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15 No crisis for Panini stickers as World Cup fever builds



Israel kills 55 Palestinians as US opens Jerusalem embassy

Kuwait requests UNSC meet • Turkey: US shares blame • Arab League: US move 'immoral'



GAZA: Palestinians run for cover from tear gas during clashes with Israeli security forces near the border between Israel and the Gaza Strip east of Jabaliya yesterday. — AFP



JERUSALEM: US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin claps as US President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka unveils an inauguration plaque during the opening of the US embassy yesterday. — AFP

JERUSALEM: Israeli forces killed 55 Palestinians on the Gaza border in the conflict's bloodiest day in years yesterday as clashes and protests coincided with the deeply controversial opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem. The clashes, which left more than 2,700 Palestinians wounded, erupted before a White House delegation and Israeli officials opened the embassy at an inauguration ceremony in Jerusalem and continued throughout the day.

It was the bloodiest day in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since a 2014 Gaza war. The dead included eight children under the age of 16, according to the Palestinian envoy to the United Nations. The Gaza health ministry provided the overall death and injury toll. Kuwait has requested an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council today, the country's mission to the UN said yesterday. "We condemned what has happened," Kuwaiti ambassador to the

United Nations Mansour Al-Otaibi told journalists. Kuwait is a non-permanent council member.

The White House said yesterday that Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas were to blame. "The responsibility for these tragic deaths rests squarely with Hamas," White House spokesman Raj Shah told reporters. "Hamas is intentionally and cynically provoking this response," he said, adding: "Israel has the right to defend itself." Tens of thousands

had gathered near the border in protest while smaller numbers of stone-throwing Palestinians approached the fence and sought to break through, with Israeli snipers positioned on the other side.

The embassy inauguration nonetheless went on as planned, attended by a Washington delegation that included US President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner, both White House aides. Ivanka Trump helped declare the new embassy open

and a plaque and seal were unveiled before the 800 guests at the ceremony. Kushner said it was possible for both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to gain more than give in any peace deal. "Jerusalem must remain a city that brings people of all faiths together," he said in a speech. Trump addressed the ceremony by video. "Our greatest hope is for peace," he said despite the Palestinian anger the move has provoked.

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News in brief

Qatar vows support for Somalia

DOHA: Qatar's Emir held talks yesterday with the Somali president in Doha and pledged support for the East African country, amid tensions between the two countries and the UAE. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani said that the relationship between Qatar and Somalia was one of "brotherhood and mutual respect". "Qatar will continue to support the unity, stability, sovereignty and well-being of the people of Somalia," he wrote on Twitter. African countries have found themselves in the fallout over the bitter Gulf crisis, with several breaking off ties with Qatar in support for countries which oppose Doha. Somalia has refused to take sides, although in recent weeks it has had its own disagreements with UAE rulers. — AFP

Houthis fail to hit Aramco facility

RIYADH: Yemen's armed Houthi movement launched a ballistic missile at a Saudi Aramco facility in Saudi Arabia's southwestern Jizan province yesterday, the group's Al-Masirah TV reported, but a Saudi-led coalition said the rocket fell in the open desert. The Houthis, an Iran-allied group that holds much of Yemen including the capital Sanaa, have fired a series of missiles into the kingdom in recent months, part of a three-year-old conflict in Yemen widely seen as a proxy battle between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Coalition spokesman Turki Al-Malki said Saudi air defense forces had tracked the rocket but that it landed in an uninhabited area, according to a report from the official Saudi Press Agency. — Reuters

Row over Socotra resolved

ADEN: Yemeni Prime Minister Ahmed bin Dagher announced yesterday that a dispute over the island of Socotra sparked after the deployment of UAE troops has been resolved. "The crisis on the island is over," Bin Dagher wrote on Facebook, adding that the crisis had "almost divided" the Saudi-led Arab coalition fighting the Houthi rebels. The announcement came a day after Saudi troops were deployed to the strategic island following tensions between Yemen's internationally recognized government and the UAE, a key member of the coalition. Dagher's comments come after an agreement was signed on Sunday evening with the UAE and Saudi Arabia, according to the Yemeni state news agency Saba. Under the deal the two countries' troops will withdraw from Socotra. — AFP

No new medical fees for expats; conflicting reports on levying VAT

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The health ministry has instructed its medical centers and hospitals that it has not raised medical fees for expatriates recently, after the increase which was implemented in October last year. The ministry insisted in a circular to senior officials that only doctors have the absolute right of prescribing medicines and their quantities to expatriate patients and that no changes had been made to these rules. The circular also insisted that the ministry had not increased the prices of drugs for expa-

triate or the charges at hospitals and medical centers.

