 series loss ended in a 128-93 pounding. Toronto had entered the playoffs as the number one seed from the Eastern Conference, and were desperate to avoid a third straight series defeat to James and the Cavs after losses in 2016 and 2017.

But their fragility was underscored by a rampant Cleveland on Monday, with James leading a blowout win that ensures the Cavs will be well rested for the Eastern Conference finals, where they will play either Boston or Philadelphia.

"It was a great series for us," James said afterwards. "We had a lot of challenges, considering the dominance (Toronto) had in the regular season. But we had a great gameplan and we executed it."

"We want to continue to improve. I think we've done that from the seven-game series against Indiana to these four games." James was once more the tormentor in chief for Toronto, contributing eight rebounds and 11 assists in addition to his 29 points.

Four other Cavaliers starters cracked double digits, with Kevin Love scoring 23 points and Kyle Korver 16 points. J.R. Smith added 15 points while George Hill added 12.

Cleveland coach Tyrone Lue said the Cavs' defense and all-round offensive display had been crucial factors in the sweep. "I think defensively we're playing pretty good," Lue said. "And I think in this series, we made



CLEVELAND: Jose Calderon #81 of the Cleveland Cavaliers handles the ball against the Toronto Raptors in Game Four of the Eastern Conference Semifinals during the 2018 NBA Playoffs at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, Ohio. — AFP

shots, a lot of different guys stepped up.

"Four or five different guys getting double figures for us every night - that was big for us. We've got to continue getting better but I like where we're at right now." Toronto's miserable night saw DeMar DeRozan ejected in the fourth quarter while Kyle Lowry was restricted to just five points.

Jonas Valanciunas was a notable beacon of resistance, providing 18 points off the bench. But it was too little, too late for Toronto, who were comprehensively outplayed in every department.

'EMOTIONALLY DRUNK'

Raptors coach Dwane Casey said his team had paid the price for not being able to recover from shattering losses in games one and three. "We were emotionally drunk after game one and game three," Casey said. "I thought we could bounce back, but we didn't."

DeRozan meanwhile was at a loss to explain yet

another defeat to the Cavs. "They've just got our number. Things just don't seem to go right for us," DeRozan said, adding that the James-inspired Cavs were anything but a one-man band.

"It's not just him going out there and scoring 128 points," DeRozan said. "The things he does for his team-mates gets them going. It's been a challenge for us over the years."

In Monday's other playoff game, T.J. McConnell and Dario Saric combined to give the Philadelphia 76ers a lifeline with their 103-92 win over the Boston Celtics. The Celtics could have clinched a 4-0 sweep but instead the Sixers' win ensured there will be a game game five in Boston on Wednesday.

McConnell's introduction into the starting line-up proved crucial for the Sixers, with the point guard scoring a career-high 19 points. Croatian power forward Saric added 25 points while Ben Simmons finished with 19 points and Joel Embiid 15. — AFP

Business

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2018

18 African growth picks up to 3.4% in 2018, but debt a concern: IMF**19** China's April exports bounce back despite US trade brawl**21** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait named 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait'

TEHRAN: An Iranian man reads the newspaper at the stock exchange in the capital Tehran yesterday. Renewed nuclear sanctions would certainly cause severe problems for Iran's economy, but much of the damage has already been done by the uncertainty created by the US and myriad home-grown problems. —AFP

Iran rial plunges ahead of Trump decision

Economy a mess even before US pulls out of nuke deal

TEHRAN: Iran's rial traded near record lows against the dollar in the free market yesterday as Iranians tried to buy hard currency, fearing economic turmoil if US President Donald Trump withdraws from a deal on Iran's nuclear program. The dollar was selling for 65,000 rials, according to foreign exchange website Bonbast.com, which tracks the free market. That was down from 57,500 at the end of last month and 42,890 at the end of last year.

Economists inside and outside the country said the rial was being driven down by heavy demand for dollars among Iranians who feared a US pullout from the nuclear agreement would lead to the resumption of US sanctions against Tehran, deterring other nations in Europe and Asia from developing business ties.

This could constrict Iran's foreign trade, causing a spike of inflation and further reducing access to hard currency in an economy which is already struggling with high unemployment and the threat of a crisis among financially troubled banks. Mehrdad Emadi, an Iranian economist who heads energy risk analysis at London's Betamatrix consultancy, said the approach of Trump's decision was encouraging a mass flight out of the rial. On Sunday, the currency hit a record low of 67,800.

"This large scale de-rialization of the Iranian economy has now created a complete collapse of confidence," Emadi said, adding that if the government did not take immediate steps to shore up the banking system and restore business confidence, the currency could fall as low as 110,000. "Such a rate would translate to a tripling of the inflation rate and a deep dollarization of the Iranian economy, and barter-based transaction when hard currency cannot be found."

As pressure on the rial mounted in early April, Iranian authorities tried to halt its slide by saying they were unify-

ing official and free-market exchange rates at a single level of 42,000, and banning any trade at other rates. "The free market has been shut down officially, but it continues its work unofficially. There is an underground currency market in Iran, with rates, charts and everything," said an analyst in Tehran, declining to be named for legal reasons. "Instead of stopping by at the exchange shop, people arrange their trade by phone calls and through underground channels."

As part of its crackdown, Iran clamped a 10,000-euro (\$11,900) ceiling on the amount of foreign currency that citizens can hold outside banks. The Tehran analyst said this regulation was being widely disobeyed, and estimated billions of dollars were being held illicitly outside banks. "The real dollar rate is much higher, and people know from the past that when they deposited their dollars into bank accounts, they were not able to withdraw later."

Economy a mess

Renewed nuclear sanctions would certainly cause severe problems for Iran's economy, but much of the damage has already been done by the uncertainty created by the US and myriad home-grown problems.

It was awkward timing for the annual International Oil Show in Tehran this week, which opened just two days before US President Donald Trump was due to make his

opportunities in key sectors including infrastructure, energy, and advanced manufacturing.

"The SelectUSA Investment Summit is the single best venue for global companies to discover how tax reform, regulatory reduction, and other pro-growth Trump Administration policies have made the United States an even more attractive destination for business investment," said US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross. The three-day event will include dozens of seminar sessions on different aspects of investment, an exhibition hall full of economic development organizations and service providers that support investors, and an online matchmaking tool to facilitate new business connections. There will also be ample opportunity for networking. Past Investment Summit participants announced more than \$71 billion of new investment projects in the United States from 2013 to 2017. The previous four Summits attracted thousands of international investors, with the 2017 Summit alone attracting more than 3,000 investors from 64 countries.

decision on whether to rip up the 2015 nuclear deal and reimpose sanctions on Iran.

"The atmosphere was grim," said a European consultant who attended the conference on Monday. "There were fewer foreigners, the stands were smaller, it was depressing." Organizers admitted that foreign guests were down by a third compared to last year, according to the Hamshahri newspaper.

The only major oil deal that Iran has landed since the nuclear deal was a \$5 billion exploration agreement with France's Total and China's CNPC last year, but its future hangs in the balance as executives wait to see what Trump will do. Foreign banks remain terrified of touching any transaction even cursorily linked to Iran, even after they have

been encouraged by their respective governments to facilitate trade and investment. "We went to the French ministry of economy and they gave us a list of all the banks that would agree to work with Iran. But when we called them, every single one said no," said French entrepreneur Amaury de la Serre when he opened a branch of the high-end Sushi Shop restaurant in Tehran last summer.

Investment halted

Iran has piled up promises of investment with foreign firms, but many have held back on actually moving money into the country while they wait to see if US sanctions will

return. The World Bank says only \$3.4 billion actually showed up in 2016 — a far cry from the \$50 billion Rouhani said he was targeting in the deal's first year. The nuclear deal has been "a genuine disappointment", said Ardavan Amir-Aslani, an international lawyer with an office in Tehran who has written several books on the region. "They're able to sell oil, OK, that's just enough to pay civil servants and maintain infrastructure, but it hasn't attracted even a fraction of the investment needed," he said. "Our business has reduced to a trickle. All foreign investment has come to a halt. The meager amounts promised have been put on hold."

Meanwhile, Iranians are scrambling for the lifeboats. One wealthy family said they had moved their entire fortune out of the country this week ahead of the Trump decision. They had already lost millions thanks to the crashing Iranian rial which has lost a third or more of its value against the dollar this year. The numbers are hard to verify but analysts and officials have said between \$10 billion and \$30 billion has left the country in recent months.

Home-grown problems

Iranian officials say all this amounts to a flagrant violation of article 29 of the nuclear deal, which committed the US to ensure "the normalization of trade and economic relations with Iran". The US counters that it never promised to lift non-nuclear sanctions related to issues such as human rights and Iran's missile program, which were already complicating trade before Trump came to power. And many of Iran's problems have nothing to do with Trump. Iran's private sector is starved of investment, its banking system is crippled by bad loans, and record levels of unemployment mean a third of under-30s are out of work. —Agencies



Foreign firms hold back investments

US embassy recruiting delegation for SelectUSA Investment Summit

KUWAIT: The US embassy is leading a delegation from Kuwait to the fifth annual SelectUSA Investment Summit June 20-22 in Washington, D.C. The Summit is a high-profile event that connects international companies and US economic development organizations (EDOs) facilitating business investment in the United States. The theme for the 2018 Investment Summit is "Invest Here. Grow Here. Succeed Here." Attendees will hear from government and industry leaders about

"The SelectUSA Investment Summit will connect Kuwaiti business leaders to the information, business locations, and key officials necessary to start or deepen the discussion on investing in the United States," said US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence R Silverman. "I hope that any company that has considered expanding in the United States considers joining the delegation to the Investment Summit. There is no more worthwhile event for global business leaders."

With over \$3.7 trillion of investment, the United States is the largest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the world. Foreign companies are attracted to the United States due to its large consumer market; stable, transparent, and fair business environment; strong intellectual property rights; and educated workforce. The United States is a global leader in innovation and research and development.

Expert guidance

The US Embassy's Commercial Section can help

you explore and understand the US business environment by providing expert guidance for those looking to invest in the United States. For example, before investing, it is important to understand American business culture, which can be very different than that in Kuwait. It is also important to remember that the United States is a large and diverse country. Each state has unique policies, including different laws, taxes, and incentives for investors. Identifying and working with experts in the field can help you decide where to invest and to understand the legal and tax implications of different locations. If you are considering investing in the United States, the US Embassy Commercial Section is a great place to start and the SelectUSA Investment Summit offers an unparalleled opportunity to learn more.

For more information about the SelectUSA Investment Summit and investing in the United States, please contact Senior Commercial Officer Jeff Hamilton at jeff.hamilton@trade.gov.

Business

African growth picks up to 3.4% in 2018, but debt a concern: IMF

Ethiopia notches up 10.9% growth in GDP in 2017

LIBREVILLE: Growth across sub-Saharan Africa will rise to 3.4 percent this year from 2.8 percent in 2017, but in the continent's poorest countries, debt is a major burden, the IMF said yesterday.

Top performers are Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania, the International Monetary Fund said. Their economies expanded by six percent or more in 2017 and will maintain strong growth over the medium term, it said.

The star is Ethiopia, which notched up 10.9 percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017, and is expected to enjoy 8.5 percent this year. At the other end of the scale lie 12 countries, home to about a third of sub-Saharan Africa's population.

Last year, per-capita incomes declined in these economies—a trend that is likely to happen in most of them in 2018, it said. Its Regional Economic Outlook for 2018 praised high-performing countries that have tackled entrenched macro-economic problems and encouraged investment.

These economies have also benefited from favorable global winds—stronger world growth and higher commodities prices. As a result, capital inflows in these economies have risen, and some countries have been able to build up their reserves.

For the laggards, though, much of the pain lies from the failure to address spending, remove market-distorting policies and mobilize capital. "Macroeconomic vulnerabilities are rising in many countries as the required fiscal adjustment keeps getting delayed," Abebe Aemro Selassie, director of the IMF's African Department, said in a press release.

"Fifteen of the region's 35 low-income countries are

now rated to be in debt distress or at high risk of debt distress," he warned.

Uptick in oil prices

Debt-burdened countries have had to divert resources "from much-needed spending in areas such as health, education, and infrastructure," he said. Based on current policies, average medium-term growth for Africa is expected to level off below four percent, said Selassie.

"(This is) far short of the levels envisaged five years ago, and below what is needed for countries to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals," he said, referring to a group of UN objectives on a range of social and economic development areas. The report also made these points: Terrorism is having a major cost for the Sahel countries, and internal conflicts are a drag for Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. Violence there also leads to a costly "spillover" of displaced people and refugees to neighboring countries.

Growth is being hampered by Nigeria and South Africa, the continent's two biggest economies. "(They) have been stuck in low gear and are weighing on the region's overall growth," says the IMF.

South African growth was 1.3 percent in 2017, reflecting a rebound in farming and minerals, and the tally for 2018 is projected at 1.8 percent. Nigeria experienced 0.8 percent GDP growth in 2017, which should rise to 2.1 percent this year.

Oil-exporting countries in Africa have enjoyed an uptick in commodity prices after a prolonged slump. But they should not waste time—they need to strengthen



Oil-exporting countries in Africa have enjoyed an uptick in commodity prices after a prolonged slump.

their sector and boost the efficiency of public spending. Capital inflows in some countries have seen a boom in stock prices: between April 2017 and January 2018,

indices rose by about 10 percent in South Africa, 40 percent in Kenya, 60 percent in Ghana and 70 percent in Nigeria. — AFP

Hedge funds hold fire as oil prices hit multi-year highs

LONDON: For all the bullish commentary around oil prices at the moment, hedge fund managers have made only minor changes to their overall position in petroleum futures and options in the last few weeks. To the extent they have made any changes at all, fund managers have been reducing rather than adding to bullish positions since the middle of April.

Hedge funds and other money managers cut their net long position in the six most important petroleum futures and options contracts by 28 million barrels in the most recent week.

Fund managers have reduced their net long position for two consecutive weeks, to 1.376 billion barrels by May 1 from a recent peak of 1.411 billion barrels on April 17. In a repeat of the week before, the liquidation last week was concentrated in crude oil, while portfolio managers increased their exposure to refined products slightly.

Funds cut their net long position in Brent (-21 million barrels) as well as NYMEX and ICE WTI (-12 million barrels). By contrast, they increased their net position in US gasoline (+1 million barrels), US heating oil (+1 million barrels) and European gasoil (+2 million barrels). The fundamental outlook remains fairly bullish with strong growth in oil consumption, continued output restraint by OPEC and a draw down in oil inventories below the five-year average.