The health ministry last October introduced major fee hikes for medical services offered to expatriates, but kept the services free for nationals. The increases included big hikes in several key medical services that include radiology, visits to hospitals and medical centers and admissions in public hospitals. All expatriates in the country are also required to pay a medical insurance fee when they stamp their residence permits or renew them.

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Violent storms in India kill 86

NEW DELHI: Indian authorities said yesterday at least 86 people have been killed and over 100 injured in a fresh wave of violent sandstorms and thunderstorms that battered vast swathes of the country. Winds of over 100 km per hour

struck parts of north, east and southern India late Sunday, uprooting trees, electricity pylons and damaging houses, officials from federal and state disaster management agencies said.

The fatalities came just 10 days after a sandstorm left more than 134 dead - most of them in Agra, the city of the Taj Mahal. Hail, wind and thunderstorms brought down walls, trees and power

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AJMER: Commuters drive along a road during a heavy dust storm in this city in the Indian state of Rajasthan yesterday. — AFP



KUWAIT: The GCC Secretary General and finance ministers pose for a group photo ahead of their meeting yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Comeback cleric Sadr set to win Iraq elections

BAGHDAD: Nationalist cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, a long-time adversary of the United States, led in Iraq's parliamentary election with more than half the votes counted yesterday, the electoral commission said, in a surprise turn of fortune for the Shiite leader. In the first election since Islamic State was defeated in the country, Shiite militia chief Hadi Al-Ameri's bloc, which is backed by Iran, was in second place, while Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi, once seen as the frontrunner, trailed in third position.

The preliminary results were based on a count of more than 95 percent of the votes cast in 10 of Iraq's 18 provinces. Unlike Abadi, a rare ally of both the United States and Iran, Sadr is an opponent of both of the countries which have wielded influence in Iraq since a US-led invasion toppled Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003 and ushered the Shiite majority to power. Sadr has led two uprisings against US forces in Iraq and is one of

the few Shiite leaders to distance himself from Iran.

Despite the election setback, Abadi might still be granted a second term in office by parliament and yesterday he called on all political blocs to respect the results, suggesting he was willing to work with Sadr to form a government. "We are ready to work and cooperate in forming the strongest government for Iraq, free of corruption," Abadi said in a live televised address. Corruption has been the top of Sadr's agenda for several years. Projecting himself as a Iraqi nationalist, Sadr has a zealous following among the young, poor and dispossessed, but he had been sidelined by influential Iranian-backed figures.

He cannot become prime minister as he did not run in the election, though his apparent victory puts him in a position to pick someone for the job. But even then his bloc might not necessarily form the next government

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Local

Crown Prince, Premier meet ministers taking part in GCC economic meeting

Amir offers condolences to Indonesian president



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ministers of finance and economy. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Sief Palace First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, as well as Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rashidi.

His Highness also received Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf accompanied by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ministers of finance and economy, who are taking part in the 107th meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee, held in Kuwait. His Highness also received newly-appointed Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait Sultan Bin Saad Bin Khaled Al Saud, as well as Chief of the National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the visiting GCC ministers of finance and economy, as well as the newly-appointed Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Kuwait. Furthermore, he met with the Chief Executive Officer of Leonardo-Finmeccanica Company Alessandro Profumo, who is in an official visit to the country.

Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser also received Profumo, and he affirmed the strong bilateral ties between the two friendly countries, and mutual willingness to strengthen and reinforce them, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense said in a press statement. In addition, Kuwait's Army Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder received Profumo, and the two sides discussed important and common matters, especially promoting and further developing bilateral relations, said the Defense Ministry in a statement. The meeting was attended by several high-ranking Kuwaiti army officers, along with the Italian Military Attache.

In other news, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent yesterday a cable of condolences to the President of Indonesia Joko Widodo. His Highness the Amir expressed sincere condolences and sorrow to the Indonesian President and people over victims of the terrorist blasts that targeted three churches in the city of Surabaya, and led to killing and wounding scores of people. His Highness affirmed Kuwait's strong condemnation and denouncement of such terrorist acts that target innocent lives and contradict all humanitarian



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Kuwaiti Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf, accompanied by GCC ministers of finance.

doctrines and values. He also affirmed Kuwait's support to all measures taken by the Indonesian authorities to face terrorist acts and preserve the country's security and stability.

His Highness the Amir prayed mercy for the victims

and wished a speedy recovery for the wounded. He also prayed for patience and solace for the victims' families. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister also sent similar cables to the Indonesian president. —KUNA



Crown Prince meets new Saudi envoy



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the newly-appointed Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Sultan Bin Saad Bin Khaled Al Saud.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with newly-appointed Saudi Ambassador to the country Sultan Bin Saad Bin Khaled Al Saud.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Chief Executive Officer of Leonardo-Finmeccanica Company Alessandro Profumo.

Kuwait appreciates Arab League's Amir honoring

CAIRO: Kuwait has expressed appreciation of the Arab League's honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. "We are deeply grateful to the Arab League for sponsoring and hosting the honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah," Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the Arab League Ambassador and Representative of His Highness the Amir, Ahmad Al-Bakr, said in his speech at the Arab function to honor His Highness the Amir.

The Arab honoring to His Highness was held Sunday in Cairo under the rubric, 'Honoring of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ... Man of Peace ... Humanitarian Leader,' in the presence of Arab, Kuwaiti, regional and international figures.

The event featured a documentary and a seminar on the experience of Kuwait and His Highness the Amir in supporting world peace. This event "aims to shed light on the march of an Arab leader works relentlessly and sincerely to raise the standing of his country and defend Arab and Muslim interests and causes," Ambassador Bakr said.

He noted that His Highness the Amir "has engaged with the world in a wise and balanced policy that focused on spreading values of dialogue, peace, moderation and humanitarian action until he was deservedly proclaimed a 'Man of Peace' and a 'Humanitarian leader.'" He described Kuwait's diplomacy as moderate and balanced throughout history. "This approach had been instilled by His Highness the Amir since he was the foreign minister of Kuwait and the dean of diplomacy in the world," he said. He went on to say that His Highness the Amir has based the foreign policy of Kuwait on solid foundations, mainly balanced relations with all parties which paved the way for Kuwait to have an influential role on the world stage, thanks to the wisdom of His Highness and world's respect of him.

Bakr stressed Kuwait's keenness on cementing joint Arab action. Kuwait under His Highness the Amir deeply believed that strengthening Arab unity is the best guarantor of the stability of the Arab region in a turbulent world, he said.

"This belief was translated into an unlimited political and financial support to the Arab League and effective contribution to empowering it to have its aspired standing in the world stage," he argued. He boasted that Kuwait stands in support of its Arab brethren and defending their fair Arab in all international and regional forums.

Kuwait through its non-permanent membership in the Security Council is doing all in power to defend Arab issues, mainly the Palestinian cause as the unrest in Syria, Libya, Yemen and other areas of conflicts and tension, he pointed out. He added that Kuwait had also been champion of dialogue to iron out Arab differences. Kuwait believes that a transparent and constructive dialogue is the best way to resolve these differences and avoid any undesired escalations, he said. Ambassador Bakr noted that Kuwait sought to spread the culture of dialogue and peace and creating relations based on mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and common interests.

"Kuwait had made several attempts to persuade some Arab neighbors to adopt these principles in their relations with other Arab countries," he said. He suggested that humanitarian action under the leadership of His Highness the Amir had become a main character of Kuwait's foreign policy. "Kuwait has been trying to guarantee a decent life for those affected by crises," he said, adding that Kuwait had dealt with many of the Arab crises through this particular angle.