Production and exports from Venezuela are declining and the United States is threatening to withdraw from the Iran nuclear agreement which could cut that country's exports in the coming months. But hedge fund managers have already amassed a near-record bullish position in futures and options contracts linked to crude and fuels. — Reuters

Zambia assesses debt trajectory as it courts new IMF program

LUSAKA: Zambia has assessed its debt trajectory as part of a bid to court International Monetary Fund support after the Fund rejected the country's debt management plans in February.

The analysis provides a basis for fresh talks with the IMF on a possible financial assistance program, the finance ministry said yesterday in a statement that gave no figures. The economy is expected to sustain growth of more than 4 percent this year helped by its mining, agricultural

and construction sectors.

Zambia is Africa's second-biggest copper producer but the government faces pressure to rein in spending, especially as it heads towards a 2021 presidential election in which President Edgar Lungu is expected to run for a second full term. "Cabinet will be briefed on the outcomes of the exercise and on the executive decisions that are required to be undertaken to successfully finalize the engagement with the Fund," it said. "We will implement the decisions particularly as they relate to the success of our debt sustainability actions," it added.

The government said last month its \$8.7 billion foreign debt was not understated. Eurasia Group said in a note on Friday Zambia may be facing fiscal challenges and was likely to default on its debt payments starting in 2019. — Reuters

EON confirms 2018 targets after surge in customers

FRANKFURT: German energy giant EON reported yesterday a jump in first-quarter profits thanks to a surge in new customers, keeping it on track to meet its 2018 targets ahead of a massive asset swap with rival RWE.

The Essen-based group, which has seen two years of huge losses as it scrambles to respond to a changing energy landscape, reported adjusted net profits of 727 million euros (\$866 million) between January and March, up 38

percent on the same period last year.

Underlying or operating profits climbed 24 percent to 1.3 billion euros, EON said in a statement, hailing a "strong start" to the year. "Our operating business is strong. We achieved significant growth by adding more than 50,000 customers in Germany," EON's chief financial officers Marc Spieker said.

Revenues however fell 11 percent to 9.33 billion euros, dragged down by a 30-percent slump in sales at the group's energy networks unit which EON blamed mainly on one-off effects and accounting changes. Analysts surveyed by Factset had predicted revenues of 11.2 billion euros.

Like other European power firms, EON has for years been battered by low wholesale electricity prices and competition from subsidized renewable energy. — AFP

RBS rules out further Scottish branch cuts until 2020

LONDON: Royal Bank of Scotland will not review the size of its Scottish branch network again until at least 2020, following widespread criticism of its decision to close 62 of them.

RBS Chief Executive Ross McEwan made the pledge yesterday in response to questions from lawmakers in London on the bank's closures in Scotland, where it was established in 1772 and is still headquartered. McEwan said RBS had to respond to the growing use of online banking and fewer people using its branches, but was now "comfortable" with the size of its network in Scotland.

"Our branches do remain a core part of our service and we will not look at the size of the network again in Scotland

until at least 2020," he told the Scottish Affairs Committee.

Banks are closing branches to cut costs and modernize as more nimble digital lenders grow in popularity. RBS has been feeling the heat from critics and postponed 10 of its planned closures in Scotland pending a review.

"You've taken a public relations pounding on this," committee chair Pete Wishart said, asking whether 9 million pounds (\$12.16 million) savings from the closures was worth it. Other committee members raised concerns about vulnerable customers and those in rural areas that might not easily be able to access other face-to-face, online or mobile services. However McEwan said the British government, which owns 71 percent of the bank, had expressed no view on the cuts other than that it was a commercial matter for the bank.

So far, customers had not been leaving RBS in large numbers due to closures, Les Matheson, its chief executive of personal and business banking told the committee. — Reuters



LONDON: In this file photo a signage is seen at the front of a branch of the Royal Bank of Scotland in central London. — AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.806
Indian Rupees	4.630
Pakistani Rupees	2.602
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.933
Nepali Rupees	2.902
Singapore Dollar	230.250
Hongkong Dollar	38.311
Bangladesh Taka	3.593
Philippine Peso	5.793
Thai Baht	9.679

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.210
Qatari Riyal	82.644
Omani Riyal	781.445
Bahraini Dinar	798.990
UAE Dirham	81.946

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	0.000
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.039
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.208
Tunisian Dinar	126.080
Jordanian Dinar	423.910
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.005
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.227

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	300.700
Euro	371.670
Sterling Pound	426.390

Canadian dollar	238.080
Turkish lira	74.520
Swiss Franc	315.860
Australian Dollar	234.090
US Dollar Buying	299.500

GOLD

20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	301.990
Canadian Dollar	234.650
Swiss Franc	410.595
Sterling Pound	361.250
Euro	305.695
Swiss Frank	803.105
Bahraini Dinar	82.625
UAE Dirhams	83.855
Qatari Riyals	81.425
Saudi Riyals	427.215
Jordanian Dinar	17.122
Egyptian Pound	1.919
Sri Lankan Rupees	4.493
Indian Rupees	2.610
Pakistani Rupees	3.617
Bangladesh Taka	5.815
Philippines Peso	17.972
Cyprus pound	3.765
Japanese Yen	1.586
Syrian Pound	

Nepalese Rupees	2.812
Malaysian Ringgit	77.355
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.845
Thai Bhat	10.455
Turkish Lira	70.965

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
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	0.001138	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

Australasia	BUY	SELL
Australian Dollar	0.220198	0.232198
New Zealand Dollar	0.206221	0.215721

America	BUY	SELL
Canadian Dollar	0.230049	0.239049
US Dollars	0.298050	0.302450
US Dollars Mint	0.298550	0.302450

Asia	BUY	SELL
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
Pakistan Rupee	0.002785	0.003125
Nepalese 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

Arab	BUY	SELL
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	0.022558	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

China's April exports bounce back despite US trade brawl

Trade surplus with US widens to \$22.19 billion

BEIJING: China's exports rebounded more strongly than expected in April after a surprise drop the previous month, suggesting global demand remains relatively resilient and providing a cushion to the economy amid a heated trade dispute with the United States.

Imports in April also grew more robustly than anticipated, signalling China's domestic demand is holding up well, good news for policymakers looking to soften the blow from any trade shocks.

China's April exports rose 12.9 percent from a year earlier, beating analysts' forecasts for a 6.3 percent increase and snapping back from a 2.7 percent drop in March that economists believe was heavily distorted by seasonal factors. Some analysts, however, warned the strong April export showing was mostly seasonal and that a multi-year global trade recovery may have topped out. "Shipments still look healthy but today's data does point to a softening in external demand recently,"

Capital Economics senior China Economist Julian Evans-Pritchard wrote in a note, estimating that exports by volume may have actually slipped on a month-on-month basis.

"The backdrop of the ongoing trade negotiations between China and the US is one in which global growth has already peaked and China's export performance is waning as a result." Still, China has outperformed other major Asian trade-reliant economies such as Japan and South Korea recently, suggesting its exporters may be ramping up shipments of finished goods and purchases of raw materials and parts in case of supply chain disruptions following both sides' tariff threats.

"We may see some retreat in exports in the following months," said Betty Wang, senior China Economist at ANZ, referring to the risk of a slowdown after a burst of

"front-loading" by shippers eager to beat any punitive measures.

Export growth was led by a 20.7 percent increase in shipments of high-tech products, led by mobile phones.

Strong import demand

Imports also beat expectations, growing 21.5 percent on-year, beating forecasts of 16 percent growth, and accelerating from a 14.4 percent rise in March. The strong readings suggest China's domestic demand remains resilient despite rising corporate borrowing costs and cooling property sales, the two risk factors most commonly cited by economists who are expecting a slowdown.

Imports were driven by China's continued appetite for resources and agricultural commodities but also by hi-tech products, especially electronic integrated circuits, which have surged 36 percent since the start of the year. The tech buying binge comes as China's strategic industrial policies come under increased global scrutiny due to complaints about forced technology transfer and intellectual property theft, with integrated circuits, or chips, an especially sensitive area.

China imported \$94.7 billion of chips in the first four months of the year, accounting for nearly 15 percent of total imports and possibly pointing to solid growth in electronics exports for at least a few more months.

Trade tussle

The world's two largest economies have threatened each other with tariffs on tens of billions of dollars' worth of exports in recent months, leading to worries that Washington and Beijing may plunge into a full-scale trade war that could damage global growth and destabi-



LIANYUNGANG: A worker loads piles of paper at a port in Lianyungang in China's eastern Jiangsu province yesterday. China's surplus with the United States widened in April, underlining an imbalance between the economic titans as they struggle to reach an agreement on averting a potentially damaging trade war. — AFP

lize financial markets.

While economists still believe a compromise can be reached and the worst-case scenario avoided, the risk of disruptions in trade and investment have added to existing concerns about an economic slowdown in China this year. High-level discussions between the two sides in Beijing last week appeared to make little substantive progress in defusing trade tensions apart from an agreement to hold more talks.

China's top economic official will visit Washington next week to resume trade talks with the Trump administration, the White House said on Monday.

The Trump administration has drawn a hard line, demanding a \$200 billion cut in the Chinese trade surplus with the United States by 2020, sharply lower tariffs and advanced technology subsidies, according

to people familiar with the top-level US-China talks last Friday.

President Xi Jinping pledged recently to increase imports, in comments that were seen as a bid to defuse tensions with the United States and other trading partners. But, highlighting the challenge of reducing that gap any time soon, China's trade surplus with the United States widened to \$22.19 billion in April, from \$15.43 billion in March, according to Reuters calculations based on customs data released yesterday.

For January-April, it rose to \$80.4 billion, from about \$71 billion in the same period last year. China's exports to the United States rose 9.7 percent in April from a year earlier, slowing from a 14.8 percent rise in the first quarter. Its imports from the US rose 20.3 percent in April, the fastest growth in three months. — Reuters



April trade data beat forecasts

Jazeera Airways holds Georgia tourism roadshow

KUWAIT: Following the recently announced new route launch to Tbilisi, Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low cost airline, recently held a sales roadshow in Kuwait with the Georgian National Tourism Administration. Promoting Georgia as a top leisure destination, the roadshow to travel agents in the city was followed by a workshop which took place at the Four Points by Sheraton hotel on Sunday May 6th. In the evening a special dinner was held and attended by Roland Beridze, Ambassador of Georgia to the State of Kuwait, Georgian Tourism, local travel agents and Voyager, general sales agent for Jazeera Airways in Georgia, and Jazeera sales executives.

Jazeera Airways will commence three weekly flights to Tbilisi, capital and largest city in Georgia from 13 June 2018 onwards to address a growing travel demand for new travel experiences - especially amongst Kuwaiti nationals. "We are happy to have conducted the roadshow which served as a great platform to network and strengthen



relations with our trade partners and agents on the ground. We are continuing to expand our route network with new leisure options, especially with summer season approaching. I am delighted with the cooperation we have received from the Georgian authorities and we look forward to elevating Georgia's position as a prime tourist attraction. We'd also like to thank Roland Beridze for his personal attendance and support," said CEO of Jazeera Airways, Rohit Ramachandran.

The low-cost champion will provide a frequency of three weekly flights scheduled for departure at 14:50 pm and arrival at 18:20 pm in Shota Rustaveli Tbilisi International Airport and departure at 19:10 pm with arrival in Kuwait at 20:45 pm. Travelers will

also enjoy connections from Tbilisi to Kuwait and onwards to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and India.

Jazeera Airways will soon be opening their new terminal in May at Kuwait International Airport, brining an enhanced passenger experience to its customers.

Jazeera Airways currently operates a fleet of 9 Airbus A320 aircraft. Passengers can enjoy a baggage allowance of 30kg for Economy class and 50kg per Business class passenger.

To book the flights to Tbilisi or learn more about Jazeera Airways services, promotions and destinations, customers can visit the airline's website at jazeeraairways.com, use the Jazeera app, or contact their travel agent.

Japan's Takeda to buy Shire in record \$62.5 billion deal

TOKYO: Drug giant Takeda yesterday said it would buy Irish pharmaceuticals firm Shire in a deal worth \$62.5 billion, the biggest foreign takeover ever by a Japanese firm.

The deal, which will create one of the world's top 10 drug companies, caps a lengthy courtship by Takeda of its larger rival as it seeks to expand overseas. Shire last month said its board would recommend the \$46 billion bid "subject to satisfactory resolution of the other terms of the possible offer". And yesterday, Takeda announced the boards of the two companies "have reached agreement on the terms of a recommended offer pursuant to which" the Japanese firm will buy Shire.

The announcement follows a string of lower offers rejected by Shire over the past month. Analysts have said the buyout would be a smart move by Takeda as it looks to diversify, and could pay off in the long-term, but it has also raised concerns

that the Japanese firm could be overextending itself financially.

In a separate statement, it said it would fund the deal with a bridge loan facility of nearly \$31 billion.

The buyout is the latest in a flurry of merger and acquisition activity in the pharmaceutical industry as traditional players see profits eroded by competition from generic medicines. Japanese firms in particular are facing pressure domestically as the government tries to cut prices of many branded drugs and increase the focus on cheaper generics to curb health spending as the population ages rapidly. Takeda, led by Frenchman Christophe Weber, has been actively looking overseas for acquisitions.

In 2011 it took over Swiss rival Nycomed for 9.6 billion euros (\$13.6 billion at the time). Analysts have described Shire as an attractive target for Takeda, with a portfolio of existing treatments in fields where the barriers to entry are high and profits large. In particular, Shire will give Takeda access to research and development in fields the Japanese firm has long sought, including digestive systems, mental illness and rare diseases. Takeda said yesterday that the buyout would create a global "biopharmaceutical leader" headquartered in Japan "with an attractive geographic footprint and the scale to drive future development". — AFP

Tax cuts and cheaper beer in pre-election Australian budget

SYDNEY: Australia's conservative government pledged tax cuts for low and middle earners, cheaper beer, and billions of dollars for new roads and rail lines in a pre-election budget yesterday.

The measures are widely seen as the unofficial start of campaigning ahead of national polls due by May next year, with the government working to demonstrate fiscal responsibility while offering some sweeteners. "The government's plan for a stronger economy will put more money back in the pockets of Australians, create more jobs, continue to guarantee essential services and keep Australians safe," said Treasurer Scott Morrison.