"Through this approach, Kuwait has been able to build an international reputation which resulted in the UN proclamation of His Highness the Amir as Humanitarian Leader and the State of Kuwait as a Humanitarian Center," he explained. The ambassador recalled Kuwait's continuing support to Arab economies and development aspirations "through its development and economic arms, as well as the adoption by His Highness the Amir of the idea of holding a specialized Arab summit to boost economic, developmental and social cooperation among Arab countries." The Arab Summit in Kuwait in 2009 was the first to focus on social and economic development issues away from political ones, he argued. —KUNA



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Chief Executive Officer of Leonardo-Finmeccanica Company Alessandro Profumo.



Army Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khuder meets with Chief Executive Officer of Leonardo-Finmeccanica Company Alessandro Profumo.

Local

Amir's envoy hands letters to Qatari Emir, Omani Sultan, UAE President

Latest regional and international developments discussed



DOHA: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hands a letter from His Highness the Amir to Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani. — KUNA photos



MUSCAT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hands a letter from His Highness the Amir to Sultan Qaboos Bin Saeed, received by Deputy Prime Minister for Relations and International Cooperation Affairs Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tariq Al Said.



ABU DHABI: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks with UAE Vice President and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum after he handed him a letter from His Highness the Amir to UAE President Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

KUWAIT: Envoy of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah handed a letter from His Highness to Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani. The letter concerned strong bilater-

al relations and latest regional and international developments.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled headed afterwards to Oman where he handed a similar letter from His Highness to Sultan Qaboos Bin Saeed, received by Deputy Prime Minister for Relations and

International Cooperation Affairs Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tariq Al Said.

After that, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled headed to the UAE where he handed another letter from His Highness the Amir to President Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, received by UAE Vice President and Prime

Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled had headed to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain on Sunday where he handed similar letters from His Highness the Amir to King Salman bin Abdulaziz and King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, respectively. — KUNA

PACI, MoI sign online licenses agreement



KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) signed an agreement to enable using the e-signature for verification in issuing driver's licenses online for citizens and expatriates. The signing of the agreement, which took place during a press conference yesterday, comes as part of MoI's steps to issue driver's licenses online, similar to civil IDs, in the near future. — KUNA

Govt appoints six Municipal Council members

KUWAIT: The government of Kuwait appointed yesterday six members in the Municipal Council following the election of 10 members last Saturday. The Cabinet, in its weekly session chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, approved appointment of Osama Al-Otaibi, Humoud Al-Enezi, Abdulsalam Al-Randi, Abdulwahhab Burusly, Mishal Al-Hamdan and Maha Al-Baghlhi. The Cabinet approved the appointment decree and referred it to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Al-Saleh said in a statement.

The Cabinet commended judges, and officials in ministries of interior, education, information and health as well as Kuwait Fire Services Directorate and Kuwait Municipality for their efforts throughout the

election, said Al-Saleh. Municipal elections were held two days ago and 10 members were elected, representing 10 constituencies.

Hassan Kamal won 2,099 votes out of 17,997 eligible voters in the first constituency. Abdullah Al-Mehri won 3,550 votes out of 24,537 eligible voters in the second constituency. Abdulaziz Al-Mejel won 1,985 votes out of 30,651 eligible voters in the third constituency. Hamad Al-Medlej got 4,108 votes out of 75,560 eligible voters in the fourth constituency. Abdullah Al-Roumi won 5,336 votes out of 36,722 eligible voters in the fifth constituency. Fheid Al-Rashidi won 7,329 votes out of 50,247 eligible voters in the sixth constituency. Mohammad Al-Mutairi won 8,480 votes out of 58,479 eligible voters in the seventh constituency. Ahmad Al-Enezi won 8,109 votes out of 77,614 eligible voters in the eighth constituency. Ali Al-Azmi won 8,702 votes out of 70,277 eligible voters in the ninth constituency. Hamdi Al-Azmi got 10,755 votes out of 78,552 eligible voters in the 10th constituency. A total of 73 candidates, including one female, stood for the elections that ran smoothly and orderly at 102 polling stations countrywide. — KUNA

US Embassy advises travel agencies for better visa experience

KUWAIT: The US Embassy's Consular Section and the Foreign Commercial Service held a seminar for travel agents on May 9, 2018, at the Radisson Blu Hotel entitled, 'Helping Your Clients Apply for a US Visa The Right Way.' The objective of the workshop was to raise awareness for travel agency staff who work directly with clients on how to apply for US visas. The highlights of the presentation were practical tips on how to fill out the US visa application form properly, to avoid common mistakes that can delay applications. Embassy tips include:

- Forms must be completed correctly and in full, including all travel to other countries in the past five years and all prior US travel.
- Forms must list the visa applicant's personal phone number, e-mail address, and current home address, not the contact information of the travel agency.
- Agencies must indicate that a third party helped the applicant to complete the

form and list the individual's name and organization.

The Deputy Consular Chief, Robin Busse, noted: "Many Kuwaitis and expatriates use travel agencies to schedule their visa appointment as part of their decision to visit the United States. Given the prominent role of travel agencies in the visa application process, the Consular Section and Foreign Commercial Service consider travel agents important multipliers in providing accurate information on US visas."

The event included a presentation by the Foreign Commercial Service on the services it offers to promote the United States as a tourist destination. Some fifty travel agents in attendance participated in a lively question-and-answer session after the presentation. US Embassy staff dispelled myths about the visa process and advised attendees on a range of practical issues to improve the visa application experience for travelers.

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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Lanterns in many shapes and colors are displayed at a market in Kuwait in preparation for the holy month of Ramadan. — KUNA photo

Kuwait affirms commitment to minorities' protection worldwide

Kuwait participates in conference on victims of violence in the Middle East

BRUSSELS: Kuwait underlined yesterday its full belief in the importance of joint international efforts in protecting minorities and ensuring their security around the globe. Kuwait's hosting of the International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq (KICRI) last February, in addition to an international donors conference for the Rohingya in October 2017, is a reflection of its various efforts and important contributions towards ensuring protection for minorities around the world, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Belgium, EU, and NATO Jassem Al-Budaiwi said. The Kuwaiti diplomat made his remarks on the sidelines of the third International Conference on the Victims of Ethnic and Religious Violence in the Middle East, which was held in Brussels yesterday.

The Belgian Conference is an extension of the Paris Conference, held in September 2015, and the Madrid Conference in 2017, he noted, adding both conferences were significant and came out with needed recommendations to help those minorities. "Ethnic and religious diversity represent the true identity of the Middle East region, and preserving it is essential for ensuring a future where peace, stability, and freedom prevail in the region," he said.

During the post-conflict reconstruction phase, special protection should be provided to religious and ethnic minorities and necessary measures should be taken to ensure a safe and lasting return that preserves the dignity of the displaced, said Budaiwi. The international community's efforts must be combined to ensure the protection of minorities and bring those who commit crimes against them to international justice, he said.

Yesterday's conference was aimed to address the steps

taken and the urgent steps to be taken within the framework of the Paris Executive Plan, adopted in this regard on September 8, 2015, added Budaiwi. The one-day conference was co-chaired by Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders and his Lebanese counterpart Gebran Bassil.

In his opening address, Reynders said the conference was aimed at safeguarding the cultural, religious, and ethnic heritage in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Syria, adding priority must be given to stabilization efforts. He underlined the importance of working towards reconciliation and harmonious coexistence between different communities in order to rebuild a resilient society based on solid foundations. It is also important to fight impunity and bring to justice those responsible of the atrocities that have been perpetrated against minorities around the world, Reynders said. The Belgian minister also said work is currently in progress to bring the perpetrators of the atrocities to justice in Iraq or in the International Criminal Court at The Hague.

Meanwhile, Lebanese Foreign Minister Bassil stressed the importance of restoring stability in the region in order for refugees and displaced people to be able to return to their homes. Bassil urged the international community to exert further efforts toward dealing with extremism and fanaticism in the Middle East region, noting his country hosts a large number of Syrian refugees that make up now nearly half of Lebanon's population.