He added that this would be done "while ensuring the government lives within its means". Morrison projected a budget deficit of Aus\$14.5 billion (US\$10.8 billion) in 2018-19, but said it would return to a slim surplus of Aus\$2.2 billion a year earlier than forecast in 2019-20. Rating agencies have previously warned Australia's coveted AAA rating could be lowered if the government did not improve its budget balances and deliver on its surplus plans.

Personal tax cuts for those earning less than Aus\$87,000 a year were a cornerstone of the budget, sold as helping Australians deal



SYDNEY: A woman pulls a "wheele bin" on a street in the central business district of Sydney yesterday as the Australian government prepares to release its 2018/19 budget later in the day. — AFP

with the rising cost of living. It amounts to barely Aus\$10 a week, but that was all the center-right government, which is lagging the opposition Labor in opinion polls, said it could responsibly afford.

Voter support for Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who only has a wafer-thin parliamentary majority, has eroded in recent months amid perceived dysfunction in Canberra, with the Liberal leader having to bat away calls to step down. The budget is seen as a way of reaffirming his credentials ahead of the election.

Brain freeze

Shadow treasurer Chris Bowen accused the

government of abandoning any attempt to pay down spiralling national debt, which he said would remain above half a trillion dollars for another decade. "This is a government that has given up on what we were told was the debt and deficit disaster," he said.

Pumping money into infrastructure projects to create jobs was a key thrust, with the government earmarking Aus\$5.1 billion to bankroll a rail link to Melbourne airport in a state governed by Labor. It also put Aus\$1.0 billion towards easing congestion on the busy freeway linking Brisbane and the Gold Coast tourist region, in another Labor state, as part of a 10-year national transport plan. — AFP

Insurer Munich Re hesitant to douse coal business

FRANKFURT: German reinsurance giant Munich Re said yesterday it was unsure whether to follow Allianz by ending all activities linked to coal in the name of fighting climate change.

"Before taking any decisions, we want to think very carefully about how (an exit from coal) should be planned, so as to avoid sending any negative signals overall," chief financial officer Joerg Schneider said in a telephone conference. "There's no doubt that burning coal makes a significant contribution to climate change," he added, "but our role as a business is harder to define." Allianz's Friday announcement that it would stop insuring coal power plants and mines and gradually end investments in coal businesses by 2040 is part of a trend that has picked up in the wake of the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

Insurers are some of the companies most gravely affected by climate change, with financial damage from catastrophes like hurricanes and flooding doubling to 330 billion euros (\$392 billion) worldwide last year, Munich Re estimated in January.

"Even though individual events cannot be directly traced to climate change, our experts expect such extreme weather to occur more often in the future," board member Torsten Jeworrek said at the time.

Tougher measures?

The group already has a rule that it does not invest in firms that generate more than 50 percent of revenue from production or burning of coal. "Of course we're also considering whether we ought to get tougher here," finance chief Schneider said. Looking to the nearer term, a lower number of disasters in the first quarter spared Munich Re the massive losses seen last year, putting it on track to hit its targets for the year. In the first three months, the group paid out just 62 million euros for major losses costing more than 10 million euros per incident, far short of the 403-million-euro blow inflicted by man-made and natural disasters in the same period last year. — AFP

Business

Wall St drops ahead of Trump's Iran decision

NEW YORK: Wall Street edged lower yesterday, weighed down by technology and consumer discretionary stocks...

Average was down 70.79 points, or 0.29 percent, at 24,286.53, the S&P 500 was down 8.95 points, or 0.33 percent, at 2,663.68 and the Nasdaq Composite was down 29.00 points, or 0.40 percent, at 7,236.22.

citing its low risk and reliable revenue. The stock's gain helped the S&P financial index to be the only gainer among the major 11 indexes.

Europe retreats

European shares retreated yesterday amid disappointing corporate earnings and worries over a snap election in Italy that put Milan on track for its worst day since an inconclusive March general election.

FTSE MIB down 2.3 percent as the chances of an early election grew, reviving worries of political turmoil in the euro zone's third-largest economy.

Italian banks took the most off the index, losing 2.5 percent. State-controlled oil major Eni was down 2.1 percent.

President Sergio Mattarella called on Monday for Italy's bickering parties to rally behind a "neutral government."

The Italian stock market has outperformed its European peers this year, but a number of analysts warned that political risk was not priced into the market.

first-quarter corporate earnings and mergers and acquisitions prompted sharp individual price moves while investors prepared for Donald Trump's decision on whether to withdraw the US from the Iran nuclear agreement.

Shares in Danish hearing aid maker William Demant were the worst performer of the STOXX, falling 9.2 percent after warning that lower demand would weigh on sales.

EBRD floats Africa expansion with heartland in flux

DEAD SEA RESORT: The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development starts its two-day annual meeting in Jordan yesterday, a symbol of a sprawling, decade-long expansion that its management now wants to extend into Africa.

more varied mix of governments, central bankers and company executives than ever, though the push for new territory will be offset by growing uncertainty in the EBRD's original heartlands.

Western sanctions mean it has not lent in Russia since 2014. Investments in Poland and Hungary have been begun to drop off amid clashes with the European Commission over the rule of law, immigration and press freedom.

of its shareholder governments, of which there are now more than 60 from the G7 to China and India, for another big expansion drive.

Set up in 1991 to help former Soviet states transition to free-market capitalism, the EBRD now operates in more than 30 countries from north Africa to central and eastern Asia.

"I would be surprised if we didn't get some positive noises because there are quite a lot of countries who have very strong commercial links into the neighboring countries of the Maghreb and Sahel," Chakrabarti told Reuters last month, referring to the area from northern

Africa to the Sahara desert. The bank currently lends around 9.5 billion euros (\$11.30 billion) a year, but Chakrabarti thinks it could rise to as much as 13 billion euros without the need for fresh capital.

He is facing some resistance, however. Some of the bank's eastern European and Baltic members as well as some others would like it to refocus on its original countries of expertise.

"The aim is to have an open discussion," EBRD director of communications

Jonathan Charles said. "We want get a sense of how shareholders would like us to proceed with this."

The stresses emerging in key markets like Turkey, Russia and Ukraine, where the stamina for reforms seems to be flagging, are likely to show up in other areas.

New EBRD economic forecasts will also be published and are expected to see another overall upgrade thanks to faster global growth. — Reuters

Petrobras posts 57% rise in Q1 profits

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's state-controlled oil company Petrobras announced yesterday a 57 percent rise in first quarter profits to 6.96 billion reais (\$1.96 billion), a surge fueled by asset sales and strengthening crude prices.

EBITDA (adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) rose 25 percent over the first quarter of 2017 to 25.669 billion reais.

Petrobras said its strong January-March returns were in part thanks to higher oil prices, at \$66.8 a barrel, compared to \$53.8 a year ago.

The company posted net losses of 446 million reais (\$139.7 million) for 2017, reflecting continued fallout from the "Car Wash" corruption scandal, but sharply improving on the previous year.

Oil slips ahead of Trump decision

LONDON: Oil prices receded slightly yesterday from their highest level since 2014 as investors held their breath for a decision from US President Donald Trump on Iran's nuclear deal.

"Oil has raced higher recently on the back of concerns that President Trump will exit the US from the Iran nuclear deal and that this would then lead to a further deterioration in the situation in the Middle East not to mention the disruption to oil supplies of Iran's production," said Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at AxiTrader.

announcement whether or not to tear up an agreement with Tehran and reimpose painful sanctions that could cut off crude supplies.

Despite being urged by world leaders to honor it, investors fear he will refuse to preserve the 2015 pact, fanning fears of fresh turmoil in the already tinderbox Middle East.

This-along with an output cap by Russia and the OPEC cartel, rising US demand and an improving world economy-has helped send the price of oil to highs not seen since late 2014, though profit-taking saw both main contracts retreat yesterday.

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High-stakes 'brinkmanship'

Iran has said Washington will regret it "like never before" if Trump walks away from the deal. Since his election Trump has repeatedly criticized OPEC and Russia over a deal sealed in 2016 that has boosted the price of oil following a slump brought about by a global oil glut.

Cheetham warned that, should sanctions be reintroduced, the impact on the market would far outweigh the effect on prices of the OPEC-Russia deal.

However, for all of Trump's bombastic rhetoric on the Iran deal, Cheetham said the US may eventually have to toe a more diplomatic line. "In a similar vein to the approach adopted with the steel and aluminum tariffs, the president is likely engaging in a game of brinkmanship to achieve his desired outcome," Cheetham wrote.



SCHIPHOL: Air France and KLM aircrafts stand parked at Schiphol Airport, Netherlands. Air France shares went into a tailspin on the Paris stock exchange after the strike-hit company's CEO resigned and the government seemed to worry about the carrier's very chances of survival.

Air France unions call for talks, say fight is not over

PARIS: Air France's French unions called on management yesterday to resume talks over a pay dispute four days after the chief executive's surprise resignation sent the strike-hit carrier deeper into turmoil.

It estimates the industrial action has so far cost it 300 million euros (\$356 million). Unions said on Monday they would not renew their strike notice, meaning no further strikes are planned for now.

"Air France management must now hear the demands of a majority of employees. The inter-union groups is asking management to return to the negotiation table in the coming days," a group of 10 French unions said in a joint statement after a meeting yesterday.

Dutch union representatives said yesterday that Dutch carrier KLM would have to stick with its partnership with Air France even though the French airline is under increasing

pressure from strikes. Shares in parent Air France-KLM closed nearly 10 percent lower on Monday after striking airline staff rejected a wage deal offered by managers and CEO Jean-Marc Janaillac said on Friday he would step down on May 15.

They jumped at the open yesterday but had sunk into negative territory by late afternoon. French Transport Minister Elisabeth Borne said yesterday that the conflict was "costing a lot of money."

attached to this beautiful company can be," she told Franceinfo radio. "Everyone should be aware that Air France is playing in a global, European competition where its competitors are more competitive," she said.

Asked about a risk for the alliance with KLM, the minister said "KLM partners are very concerned about this situation." Janaillac accused the pilots' unions, in a letter published in La Tribune newspaper, of deliberately creating a deadlock and urged them to resume talks after a "destructive conflict". — Reuters

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. Includes tables for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.

Business

Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait named 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait'

Honor by Asian Banker for 3rd consecutive year

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was awarded the prominent 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait' by the Asian Banker for the third year in a row. The coveted award is given each year by one of Asia's most highly regarded independent financial research organization, which follows a stringent evaluation and benchmarking process.

Speaking on the occasion, Stewart Lockie, General Manager of Retail Banking at ABK said: "We are honored to be recognized as the 'Best Retail Bank in Kuwait'. Receiving this award for the third successive year reflects the depth of our capabilities and demonstrates our commitment to providing ABK's clients with comprehensive bespoke solutions across the country."

ABK continuously strives towards enhancing its services for its customers through investment in technology, innovative products and customer service refinements under the umbrella of 'Simpler Banking'. Creating a retail banking model that offers customers superior convenience, speed and security is essential to the Bank's service. ABK is dedicated to serving its customers by building on the success it has achieved to date and setting new benchmark for retail banking customer service in the region. ABK has received a number of awards in the first quarter of 2018 from different institutions regionally and internationally.



The ABK retail team

Boursa Kuwait participates in 43rd IOSCO conference

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait participated in the 43rd Annual International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) Conference in Budapest, Hungary, as an affiliate member. During the trip, Boursa Kuwait also took the initiative to meet with several international exchanges.

Many securities regulators and capital market experts have participated in the 2018 IOSCO Annual Conference, which was hosted by the Magyar Nemzeti Bank (MNB) between 7 and 11 May 2018, for a chance to establish new contacts and contribute to the lively discussions on the most relevant capital market related issues. The conference was the first to be hosted by an IOSCO Member from the Central and Eastern European region.

The International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) is the inter-



national body that brings together the world's securities regulators and is recognized as the global standard setter for the securities sector. IOSCO develops, implements and promotes adherence to internationally recognized standards for securities regulation. It works intensively with the G20 and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) on the global regulatory reform agenda.

"Participation in the 43rd Annual IOSCO Conference in Budapest goes a long way to establishing Boursa Kuwait as a leading player in the securities exchanges sector. It is imperative that we attend such conferences to better understand the market and cement our status as a leading, world renowned exchange," Boursa Kuwait CEO Khaled Abdulrazzaq Al-Khaled said.

New generation Ford Expedition: Tested to withstand toughest conditions

KUWAIT: From treacherous terrains to heat-soaked cities, every Ford vehicle undergoes thousands of hours of scrutiny by a team of hundreds of engineers, designers and technicians stationed around the globe long before it makes it to the showroom floor.

The new-generation Expedition is no exception. Almost a year to the day ahead of its Middle East market launch, in a sweltering corner of the desert near Dubai, a group of engineers is poring over the 2018 Expedition ahead of its first venture on to UAE sand.

It's mid-July 2017, and the temperature has already soared to close to 50 degrees Celsius. A breeze has kicked up, bringing with it clouds of swirling fine dust and sand - making the conditions extremely challenging for engineers. The new generation Expedition sits ready for the day ahead. External sensors are taped to its new aluminum bodywork, tyres have been deflated to offer better traction on sand, and final checks are made by the team - a collection of engineers from Dearborn, Michigan, and Ford's own Middle East in-market product development team based in Dubai.

Expedition chief program engineer Todd Hoeverer is present, and explains, "In-market testing is to confirm the work we've done, and fine tune the product before it's introduced. Our standards within Ford account for extreme conditions, so we developed this vehicle for global use. But it is very important to test in market, not only here but in other parts of the world, for final confirmation."

"Even though we simulate these temperatures in our labs and at our Arizona proving ground, this is a unique combination of both deep sand - which is very fine, versus the coarse sand we have in the States - as well as high temperatures. In addition, high winds with sand blowing really test the car's ability to handle sand ingestion," he adds.

Expectations

Weather aside, the Middle East offers very unique circumstances for Ford's engineering team to contend with. Vehicle use in this part of the world differs greatly to other areas: customers are more likely to take their



SUVs offroad into the desert or onto a trail - and expectations on capability are set extremely high. While driving on the loose sand is fairly similar all over the world, desert driving in deep sand on a reasonably regular basis is something particular to this region - and customers expect SUVs to deliver where it counts.

At more than 5.3 meters long and 2.1 meters wide, the new generation Expedition is easily the most spacious desert-going eight-seat vehicle on the market. With a 400hp and best-in-class 650Nm EcoBoost engine, class-exclusive 10-speed transmission and advanced four-wheel drive system with two-speed transfer case, the Expedition is equipped to handle the Middle East's toughest conditions. With a tailored Terrain Management System (TMS), mastering any surface - whether on the loose sand or on tarmac - is as easy as turning a dial.

"The off-road modes are designed to help drivers navigate conditions they may not be familiar with - like sand," Hoeverer explained. "What's the worst thing that can happen to you as a driver when you've got your family and friends in the car? Getting stuck. Sand mode, if you're not as skilled, just makes it enjoyable to drive - and you have that safety net of having the vehicle electronics there to help."

EcoBoost

Much of that learning comes from the long hours Ford's team put into developing the car - and in-market testing is essential in fully understanding situations customers will face.

"During development, we drive to get stuck so that we know the limits of the vehicle. We then calibrate our engine management and Terrain Management System settings so that the next time we - or, ultimately, the customer - gets into that situation, the vehicle doesn't get stuck again," he said.

For Ford engineers, that means long days in the desert heat, and more days of on-road testing where the 3.5-litre twin-turbo EcoBoost faces challenging mountain roads at the height of the UAE summer, and city driving conditions in temperatures close to 50 degrees Celsius.

"It's a very proud moment to see the vehicle perform well in these types of situations and drive it to see how the people in this market will be using the product. I've been on the program since it started a few years ago, so it's great to see it finally developed and in a market that clearly loves the Expedition," Hoeverer concluded.

You can watch the team put the new-generation 2018 Expedition through its paces during hot weather testing by clicking this link.

KIB awarded 'Best Customer Acquisition in Kuwait' by CPI Financial

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was awarded 'Best Customer Acquisition in Kuwait' for the year 2018 by CPI Financial. The bank received this award at the annual Islamic Business & Finance Awards ceremony, which was recently held in Dubai. The event was attended by a number of notable figures and representatives from leading banks and Islamic finance institutions from across the globe.

KIB's Acting Chief Executive Officer & Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed El Saka, received the award on behalf of the Bank. This latest accolade came after extensive deliberation by the judging panel regarding the Bank's outstanding ability to offer innovative banking solutions, attract customers, as well as improve the customer banking experience through all means including ATMs, online and mobile banking.

On his part, El Saka said: "KIB was recognized with this award from amongst a number of other banks, as a result of its high-quality and innovative Islamic banking offerings, which offer our customers a more convenient banking experience. Additionally, we continuously strive to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction by providing customers with the latest promotional campaigns, countless benefits, exclusive rewards, and many digital banking services; all of which have helped distinguish KIB from other players in a highly-competitive market."

El Saka added that KIB's latest accolade is a strong testament to the success of its new strategic transformation, which is aimed at transforming the way KIB engages with customers across the years. This new strategy focuses on offering a next-level cus-



tom experience that delivers much more than just "banking" in the traditional sense - but rather establishes KIB as a partner in every aspect of its customers' lives; a true "Bank for Life". Accordingly, the Bank is committed to redoubling its efforts to maintain this prestigious achievement in the coming years.

Established in Dubai in 1999, CPI Financial is the Middle East's leading financial and business publishing house with several magazines, including Bankers Middle East and Islamic Business and Finance. CPI Financial is committed to delivering the most relevant financial news, features and analysis to bankers and businesses throughout the Middle East and beyond. Additionally, it commits itself to the utmost standards of transparency, ensuring accurate reporting of the current economic situation, the factors determining the future of the banking and finance community and relevant business deals.

VIVA announces big prize winner

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the "Celebrate with VIVA Challenge" draw campaign's big

prize winner, Mulla Jaballah Mulla Mohamed Azzam who won \$9,000.

With amazing prizes including iPhone X (daily prize) and \$9,000 in cash as grand prize, this interactive service kept the customers excited with loads of fun for 45 days, and allowed them to accumulate chances on daily basis with a free trial day and enjoy trivia quiz and information content of their choice: "Did you know?", "Bollywood" or "Sports".



Technology

Microsoft launches \$25m program to use AI for people with disabilities

Microsoft competes with Amazon, Google to offer internet-connected services

SEATTLE: Microsoft is launching a \$25 million initiative to use artificial intelligence to build better technology for people with disabilities. CEO Satya Nadella announced the new "AI for Accessibility" effort as he kicked off Microsoft's annual conference for software developers. The Build conference in Seattle is meant to foster enthusiasm for the company's latest ventures in cloud computing, artificial intelligence, internet-connected devices and virtual reality.

Microsoft competes with Amazon and Google to offer internet-connected services to businesses and organizations. The conference and the new initiative offer Microsoft an opportunity to emphasize its philosophy of building AI for social good. The focus could help counter some of the privacy and ethical concerns that have risen over AI and other fast-developing technology, including the potential that software formulas can perpetuate or even amplify gender and racial biases.

In unusually serious terms for a tech conference keynote, Nadella name-checked the dystopian fiction of George Orwell and Aldous Huxley, declared that "privacy is a human right" and warned of the dangers of building new technology without ethical principles in mind. "We should be asking not only what computers can do, but what computers should do," Nadella said. "That time has come."

The five-year accessibility initiative will include seed grants for startups, nonprofit organizations and academic researchers, as well as deeper investments and expertise from Microsoft researchers. Microsoft President Brad Smith said the company hopes to empower people by accelerating the development of AI tools that provide them with more opportunities for independence and employment.

"It may be an accessibility need relating to vision or deafness or to something like autism or dyslexia," Smith said in an interview. "There are about a billion people on the planet who have some kind of disability, either permanent or temporary." Those people already have

"huge potential," he said, but "technology can help them accomplish even more."

Seeing AI

Microsoft has already experimented with its own accessibility tools, such as a "Seeing AI" free smartphone app using computer vision and narration to help people navigate if they're blind or have low vision. Nadella introduced the app at a previous Build conference. Microsoft's translation tool also provides deaf users with real-time captioning of conversations.

"People with disabilities are often overlooked when it comes to technology advances,

but Microsoft sees this as a key area to address concerns over the technology and compete against Google, Amazon and IBM," said Nick McQuire, an analyst at CCS Insight. Smith acknowledged that other firms, especially Apple and Google, have also spent years doing important work on accessibility.

He said Microsoft's accessibility fund builds on the model of the company's AI for Earth initiative, which launched last year to jumpstart projects combating climate change and other environmental problems. The idea, Smith said, is to get more startups excited about building tools for people with disabilities - both for the social good and for their large market potential.

Other announcements at the Build conference include partnerships with drone company DJI and chipmaker Qualcomm. More than 6,000 people are registered to attend, most of them developers who build apps for Microsoft's products. Facebook had its F8 developers' gathering last week. Google's I/O conference began yesterday. Apple's takes place in early June. This is the second consecutive year that Microsoft has held its conference in Seattle, not far from its Redmond, Washington, headquarters—AP

“Nadella declared that privacy is a human right”

”

Google to showcase AI advances at its big conference

MOUNTAIN VIEW, California: Google is likely to again put artificial intelligence in the spotlight at its annual developers' conference tomorrow. The company's digital concierge, known only as the Google Assistant, could gain new abilities to handle tasks such as making restaurant reservations without human hand-holding. Google may also unveil updates to its Android mobile operating system, enable better AI-powered navigation suggestions in Google Maps, and push further into augmented reality technology, which overlays a view of the real world with digital images.

The search giant aims to make its assistant so useful that people can't live without it - or the search results that drive its advertising business. But it also wants to play up the social benefits of AI, and plans to showcase how it's being used to improve health



SAN FRANCISCO: In this file photo Google CEO Sundar Pichai talks about Google Assistant during a product event in San Francisco. —AP

care, preserve the environment and make scientific discoveries.

CEO Sundar Pichai probably won't emphasize privacy or data security concerns, which have put companies like Facebook, Twitter and Google in the crosshairs of regulators. But Google could also give parents new tools to manage how children access video and other material on different devices.

The company is also expected to unveil a new app for news that combines elements of its Google Play Newsstand app and YouTube. It's too

early in the year for Google to showcase any new hardware, which it tends to do ahead of the Christmas shopping season. Last week, however, it said its partner Lenovo will sell a \$400 stand-alone virtual reality headset that doesn't require inserting a smartphone.

Google also last week updated actions that its assistant can perform on smartwatches powered by its Wear OS software. For instance, it can tell you about your day if you're wearing headphones instead of making you read your calendar.—AP

Egypt approves law to govern popular ride-hailing apps

CAIRO: Egypt's parliament has approved a law to govern popular ride-hailing apps Uber and Careem, which had faced legal challenges stemming from regulations designed for traditional taxis. The new law, as described Monday by state news agency MENA, establishes operating licenses and fees. It requires licensed companies to store user data for 180 days and provide it to Egyptian security authorities upon request.

Uber and Careem welcomed the move. "This is a major step forward for the ridesharing industry as Egypt becomes one of the first countries in the Middle East to pass progressive regulations," Uber spokeswoman Shaden Abdellatif said. "We will continue working with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet in the coming months as the law is finalized, and look forward to continuing to serve the millions of Egyptian riders and drivers that rely on Uber."

Careem called the passage "a remarkable step for Egypt, Careem and our region." It said it marked the first time in any of its markets "that a regulatory framework for ride-hailing has emerged from a consultative legislative and parliamentary process." Both companies provide smartphone apps that connect passengers with drivers who work as independent contractors. An administrative court in Cairo ruled in March that it is illegal to use private vehicles as taxis, but another court overruled it on appeal, and both companies have continued operating.

Data privacy is a major concern for Uber in its dealings with the Egyptian government. A strict new European law called the General Data Protection Regulation comes into



CAIRO: In this photo, an Uber employee shows the mobile application at the official launch of the car-hailing service, in Cairo, Egypt.—AP

effect on May 25 and would affect its operations worldwide. Uber was founded in 2010 in San Francisco, and operates in more than 600 cities across the world. Careem was founded in 2012 in Dubai, and operates in 90 cities in the Middle East and North Africa, Turkey, and Pakistan. The applications took off in Cairo, a city of 20 million people with near-constant traffic and little parking.

The services have recently started offering rides on scooters and tuk-tuks, three-wheeled motorized vehicles that can sometimes squeeze through the gridlock. The apps are especially popular among women, who face rampant sexual harassment in Egypt, including from some taxi drivers. Cairo's taxi drivers are also notorious for tampering with their meters or pretending the meters are broken in order to charge higher rates. In 2016, taxi drivers protested the ride-hailing apps. They have complained that Uber and Careem drivers have an unfair advantage because they do not have to pay the same taxes or fees, or follow the same licensing procedures.—AP



SEATTLE: A DJI employee demonstrates use of a tiny drone during the keynote address at Build.



SEATTLE: Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella delivers the keynote address at Build.



SEATTLE: Participants attending the keynote address at Microsoft's Build, the company's annual conference for software developers, are led in standing and stretching mid-way through the morning event in Seattle.—AP photos

Afghan girl coders design games to fight opium and inequality

HERAT, Afghanistan: Think Super Mario Bros, but with an Afghan twist. This is how Afghanistan's first generation of female coders explain their abilities as game-makers after uploading more than 20 games on digital app stores this year. More than 20 young women in the western city of Herat have established themselves as computer experts, building apps and websites as well as tracking down bugs in computer code.

Like the team of Afghan schoolgirls who rose to fame last year when they competed in a robotics competition in the United States, the coders show what reserves of talent there are to be tapped when Afghan girls are given a chance. "Coders can work from home and it is in this process women are building a new career path for themselves and for the next generation," said Hasib Rasa, project manager of Code to Inspire, which teaches female students coding in Herat.

One of the games designed by the all-female team has caught the eye of developers and gamers as it illustrates the scourge of opium cultivation and the challenges the Afghan security forces face as they try to stamp it out. The 2D game "Fight Against Opium" is an animated interpretation of the missions that Afghan soldiers undertake to

destroy opium fields, fight drug lords and help farmers switch to growing saffron.

Afghanistan is the world's largest source of opium but it also grows saffron - the world's most expensive spice - which has long been pushed as an alternative to wean farmers off a crop used to make heroin. Despite a ban, opium production hit a record in 2017, up 87 percent over 2016, according to a UN study.

Khatira Mohammadi, a student who helped develop the anti-opium game, said she wanted to show the complexities of the drug problem in the simplest way. "We have illustrated our country's main problem through a game," said Mohammadi. At the institute, more than 90 girls and young women, wearing headscarves and long black coats, are trained in coding and software development, a profession seen by some in conservative Afghanistan as unsuitable for women.

In Afghan society, it is unusual for women to work outside the home. Those who do, are mostly teachers, nurses, doctors, midwives and house helpers. After the ouster of the Taliban in 2001, women regained freedom to work in offices with male colleagues - but many consider working as a software developer a step too far. Hasib Rasa said girls are encouraged to design original player characters, goals, and obstacles that reflect Afghanistan's ethos.

The course is exclusively aimed at females, aged 15-25, who are unable to pursue a four-year degree due to lack of funds or hail from families where they are prevented from enrolling in co-education schools. "In Afghanistan the ability to work remotely is a key tool in the push for equality," said Rasa.—Reuters



HERAT: Afghan coders practice at the Code to Inspire computer training center in Herat, Afghanistan.—Reuters

Facebook to block foreign ads in Irish abortion referendum

DUBLIN: Facebook will no longer accept advertisements from outside Ireland related to the country's May 25 abortion referendum, the US firm said yesterday, in its latest move to boost the transparency of its political advertising. The social media group, under scrutiny for its role in Britain's Brexit referendum and the 2016 US presidential election, made the move following criticism that foreign advertising could be a decisive in the campaign to

overhaul one of the world's strictest abortion regimes. "As part of our efforts to help protect the integrity of elections and referendums from undue influence, we will begin rejecting ads related to the referendum if they are being run by advertisers based outside of Ireland," said the company in a statement on its website. The company said it would rely on reports from established campaign groups on both sides of the campaign to identify foreign-based ads, as its automated election integrity tools are still in development.

On April 25, the company launched a trial of a 'view ads' tool, which allows users to view all of the ads any advertiser is running on Facebook in Ireland at the same time. The Irish referendum on whether or not to liberalize its abortion laws will give voters the first opportunity in 35 years to repeal a constitutional amendment that has long divided the once deeply Catholic nation.—Reuters

Health

Indian train offers ticket to life-saving care

Lifeline Express provides free treatment to the needy



JALORE, India: In this picture, nurses sit outside the Lifeline Express at a railway station in Jalore.



JALORE, India: In this picture, the father of 10-month-old Gopi Kumar looks at her ahead of a cleft lip surgery aboard the Lifeline Express at a railway station in Jalore in India's western state of Rajasthan.—AFP photos

JALORE, India: When the Lifeline Express rolled into the sleepy Indian town of Jalore, Bhagwana Ram Prajapat was anxiously waiting to board. The 55-year-old has been desperately looking for treatment for his grandson's cleft-lip and the specially converted sky-blue, seven-coach train was the answer to his prayers. "We had been waiting for the surgery ever since the child was born 18 months ago," said Prajapat as his grandson was wheeled into the operating theatre onboard the hospital-train.

The Lifeline Express has been providing free treatment to the needy in deepest India for nearly three decades. It has helped more than one million people, treating ailments ranging from cataracts to cancer. The train criss-crosses India, providing state-of-the-art medical care to those who would otherwise have to travel hundreds of miles to the nearest major hospital. It spends about a month in a district before moving on to a new destination, filling a critical gap in India's public health system.

"We were thinking we would have to travel everywhere and spend a lot of money. But its god's blessing that this hospital came to us," said Prajapat. "I was wor-

ried how they are going to conduct the operation in a train. But when we came here and saw the facilities, there was no doubt." Government-run community health centers form the backbone of rural healthcare in India. But a

“ Traumatized to see the healthcare system ”

lack of infrastructure and doctors means 70 percent of its 1.25 billion people have no easy access to treatment. India is the fastest growing of the world's major economies, but a UNICEF report said some 1.2 million

children died of preventable causes in India in 2015 before their fifth birthday. State-run hospitals are often stretched to breaking point and patients face long delays for even minor treatment and are forced to share beds. So many Indians flock to private clinics even though a consultation can cost 1,000 rupees — a huge sum for millions living on less than \$2 a day.

Train takes the strain

The Lifeline Express took to the rails in 1991 to help patients in far-flung areas who need surgery for cataracts, polio and cleft palates. In 2016, the train expanded its services to include screening and surgery for oral, breast and cervical cancer. It has two operating theatres and about 20 staff. Many of the doctors work for free.

Mehak Sikka, the Lifeline Express medical officer, said she joined the hospital-on-wheels after seeing the pathetic conditions at health centers. "I was traumatized to see the healthcare system—especially for women—that we have in the country," said Sikka. "In many places there were no gynecologists. Having a gynecologist is very important in any district hospital but the women

didn't have access to one. "Women were contracting infections only because they were delivering kids outside hospitals." Sikka said the Lifeline Express did not just aim to treat and leave, but to educate local doctors and people about the right approach to healthcare. "We also try to set the example that this is how an operating theatre should look. We make sure a local doctor is there when the surgery is being conducted so that he can do the follow-ups later on."

The Lifeline Express is run by Impact India foundation, a non-profit that works with the government and is helped by the World Health Organization and the UN children's agency UNICEF. Since its launch, more than 130,000 operations have been carried out at 191 stops across the country, said Anil Darse, deputy project director of the hospital-train. "It's a unique concept of taking healthcare to the public," he said.

The expected launch of another train this year will help more people like Prajapat. "It's beautiful reaching out to those who really need you," said Sikka. "We need more such trains. Hopefully we will have one more this year."—AFP

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What's On

Ooredoo to celebrate Holy Month with wide range of CSR activities



In continuation of its yearly tradition of leading charitable and humanitarian initiatives, Ooredoo Kuwait announced its readiness to launch its rich program of activities throughout the upcoming Holy Month of Ramadan. The program also witnesses the launch of the 4th edition of the award-winning Ooredoo Volunteers Program, which witnessed the participation of hundreds of youth since its inception.

The leading telecom provider will launch its activities with distributing iftar meals to hundreds of workers from its iftar tent, with its prime location on Soor Street opposite its head office. To better serve a wider range of beneficiaries, the company will utilize a special truck that will deliver meals to areas populated by underserved communities. The meal distribution drive is fully operated by Ooredoo's volunteer program members, after the great success of the program in the last years. The upper management at Ooredoo regularly participate in the activities, in addition to staff from the company's different depart-

ments and divisions.

Commenting on this, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub lauded the volunteers for their commitment to the spirit of giving throughout the Holy Month, noting that this is an important value that the company aims to instil in youth throughout its volunteer program. "We are proud to be a supporter for youth who aspire to volunteer their time serving others. This campaign is aligned with our core values of caring, connecting, and challenging, and the ongoing interest of youth in our program is what keeps us going," he said.

The company also announced that it will release tailor-made plans and offers that better suit consumption trends during the Holy Month, to continue its pledge towards enriching the lives and experience of its customers.

Investing internally

Welcoming the Holy Month of Ramadan, Ooredoo will



hold a special celebration marking 'Ghaish', the traditional Kuwaiti tradition of feasting before the month of Ramadan. The annual tradition allows Ooredoo to welcome the Holy Month with its employees and to revive the old Kuwaiti customs and heritage. All employees gather on this occasion to have one last meal before Ramadan together, greet each other and exchange best wishes in a festive atmosphere. Adding a fun competitive flair, a judging panel of the upper management will attend the event and announces a winner from the company's different departments.

Annual Ghabqa

Embodying the core value of connecting, Ooredoo will hold its annual Ghabqa during the Holy Month of Ramadan, fostering the one-family spirit and enjoying traditional festivities in a friendly set-up between the upper management and staff across the entire company. The event aims to provide an opportunity to interact and

celebrate the Ramadan spirit, away from the bustle of office life.

In addition to this, Ooredoo's volunteers and staff will lead a number of charity drives and Ramadan celebrations in collaboration with different entities such as the Ministry of State for Social Affairs' orphanage and the elderly care centre. Ooredoo will also mark the children's beloved Gergean tradition with celebrations in children's hospital wards and centres for children with disabilities and special needs.



Mijbil Alayoub



CBK organizes open day recreational activities

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently organized an open day recreational activities for its 'My First Account' clients, where hundreds of kids and their families flocked to the Magic Planet at the Avenues to enjoy playing various games using the pre-paid cards provided by the bank in addition to 50 per cent discounts on meals they bought from McDonald's restaurant at the magic planet.

The activity is part of the bank's policy of taking care of clients from various ages. The young clients and their families were received by CBK marketing team. Notably, the 'My First Account' is a saving account especially made for children aging up to 14. It is the ideal way for parents wishing to provide a better for future for their children through saving for them at such an early age.

Young Arabs express great hopes for Saudi Crown Prince's leadership

In a region they view as having drifted off course over the past decade, young Arabs say action on jobs, education, fighting terrorism and corruption is needed to steer the region in the right direction. Arab youth overwhelmingly support the reforms Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is spearheading and view him as a strong leader who will shape the region over the next decade, according to the 10th annual ASDA's Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey 2018, released today.

The survey also reveals that the perception of global power in the region has shifted markedly, with a majority of Arab youth across the region now viewing the US as an adversary and Russia, instead, seen as the top non-Arab ally among young people. The ASDA's 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 nations and territories, between January 21 and February 20, 2018. The majority of young Arabs (55 percent) say they believe the region has moved in the wrong direction over the past decade - a period stamped by the Arab Spring and the rise of Daesh.

Pessimism is particularly pronounced in the Levant, where 85 percent say the region has moved in the wrong direction. Defeating terrorism, providing well-paying jobs, better education and fighting corruption are all cited by youth as the main action areas to move things back on track over the next decade.

Young Arabs are also throwing their support behind Saudi Arabia's young Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin Salman, and view him as the Arab leader likely to have the greatest impact on the region over the next 10 years. Asked about the reforms introduced by the Crown Prince, 88 percent of young Arabs support Saudi Arabia's decision to allow women to drive and 86 percent (94 percent among young Saudis) support this anti-corruption drive, which saw dozens of leading businessmen and senior royals detained over graft allegations.

"Over the past 10 years, the Arab Youth Survey has provided insights into many momentous changes in the region, and this year is no exception," said Donna Imperato, CEO, Burson Cohn & Wolfe. "This annual review of the thoughts and concerns of Arab Youth provides an important framework for understanding what is most important to the region's next generation of business leaders and policy makers."

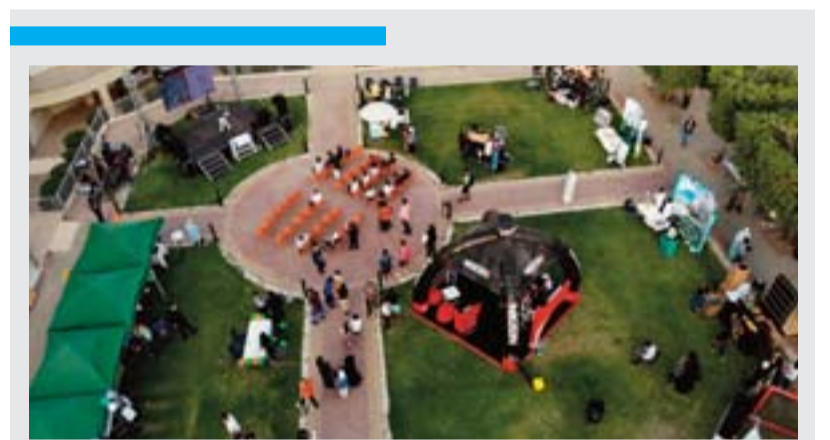
An overwhelming majority (78 percent) of Arab youth say Daesh has become weaker over the past year and, furthermore, 58 percent say Daesh and its ideology will be completely defeated. It marks a significant shift from 2015 when only 47 percent of young Arabs expressed any confidence in their government's ability to deal with the terrorist organization.

In another dramatic shift, young Arabs now view the US as an adversary, while Russia has tak-

en America's spot as the top non-Arab ally. A majority (57 percent) of Arab youth say the US is an adversary of their country (up from 32 percent in 2016) versus 35 percent who see America as an ally (down from 63 percent in 2016). When asked to name their country's top allies, young Arabs are most likely to cite the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, followed by Russia in fourth place and Egypt in fifth. The US has dropped out of the top five for first time in the survey's history, falling to 11th place.

This finding stands in contrast to the response from young Arabs when asked which country other than their own they would most like to live in, and which they would like their own nation to emulate, where the US ranks second, behind the UAE. Additionally, respondents' most trusted media brand is CNN. Sunil John, founder of ASDA's Burson-Marsteller and President, Middle East, Burson Cohn & Wolfe, said: "This is a milestone survey for us, marking a full decade of the region's leading study into its most important demographic."

"This year has produced some striking findings, including more evidence that the region's youth view the US in a very different light from previous years, and that the majority of young people now envision a future where Daesh and its ideology have no place whatsoever." For this year's survey, international polling firm PSB Research conducted 3,500 face-to-face interviews with exclusively Arab national men and women in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain; Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the Palestinian territories, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen. The sample comprised 50 percent male and 50 percent female respondents.



ACK holds 5th Health Day

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) recently held its 5th Health Day. These special occasions are held every semester and create the opportunity for the wider ACK family to gather and have fun with a purpose. Special guest of honor at the event this semester was the Australian Ambassador, His Excellency Jonathon Gilbert. He was greeted by ACK President, Professor Isam Zabalawi and Health Day Committee's Chairperson, Mr Abdulmohsen Al Rifai. Ambassador Gilbert expressed his delight at the energy and creativity of students in the organization and management of the many activities.

A different theme for the Health Day is selected each semester with the current focus being on "Nutrition". Over 20 different activities were organized by student groups to promote greater awareness by students, staff and their family members regarding the importance of a healthy and balanced diet and lifestyle. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was ACK Student Council member,

Abdulnaser Saeed. Following a welcome to the event from Ms Mariam AlMaraghi - Business Development Manager, there was a program full of activities and entertainment on the stage. A special focus was a lecture on nutrition presented by Dr. Ali Al-Jadi from AL Salam Hospital.

A very pleasing dimension to the Health Days is the growing attendance by children and younger siblings of students and staff. As part of its ongoing program of Social Responsibility, the college is committed to active involvement in projects that encourage people of all ages to live healthy and engaged lifestyles. Mr Abdulmohsen Al Rifai noted that the Health Days during each semester provides a rare chance for the whole campus to meet together.

Some students from the School of Business take part in the organization for their course of study in Event Management. However, there are also many other students who become involved outside the curriculum and Mr Al Rifai was full of praise for their college spirit. He commented: "At ACK, we place great emphasis on our students graduating not only with a qualification but also as rounded and connected members of the community."

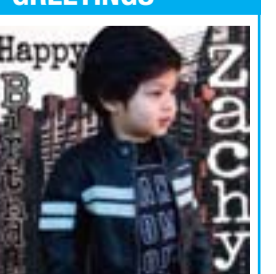
INVITE

You are cordially invited to another session of our series about some prophets and messengers of Allah (SWT) on May 10, 2018 at 7:00 pm. In this class, we will discuss how the high minister's wife, while attempting to seduce Yusuf, tried to exonerate herself when she unexpectedly met her husband at the door, how her husband reacted, and how Yusuf vindicated himself. We will also

examine the eyewitness's method to indicate the guilty party, his identity, and how being related to the minister's wife, affected the situation. Finally, we will discuss the significance of repentance, its requirements, and the temporal and spiritual benefits of apologizing. Come and learn more about the life and times of Prophet Joseph (AS) in a relaxed, encouraging and supportive atmosphere.



GREETINGS



Many many happy returns to Zachy on turning three years old. Best wishes from Dad, Mom, family and friends.

TV

AM MOVIES ACTION
01:20 Lost & Found
03:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier

Discovery Family
00:05 Fail Army
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds

Disney Junior
00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks

04:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Revenge Body With Khloe

11:45 A Is For Apple
12:40 Fish Of The Day
13:05 Fish Of The Day

04:08 Nella The Princess Knight
04:31 Shimmer And Shine
04:41 Shimmer And Shine

07:00 Good Morning America
09:00 The View
10:00 Riverdale

ANIMAL PLANET HD
00:45 Rugged Justice
01:40 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101

00:05 Fail Army
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds

00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks
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04:41 Shimmer And Shine

07:00 Good Morning America
09:00 The View
10:00 Riverdale

BBC FIRST
00:20 The Durrells
01:10 Death In Paradise

00:05 Fail Army
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds

00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks
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crime investigation network
00:00 The Killing Season
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COMEDY CENTRAL
00:05 Broad City
00:30 Why? With Hannibal Buress

00:05 Fail Army
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds

00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks
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00:05 Broad City
00:30 Why? With Hannibal Buress
00:55 Workaholics

00:05 Fail Army
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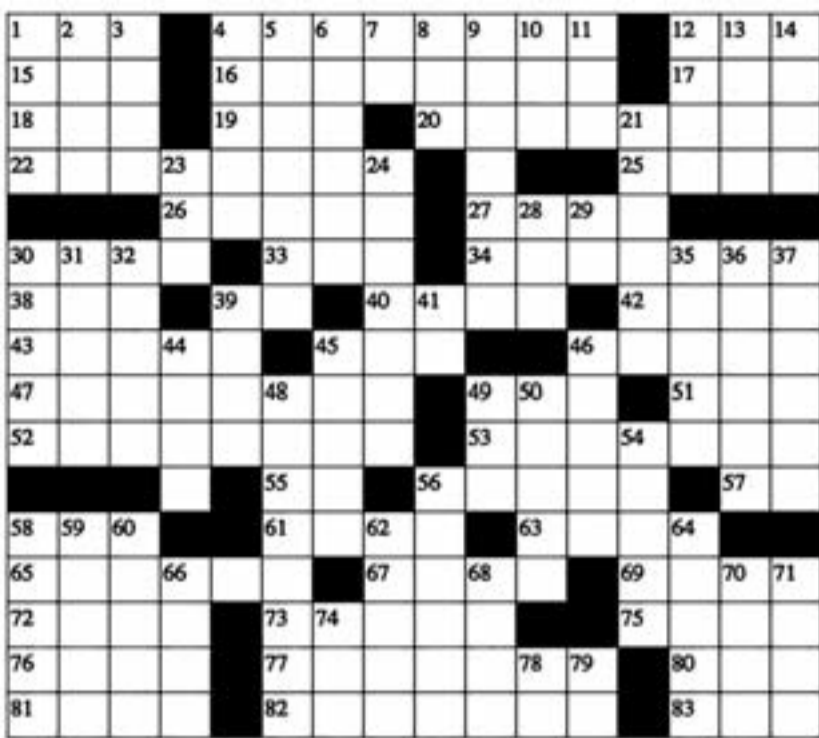
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10:00 Riverdale

Stars

CROSSWORD 1904



ACROSS

- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- Dangerous to yourself or your interests.
- The sound made by a cat (or any sound resembling this).
- The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
- Write upon.
- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
- A master's degree in business.
- Type genus of the Ascaphidae.
- A skeletal muscle arising from the tibia.
- Exhibiting or restored to vigorous good health.
- Anything that covers or conceals.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A small loosely aggregated mass of flocculent material suspended in or precipitated from a liquid.
- The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet.
- Headlight that provides strong beam for use in foggy weather.
- The basic unit of money in Albania.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A mark left by the healing of injured tissue.
- (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
- A worker who is hired to perform a job.
- Take in solid food.
- Line that is the commercial organization responsible for operating a railway system.
- Very spicy sauce made from tabasco peppers.
- The local time at the 0 meridian passing through Greenwich, England.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- (Greek mythology) The Titaness who was mother of Helios and Selene and Eos in ancient mythology.
- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- The whiteness that results from removing the color from something.
- (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
- A doctor's degree in music.
- Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
- A rotund individual.
- Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- Wife of Ramachandra.
- Bring to light.
- (informal) Roused to anger.
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
- Of or relating to Linnaeus or to the system of taxonomic classification that he proposed.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- A nearly horizontal passage from the surface into a mine.
- Medium-sized tree having glossy lanceolate leaves.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- East Indian silk cotton tree yielding fibers inferior to kapok.
- In card games.
- (Old Testament) The first of the major Hebrew prophets (8th century BC).
- Being ten more than one hundred ninety.
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- Characteristic of or peculiar to a woman.
- The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
- A unit of length of thread or yarn.
- A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- The twelfth month of the civil year.
- Having or prompted by wisdom or discernment.
- Drought-resistant Asiatic tree-like shrub bearing pleasantly acid small red edible fruits commonly used in sherbets.
- A federal agency that supervises carriers that transport goods and people between states.
- Used of milk and milk products from which the cream has been removed.
- A state of southwestern India.
- A heavy silvery toxic univalent and bivalent metallic element.
- A subsidiary proposition that is assumed to be true in order to prove another proposition.
- Similar to the giraffe but smaller with much shorter neck and stripe on the legs.
- Extensive landed property (especially in the country) retained by the owner for his own use.
- Small genus of delicate mossy bog plants having white or violet flowers.
- An annually elected magistrate of the ancient Roman Republic.
- (Roman mythology) God of love.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
- The event of dying or departure from life.
- An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
- Suggestive of youth.
- Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
- A unit of current equal to 10 amperes.
- A resident of Kansas.
- (medicine) Chilly.
- A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
- Having been taken into the mouth for consumption.
- Tropical tree of Puerto Rico and West Indies and Puerto Rico having spikes of white flowers.
- The biblical name for ancient Syria.
- Commonly the lowest molding at the base of a column.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- An informal term for a father.
- Black tropical American cuckoo.
- A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
- A colorless explosive liquid that is volatile and poisonous and foul-smelling.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Memories of a long ago time in your youth stay with you: the desire to revisit these days is overwhelming. Even so, your focus on the present demands your attention. The life you live offers security, love and family: consider this before making a foolish decision that could rock your world. An opportunity arises for a change in position involving work; take some time with this. You may consider working with new people or perhaps returning to a former company. You devote some time to someone who loves you. Communication skills are high and clear. You hold the keys to the future: choices to sabotage yourself could be made but it seems that you are now serious about choosing stability and prosperity for yourself and those you love.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

The energy is one of ease and accomplishment today. Working with others is a breeze and you could have valuable ideas the boss wholeheartedly approves of. You find that working with people is much easier than working against them. You feel appreciated and valuable as you discover that you could be considered for a promotion or a raise. A new client or customer makes your day when they brag to others about your work and creative style. You find yourself engaging with people in a convention or workshop setting; you're around a large number of people. Travel plays a big part in your work or spiritual pursuits. You meet someone who reminds you of yourself. A nice dinner with friends and family creates enjoyment!



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your needs are simple; you run from anything complicated or consuming just now. Stripping a situation down to the bare bones helps your efforts to gain information. Prayer and meditation are valuable tools when dealing with disruption. Your interest in taking new directions along your path in life opposes where you actually are along the way; realities clash with hopes and dreams. Letting things unfold on their own schedule is difficult for you. If you insist on having your way damage could occur but may be long lasting; though most challenging, let patience defeat ego. Being surrounded by those who love you brings strength and confidence that more than gets you through; a gathering with excellent food is likely this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your commitment to the health of your body strengthens when you experience a dip in physical energy. Diet, exercise and supplements are in your consideration as you look through different options. You're eager to find more ways to have a better opinion of yourself; try not to be too harsh in self-judgment. This is a good time to start new projects or research for different investments in stock market or real estate. A new romance could be indicated or the reigniting of an already established love relationship. If your focus moves off of your work, take a moment to breathe and stretch; you're capable of overcoming distractions now. You prefer to think about home and family this evening as you try a new recipe on several at a small gathering.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Let your ambitions be known; the energy of accomplishment is present and operating at top levels. If you have wanted to be promoted at work or take a chance with earning money somewhere new, the time is now; the only blockages and obstacles are in your mind, ignore doubts and go for the win! If you're aware of pitfalls, avoid them no matter what, use your instinct here. You're honestly in touch with your true self; you can't work on flaws if you can't see them, so good, brave job! You mention something by mistake and save someone a large sum of money and headache. Something or someone you find utterly irresistible makes an appearance. You know what's best for you and where to find it; use your heart as well as your head for this choice.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You're able to see straight to the center of the web; you can unravel complicated issues and puzzling circumstances by seeing through the jumbled details clearly. Things fall into place, forming productive situations that can come to fruition as you deserve; you have worked and planned carefully to get where you are, haven't you continue on this path and in this direction. Something unusual, actually sort of bizarre, demands your attention later; this is a result of your past behavior. This could be a great window of time to let something go, just release it so it can release you! Explaining your theories or plans comes naturally and those who listen understand. After a day full of demanding moments, you've come to a place you can rest; do it now.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Important information comes from a place you least expect; use this wisely as it could unlock a difficult situation. You could find yourself planning a block party or family reunion. A need arises to get things straight with someone close to your heart: a difficult confrontation ends well after the truth comes out. You're on guard with what you say and do during a meeting with superiors; a favorable outcome is indicated. Someone will seek your guidance later when you have a moment alone. Your star rises high at a social function you attend in honor of a coworker or family member; compliments on your appearance make your day. After dinner, take your shoes off and put your feet up after a day filled with accomplishment and positive energy.



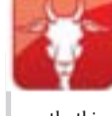
Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You would prefer to be anywhere but work today. Duties and coworkers insist on having your attention regarding something new and detailed oriented you're good at. Events demand that you re-arrange schedules and re-make plans to cover your position; this is something you do effortlessly as it all comes together with ease. A tender subject may be brought up by someone who means well but comes across as harsh and meddling; the way you respond to this is very important. Temptation to spend money on something foolish is tough to overcome. Something unfolds on the domestic front that enhances your life and provides comfort. Others enjoy your off the wall humor and jovial manner. Good food and company for you this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You're rather annoyed with both job and home life; you could feel as though people are going out of their way to irritate you. This isn't a time to make choices or decisions regarding personal or professional directions to take. Instead of stressing out, step back and let this pass without your input or worry. You review the path you have taken thus far and make notes about the positives and negatives that have resulted; continue to be who you are! You feel good about yourself today and there's a spring in your step. A new outfit or shoes could be the ticket as you have an event to prepare for! Someone new at work appears to be agreeable and capable. Tonight, you could just find that you have been selected as the winner of a contest.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

The day feels wide open for new opportunities; hopes and dreams are supported. There's something valuable within your reach, if you go about it correctly this can be yours; be patient and watch! A mentor shares motivational input and energy. Something you needed to know comes from a surprising source; sometimes people we have never met can lend a helping hand they have no idea they're even extending! A neighborhood gathering draws more people than you thought and good progress is made. Pulling people together by explaining something in a way everyone can understand makes a huge difference. A person who doesn't have all the facts criticizes something in a petty way. Your ability to be patient is becoming stronger.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Your suggestions for a project appeal to the entire team. Story telling skills set you apart as you speak and take people in directions they would never have known about. There could be a person that is not interested in what you have to say; this could be someone that is normally easy to work with and be around. You may find that you can no longer please everyone around you; remember that the energy you surround yourself with creates more of the same energy! An elderly person tests your judgment and questions your honor. You find that daydreaming is a productive pastime. Let yourself dream, these days do not come too often, so do not ignore the opportunity to follow your fantasies. Relax and smile this evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

The past reaches into your mind; you may discover a new fact regarding this issue that provides relief. Younger people seek your input and guidance on a certain topic that you can help with. Now isn't the time to seek approval from everyone around you; being honest is more important than being liked or agreed with. You could feel trapped or painted into a corner when you are challenged on a matter of a sensitive nature. You may feel a strong desire to start over with a diet you tried once before. Working through issues isn't easy but definitely doable if you focus and look at all angles. You shine when addressing coworkers in a meeting with new ideas regarding a customer or client; your thoughts are clear and helpful today and this evening.

Wordsearch Puzzle

More 70's Songs

Find and circle all of these songs from the 1970's that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters will spell the names of ten music groups from the 70's.

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

AFTERNOON DELIGHT DREAM ON MAGIC MAN SHE'S GONE
AMERICAN PIE DREAM WEAVER MAIN STREET SIGNS
AMERICAN WOMAN DRIFT AWAY MARGARITAVILLE SOUTHERN NIGHTS
ANNIE'S SONG EBONY EYES MY LOVE SUMMER NIGHTS
BAD GIRLS FIRE AND RAIN MY SHARONA SUNDOWN
BARRACUDA HELP ME NIGHT FEVER SUPERSTAR
BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY IMAGINE PHOTOGRAPH THE GAMBLER
BROTHER LOUIE LAST DANCE PIANO MAN WITHOUT YOU
CRAZY ON YOU LET IT BE REUNITED WOODSTOCK
DELTA DAWN LOVE HURTS ROSE GARDEN Y.M.C.A.
DON'T STOP LOW RIDER SHADOW DANCING YOU'RE SIXTEEN

Yesterday's Solution

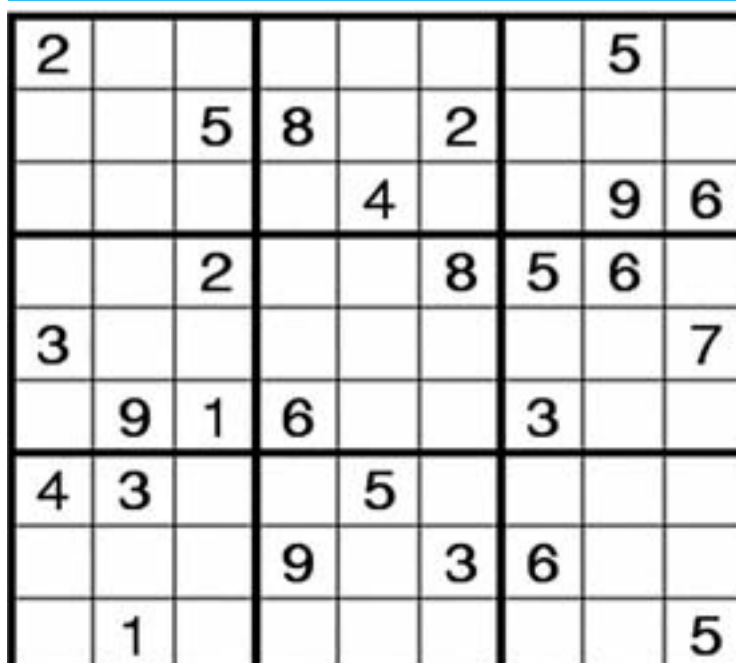
More 1950's Songs

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

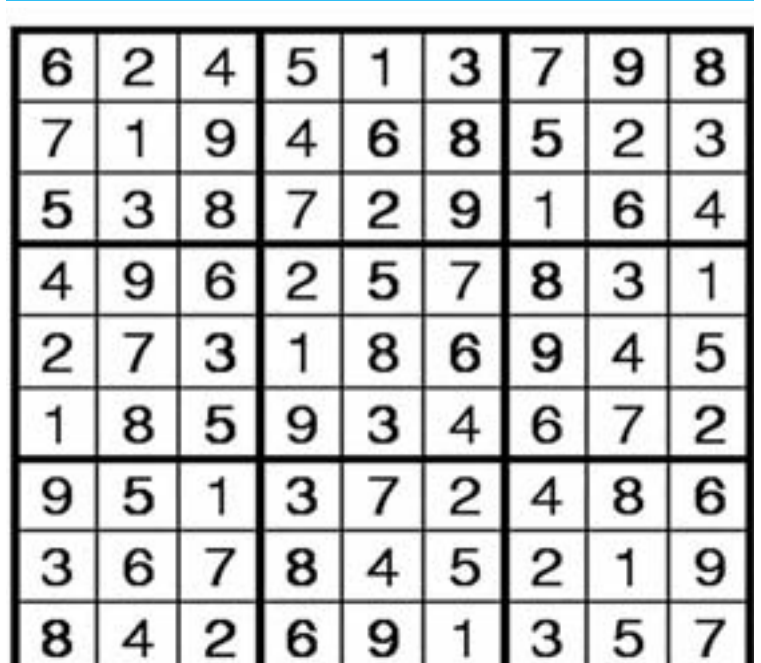
ALL SHOOK UP FLAMINGO LUCILLE SOUL ON FIRE
ALMOST GROWN GET A JOB MAYBE STAGGER LEE
AT THE HOP GOODNIGHT IRENE MONEY HONEY THE BELLS
BIRD DOG I'M A MAN MR SANDMAN THE WIND
BLUE MONDAY I'M WALKIN' PERSONALITY TIFITINA
CHANCES ARE JIM DANDY REBEL ROUSER TOM DOOLEY
CHANTILLY LACE JUKE ROLLIN' STONE TRY ME
CRY LITTLE DARLIN' SEA CRUISE WHITE LIGHTNING
DON'T BE CRUEL LONELY AVENUE SINCERELY YOUNG BLOOD
EL PASO LOUIE LOUIE SO WHAT

The hidden sentence is: PLEASE SEND ME SOMEONE TO LOVE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Classifieds

Wednesday, May 9, 2018



Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

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- Good knowledge of tenders and ability to get orders.
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- Good negotiation skills
- Transferrable Iqama
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Age: 30-45 years.

JOB REQUIREMENT

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- Energetic, fluent in English language.
- Good knowledge of local Kuwaiti market, Gulf and international market
- Good knowledge of tenders and ability to get orders.
- Good business relations
- Good negotiation skills
- Transferrable Iqama
- Driving License

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CHANGE OF NAME

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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DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION



Arrival Flights on Wednesday 9/5/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 9/5/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	THY	767	Istanbul	13:40
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
KAC	102	London	00:50	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
WAN	118D	Bahrain	01:10	FEG	442	Asyut	14:50
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
JZR	267	Beirut	01:25	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	JZR	188	Dubai	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KNE	684	Madinah	15:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	04:45	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:10	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05	WAN	135	Doha	19:50
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
WAN	342	Sohag	08:25	JZR	552	Alexandria	20:05
IRC	6552	ABD	08:50	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:55	KAC	353	Muscat	21:05
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	ME A	403	Beirut	21:15
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	KAC	543	Cairo	21:20
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
SYR	341	Latakia	11:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
KIS	6032	Mashhad	12:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
WAN	134	Doha	12:20	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	JZR	604	Ahmedabad	22:40
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
JZR	903	Baku	12:55	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	SVA	515	Riyadh	23:30
KAC	522	Al Najaf	13:00	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
JZR	357	Mashhad	13:05	JZR	560	Sohag	23:45
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45				
FEG	341	Sohag	13:50				

Lee says Peele convinced him to make BlackKkKlansman

Spice Lee's ambition to make 'BlackKkKlansman' was sparked by Jordan Peele. The 61-year-old moviemaker has helmed the new drama film, which tells the story of the first African-American police officer who worked undercover to infiltrate the Ku Klux Klan, and Spike has revealed it was the 'Get Out' director who made him aware of the story. Spike confessed: "I never heard of any of that. I never heard of Ron [Stallworth, who penned the memoir on which the film is based], never heard of the book." Many of Spike's movies, such as 'Do the Right Thing' and 'Get on the Bus', have looked at the issue of race relations in America. And despite efforts made to tackle racism in the country, the



New York-born filmmaker insists that the problem has never truly gone away. Asked whether he sees a solution to the "undercurrent" of racism in America, Spike told The Hollywood Reporter: "Undercurrent? It never went away. Racism is woven into the fabric of this country. The foundation of this country is the genocide of the native people. And my ancestors were stolen from Mother Africa and brought here to work from can't-see-in-the-morning to can't-see-at-night and built this country. That's the source. "Genocide and slavery is the source, the foundation of this country. That's a fact. That's how I feel. The foundation of this country is faulty, is false."

The Hitman's Bodyguard sequel is in the works

A'Hitman's Bodyguard' sequel is in the works. The Patrick Hughes-directed buddy movie starred the likes of Ryan Reynolds, Samuel L. Jackson and Salma Hayek, and Millennium Films is already working on a sequel. The follow-up film will be called 'The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard', which is being teased with posters at the Cannes Film Festival. Casting for the movie has not yet been confirmed, but according to The Hollywood Reporter, Hughes is expected to return to the director's chair. The original movie achieved considerable box office success, earning as much as \$177 million from a \$30 million budget and becoming the most popular film in the US for three straight weeks. Despite starring in 'The Hitman's Bodyguard', Ryan previously admitted he doesn't have a bodyguard and would feel "ashamed" if he did feel the need to employ protection because he is a "big guy".



When the Hollywood actor and his co-star Samuel L. Jackson were asked if they employ their own protection, Ryan explained: "Look we're two pretty big guys. I would feel ashamed if I had a bodyguard." The only time I ever have security is when I go to Comic-Con because you need guys to help get you 100 feet." By contrast, Samuel revealed there are certain places where he needs to have someone to protect him. He said: "Aggression changes from place to place. "In France people camp outside your hotel and chant your name. In Germany, you wish you had a bodyguard because Germans are aggressive whenever they want their s**t signed. But most times, I'm pretty OK. "The first time I went to Johannesburg I was riding around in a bullet-proof car and all that kind of things. "Five guys met me at the airport. One guy was like, 'Mike will always be on tour right because he draws from his right. I am left-handed. I will always be to your left. If we try and take you down, let us take you down. Do. Not. Resist.' "I was like, 'What the hell? I'm here to do press, man.'"

Cumberbatch would happily be objectified on screen

Benedict Cumberbatch would happily play an objectified man in a female-dominated film. The 41-year-old actor has revealed he would have no qualms about being objectified in a movie, saying that if Chris Pine was happy to fulfill the role in 'Wonder Woman', he's willing to follow suit. He said: "If it's good enough for Chris Pine in 'Wonder Woman', it's good enough for Benedict Cumberbatch. "Yeah! Definitely. Like, just in your pants? Slow pan up from the feet to the head, with sexy, screaming saxophone music in the background? "Ha ha ha, yes! So long as it was fun." Despite this, Benedict admitted he'd want to get himself in tip-top shape before he



appeared on screen wearing next-to-nothing. The London-born star revealed he didn't want to embarrass himself by appearing unfit in a movie. He shared: "I'd have to be in good shape, though. Prepare." Meanwhile, Benedict has also discussed the gender pay gap in Hollywood, calling on male stars to reject work if their female counterparts are being paid less than them. He suggested, too, that actors ought to ask their female co-stars what they're being paid in a bid to tackle the inequality. He told the Radio Times: "Equal pay and a place at the table are the central tenets of feminism. Look at your quotas. "Ask what women are paid, and say, 'If she's not paid the same as the men, I'm not doing it.'"

Avengers: Infinity War directors explain why Scarlet Witch's accent has disappeared

Scarlet Witch's accent disappeared in 'Avengers: Infinity War' because the directors wanted her to be less distinguishable. The fictional superhero - who is played by actress Elizabeth Olsen - had a discernible Eastern European accent when she made her Marvel debut, but the duo behind the money-spinning hit, Joe and Anthony Russo, have revealed why they've decided to phase it out. Speaking on the Happy Sad Confused podcast, the brothers explained: "We have intentionally tried to strip that accent away for a couple of reasons. One is you'll notice at the beginning of 'Civil War' that Black Widow is training her to be a spy, and two is she's been on the run, and one of the most distinguishing characteristics that she has is her accent. "So if you're gonna try to disguise yourself or hide yourself or not be caught, you're going to try to limit those trigger warnings that would make it easy for someone to identify you, which would be inclusive of her accent." The directors said that the decision to phase out the accent fitted in with their broader plan for the franchise.



MEL B HINTS THAT SPICE GIRLS TOUR IS COMING

Mel B has teased the Spice Girls are planning to perform together again and says she would go on tour "immediately" if all the band members agreed to it. The 'Wannabe' hitmakers sparked excitement earlier this year when all five girls - Geri Horner, Mel B, Emma Bunton, Mel C and Victoria Beckham - got together at Geri's house to discuss potential new projects, and though the details of their plans have remained under wraps, fans have been waiting in hope that they will sing on stage together again. Mel - who was better known as Scary Spice during the group's heyday - has confirmed that all of the Spice Girls are signed to new deals with their former manager Simon Fuller and she is very hopeful that concerts will happen in the near future. During an appearance as a guest panellist on UK TV show 'Loose Women' on Monday the 'Say You'll Be There' singer said: "We are in the process of figuring stuff out, all five of us have signed with Simon Fuller. I don't know what is going to happen or when but it is all very exciting. There's going to be a bit of everything. "If it was up to me we would go on tour immediately. Maybe we will, soon ... I've always said we're definitely touring, I think I've just been nagging them too much and once I stopped nagging them they all said yes, I just need to shut my mouth." Mel - who endured a bitter divorce from her husband Stephen Belafonte last year - insists the Spice Girls share a bond that is unique and admits it has been great to reconnect with her friends, whatever else happens. The 42-year-old pop star said: "We actually all do really get on. We've all been through something huge together, we basically got famous overnight and we only had each other so we've got a bond that nobody can break ... We didn't really fall out, we're like five sisters, we bicker a bit but we've always got each other's back. I'm seeing Emma and Geri tomorrow, they better be there." The Spice Girls last toured after reuniting in 2007 with their greatest hits shows wrapping up in 2008. The last time they performed as a five-piece at the 2012 London Olympics closing ceremony. — Bang Showbiz



(From left) French actress and member of the Feature Film Jury Lea Seydoux, Russian director and member of the Feature Film Jury Andrey Zvyagintsev, French director and member of the Feature Film Jury Robert Guediguain, US director and screenwriter and member of the Feature Film Jury Ava DuVernay, Canadian director and member of the Feature Film Jury Denis Villeneuve, US actress and member of the Feature Film Jury Kristen Stewart, Australian actress and President of the Jury Cate Blanchett, Burundian singer and member of the Feature Film Jury Khadja Nin and Taiwanese actor and member of the Feature Film Jury Chang Chen pose on May 8, 2018 during a photocall ahead of the opening of the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos



Australian actress and President of the Jury Cate Blanchett poses yesterday during photocall ahead of the opening of the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival.

Scandal, protesting stars and bans as Cannes festival opens

The most political Cannes film festival in years opened yesterday with female stars vowing to protest on the red carpet against industry sexism, two top directors barred from attending and bans hanging over some movies. With Hollywood still reeling from the Harvey Weinstein scandal, and Cannes under fire for its dearth of women directors, jury members Cate Blanchett, Ava DuVernay and Kristen Stewart said they would join other actresses and female filmmakers on Saturday in a protest in support of the #MeToo and Time's Up movements.

Blanchett, who heads the jury, did not hide her unhappiness that only three of the 21 directors in the running for the top Palme d'Or prize are women. "For profound lasting change to occur, it needs to take place through specific actions, not through pontification," she said. "It's addressing the gender gap and the racial diversity and the equality and the way we make our work." Cannes' patchy record on female directors, and Saturday's red carpet

protest, may generate the most heat in a festival packed with political hot potatoes—even if the launch of the new "Star Wars" spin-off, "Solo", should lighten the mix.

Yet with no fewer than a dozen films with LGBT themes, and others tackling child abuse, male prostitution and an eye-watering DIY sex change, it has all the makings of a vintage year for scandal and controversy in Cannes. A new documentary about the singer Whitney Houston by Oscar winner Kevin Macdonald reportedly includes a devastating revelation about the demons that dogged her short tragic life. "Black Panther" director Ryan Coogler—whose film is breaking box office records—is likely to tackle the lack of black faces both in front of and behind the camera in a Cannes masterclass.

Lesbian film banned

While Monty Python's Terry Gilliam is fighting in the French courts to have his disaster-plagued "The Man Who Killed Don

Quixote" shown, the first Kenyan movie to be selected for the world's top festival, "Rafiki", has already been banned in its homeland for daring to depict a lesbian romance. Despite a plea by US director Oliver Stone and other supporters, Tehran has refused to lift a travel ban on the dissident Iranian master Jafar Panahi, whose "Three Faces" is in the running for the Palme d'Or. Appeals to bail Russia's Kirill Serebrennikov, under house arrest in Moscow on embezzlement charges his allies claim are political, have also fallen on deaf ears.

Festival director Thierry Fremaux told reporters Monday that it was ironic that both Iran and Russia should be "punishing the directors when neither film is political". Blanchett said the films would be judged on their artistic merits, not their political pedigree. "This is not the Nobel Peace prize—it's the Palme d'Or," she said. But she called it a "terrible situation that two of the filmmakers will more than likely not be here with us when their films are going to be screened". Serious

doubts also hang over whether Gilliam's Pythonesque movie will be allowed to close the festival after it became embroiled in a bitter legal battle over who owns the rights. Judges in Paris will decide whether the film, which Gilliam has labored on for nearly two decades, can be shown.

'Problem with women'

Long before Weinstein was accused of attacking four women at the festival, Cannes had been under fire for a "problem with women". Women have been stopped on the red carpet in previous years for not wearing high heels, and its dress code has been condemned as sexist. But the Weinstein scandal has given its critics further ammunition, with screenwriter Kate Muir of Women and Hollywood lacerating the festival as "a two-week celebration of male brains and female beauty". Blanchett noted the industry's frequent reduction of women to ornaments and sidekicks was only slowly changing.

"Being attractive doesn't preclude being intelligent," she said. While admitting that Cannes "will never be the same again" after the Weinstein scandal, Fremaux said he was against quotas. Instead he put Blanchett—one of the first to call out Weinstein—at the head of a majority-female jury alongside another of his accusers, French "Bond" actress Lea Seydoux. But Fremaux's surprise decision to lift the festival's seven-year ban on Danish director Lars von Trier has stoked feminist ire.

The ageing provocateur has been accused of sexual harassment by the singer Bjork, and his production company has been hit by multiple similar claims. He denies the allegations. Von Trier sparked outrage during a 2011 Cannes press conference by saying that he was a Nazi who understood Hitler and sympathized "with him a little bit". Pointedly Fremaux has not risked giving von Trier a press conference this time for his new serial killer flick, "The House That Jack Built" with Uma Thurman and Matt Dillon. — AFP



Rihanna arrives for the 2018 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. —AFP photos



Jennifer Lopez



Gigi Hadid

FASHION PRIESTESSES

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Blake Lively



Zendaya

Madonna and Rihanna stunned as fashion high priestesses on the red carpet at New York's Met Gala on Monday, headlining the most sought after invitation in the celebrity universe. Midge, the Catholic girl from Michigan and queen of pop whose 1989 hit "Like a Prayer" remains a dance-floor classic 30 years later, presided over the "Sunday Best" theme dressed head to toe in Jean Paul Gaultier. The 59-year-old mother of six balanced a golden crown studded with crucifixes on her head, shrouded her face in a black fishnet mantilla and donned a very flouncy, very full and very black gown. Held every year on the first Monday in May, the black-tie extravaganza is the chief source of income for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, reportedly raising more than \$12 million in 2017.

The gathering of A-list models, musicians and movie stars, dubbed "the Oscars of the East Coast," saw Amal Clooney, Rihanna and Donatella Versace join Vogue supreme Anna Wintour as this year's co-chairs. Tickets are said to cost \$30,000 each or \$275,000 for a table, but all guests must be invited, ruling out all but the most elite Hollywood actors, music superstars, top models and fashion designers. If A-listers have shunned the theme in the past, this year's "Sunday Best," a nod to the "Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" exhibition at The Costume Institute, proved popular.



Nicki Minaj



Bella Hadid



Cardi B



Ariana Grande



Kylie Jenner and Travis Scott

Lifestyle | Fashion



Diane Kruger



(From right) Troye Sivan, Adut Akech, Adam Shulman, Anne Hathaway, Pierpaolo Piccioli, Frances McDormand and Hamish Bowles.



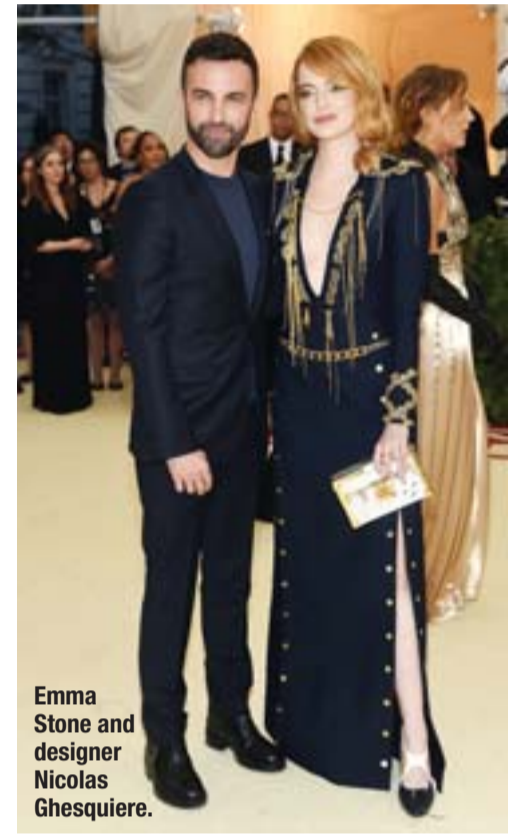
Chadwick Boseman



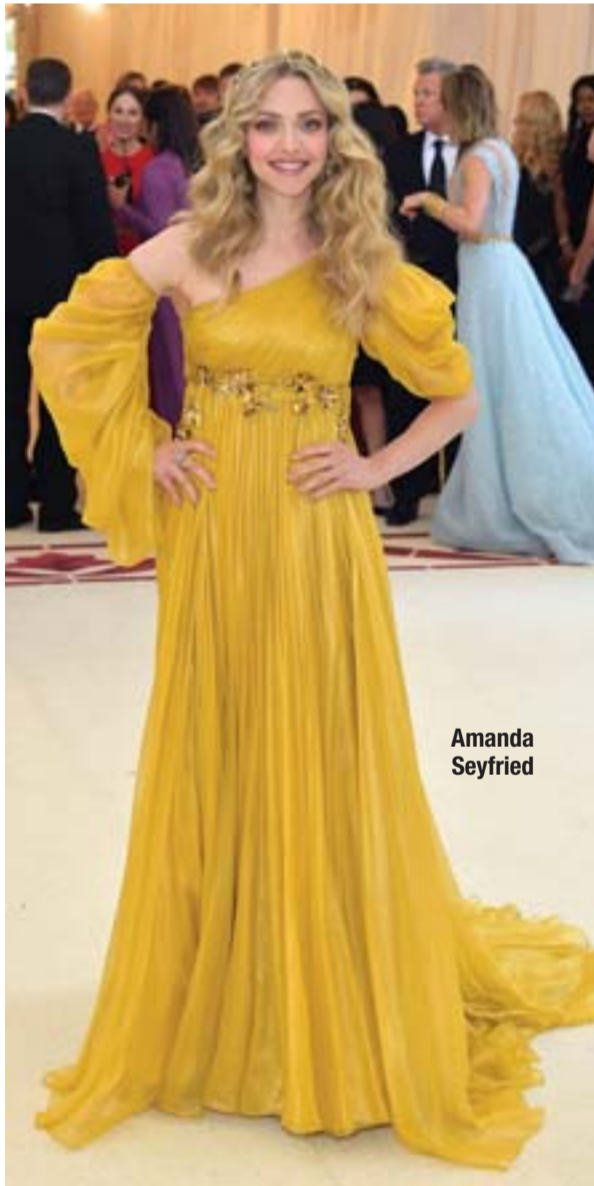
Sarah Jessica Parker



Gisele Bündchen



Emma Stone and designer Nicolas Ghesquiere.



Amanda Seyfried

Wing and a prayer
Rihanna, the Barbadian superstar and one of the biggest pop stars on the planet, proved her red carpet pulling power in a jewel-encrusted gown from John Galiano's Maison Margiela and bejeweled bishop's hat. There were celestial crowns like a Virgin Mary icon, lashings of cardinal red, virginal white and New York's de rigueur clerical black. Katy Perry dressed as an angel with enormous feathered white wings that towered over her petite frame and trailed the floor, a Versace chain-mail gold mini-dress and thigh-high stilettoed gold boots Clooney, the international human rights lawyer and this month's Vogue cover star, wore the pants as she arrived on the arm of her movie star husband George, dressed in blue cigarette trousers with a strapless bustier and voluminous skirt by up-and-coming Briton, Richard Quinn. Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez, the celebrity couple of the moment, also stepped out, the "Jenny from

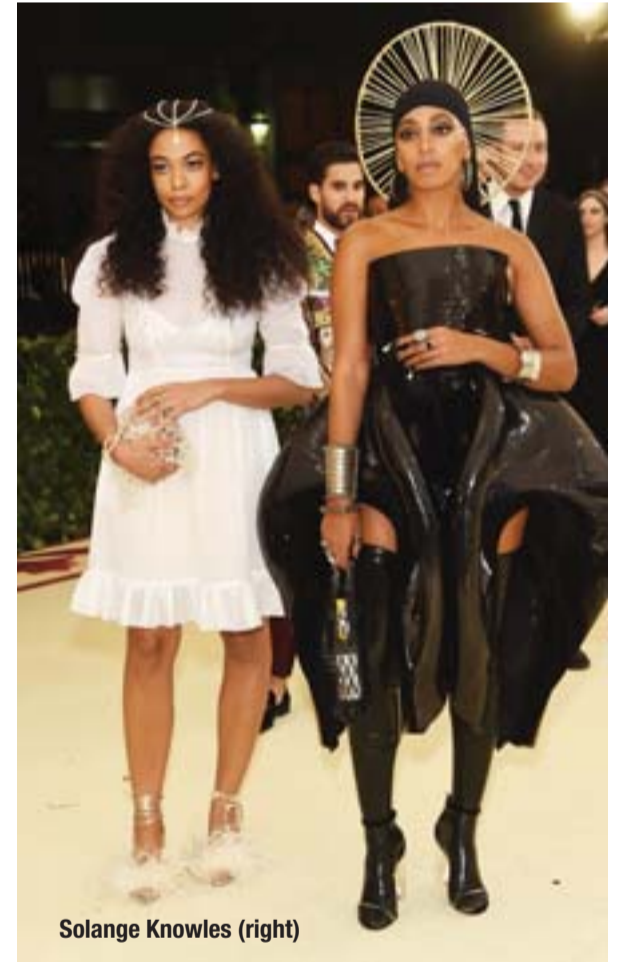
Block" songstress in a beaded and feathered gown with a giant mosaic crucifix on the front. Sarah Jessica Parker, a doyenne of New York high society and the "Sex and the City" fashionista, walked the red carpet in full-length gold brocade by Dolce and Gabbana and an astonishing head piece. But for all the glitz, the event has also been dogged by rumors that once inside, it can be intimidating and unfriendly. Tina Fey once called it a "jerk parade," complaining to David Letterman that: "If you had a million arms and all the people you would punch in the whole world, they're all there." — AFP



Lily Collins



Frances McDormand



Solange Knowles (right)



Emilia Clarke



Kate Bosworth



Scarlett Johansson

Lifestyle | Fashion



Hailee Steinfeld



Alicia Vikander



Winnie Harlow



Michelle Williams



Mary J. Blige



Yara Shahidi



Lena Waithe



Alessandro Michele, Lana Del Rey and Jared Leto



Amber Heard



Priyanka Chopra



Doutzen Kroes



Stella Maxwell



(From left) Alek Wek, Lili Reinhart, Luka Sabbat, Olivia Munn, Kiersey Clemons, Jasmine Sanders, and Valerie Messika.



Rita Ora



SZA



Lily Aldridge and Rosie Huntington-Whiteley



Kate Upton



Uma Thurman



Joan Smalls



Sarah Paulson



Salma Hayek and Francois-Henri Pinault

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2018



Katy Perry attends the Heavenly Bodies: Fashion & The Catholic Imagination Costume Institute Gala at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. — AFP photos

Kites: Age-old hobby gives new generation of fans a lift

When Kay and Larry Day came across a kite shop while vacationing in Wisconsin nearly two decades ago, they decided to buy kites for their grandchildren. On a whim, Larry bought one for himself. "He went out and flew it and decided he needed to go back and get a better one," Kay recalled. Since then, the couple - particularly Larry - have been hooked on kite flying. They own dozens of kites, plan vacations around flying



Photo shows two of the "Zoo" kites owned by LeAnn and Dennis Lauer of Kaukauna, Wis., on display at the Kites Over Lake Michigan festival.

them and organize an annual winter kite-flying festival in their hometown of Clear Lake, Iowa. "I'm at peace when I'm flying," said Larry, 72. "It's something unique that I do." While the hobby might be unusual, it has a long history as a pastime for adults and children. The practice of flying fabric on the end of a string began more than 2,000 years ago in China. Since then, kites have been used to conduct scientific experiments, power surfboards, take aerial photos and much more.

"Kite flying is really a broad subject," said

Nic O'Neill, president of the American Kitefliers Association. "There is a kind of a kite for everybody out there. It's a solo, partner and family sport." For many, the activity involves something more than recreation, she said. Kites appeal to artistic people who like to create works of art to fly in the sky; to engineer-types who try to improve on the kite's design; and to performers who like to develop kite-flying routines choreographed to music. "The best thing about it is you can come at it from different points in your life and have it be a completely different experience," O'Neill said. Grant Lovett began flying "dime-store" kites as a kid but moved on to more expensive and sophisticated kites as an adult, including a 42-foot inflatable kite.

Festivals and events

Today, he enjoys making his own, crafting them from nylon, Mylar and cloth designed for boat sails. "I've always been interested in stuff that flies," he said. "It's really fascinating to see something I made up in the air." He enjoys taking his creations to festivals and events and sharing them with others.

He attends kite-making workshops and looks for new patterns online. "I don't make tons and tons of the same thing," he says. "I like making new kites, finding new designs." He makes kites

of different shapes and sizes because flying conditions can differ greatly. "Some kites need very little wind. Others may need winds of 5 to 10 miles per hour." Flying kites requires skill, but also a bit of art, Lovett said. Experience makes a difference, as does the weather. "It's a lot of trial and error," O'Neill said.

"Part of the reason I love kiting is that you have to risk trying and not succeeding. The best way to learn is to go out, undo the string and let your kite fly." Ideally, you want a nice steady wind and a place away from trees and

buildings that can cause turbulence, O'Neill said. Sometimes the best flying conditions occur in winter - on a frozen lake, said Kay Day, who with her husband organizes the Color the Wind Kite Festival each February on Clear Lake. "It's 3,600 acres of flying field with no 'Charlie Brown trees' to catch your kite," she said. The festival adds color to the winter sky and gives people a reason to go outside, she added. The Days invite renowned kite fliers to come share their passion with locals and visitors. — AP



Photo shows Dylan Nguyen, left, and Cardin Nguyen holding their kites and enjoy flying and competing at the Washington State International Kite Festival in Long Beach.



Photo shows a young boy looking on in wonder at one of the many ground displays found each year on Labor Day weekend at the Kites Over Lake Michigan festival.



Photo shows a typical display of giant show kites found each year on Labor Day weekend at the Kites Over Lake Michigan festival in Two Rivers. — AP photos



Photo shows 120 ft long giant show kites framed by a 30 ft high 'Crown' spinner at the Kites Over Lake Michigan festival.