Jan Kubis, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Iraq, meanwhile praised Kuwait for its reconciliation efforts in the region. "I would like to join our



BRUSSELS: Kuwait participates in third International Conference on the Victims of Ethnic and Religious Violence in the Middle East in Brussels, Belgium. — KUNA

keynote speakers to express our admiration and gratitude to the State of Kuwait for facilitating a very important reconstruction and rehabilitation conference and for the countries of the region that pledged massive support," said the UN official in his speech. He said the UN has created special

investigating team to deal with the horrendous crimes committed by the so-called Islamic State (IS) in Iraq. A large number of ministers, heads of international organizations, and representatives of a number of ethnic and religious communities took part in the conference. — KUNA

Zain Platinum Partner of NEST's educational campaign

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its Platinum Partnership of Nurture and Educate Students Today (NEST)'s educational campaign, entitled #Rock_Paper_Pen held at the Avenues mall from 10 - 24 May in partnership with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) and Direct Aid. The campaign's launch event witnessed the attendance of Zain Kuwait Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan.

Zain's Platinum Partnership to this campaign came as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Strategy that closely focuses on supporting humanitarian and educational initiatives and aims at continually developing the education sector and further contributing to resolve the challenges it faces locally and globally. Zain considers supporting education a top priority, as it plays a crucial role in building the future.

NEST's #Rock_Paper_Pen campaign mainly aims at raising donations for the ben-

efit of building three new schools set to serve 820 students in the Republic of Chad. The campaign's idea centers around using advanced technology solutions to attract and aware potential donors in the campaign's booth at the Avenues mall.

The booth was designed to mimic the harsh living environment that faces Chad's children, where potential donors can wear Virtual Reality (VR) headsets and see up-close the hardships children face to get education, which adds a human value and encourages visitors to donate and contribute to building a better future for those who are in need of help.

Zain is proud of its long list of programs and contributions that serve noble causes through strategically partnering with entities that adopt humanitarian work, including Nurture and Educate Students Today (NEST) and the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), as well as other non-profit organizations, governmental institutions, and global entities. One of Zain's latest humani-

tarian contributions was its Strategic Sponsorship of "One Roof" campaign to raise awareness on domestic workers and employers rights in partnership with the Human Line Organization and the Social Work Society in partnership with the Ministry of Interior. The company's support came as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Strategy, through which it aims at supporting such humanitarian initiatives that achieve equality between all members of the society. Zain will always stay committed to building a better future for everyone.

Nurture and Educate Students Today (NEST) is a non-profit group dedicated to helping underprivileged students internationally and locally. It aims to provide proper educative resources for those who cannot provide for themselves. Founded in 2013, NEST is a rapidly growing organization with many goals and impassioned volunteers. It is a diverse group of students, teachers, doctors, and other



KUWAIT: Zain Kuwait Chief Executive Officer Eaman Al-Roudhan is seen with NEST's officials and the campaign's partners.

active members of society based in Kuwait all unified by the singular desire to bring proper education and resources to schools

all over the world. NEST proudly works under the patronage of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society.

Local

Domestic helpers' department halts procedures in preparation for transfer

Health Ministry, Kuwait Medical Association to address doctors' concerns

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior's (MoI) domestic helpers' department stopped processing all domestic labor-related procedures as well as receiving related complaints and grievances, in implementation of the Cabinet's decision number 614/2018 pertaining with transferring its liabilities to the Public Authority for Manpower. Such measures will be the first steps towards completing the transfer process, although no official statements have been made so far, said informed sources, noting that Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Development Hind Al-Sabeeh had mentioned that the transfer process would need some time.

Doctors' concerns

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah yesterday received Kuwait Medical Association's (KMA) board of directors to discuss doctors' concerns and problems and possible solutions. KMA Chairman Dr Ahmed Thuwaini Al-Enezi stressed that KMA is ready

to cooperate with the Ministry of Health (MofH) with regards to doctors' benefit, provide a healthy working environment in the medical sector as well as develop medical services provided to patients. "KMA will not be lenient in achieving doctors' demands, especially after detecting general despair and frustration amongst them," he underlined. Enezi said KMA discussed giving new qualified doctors opportunities to head various departments in hospitals.

KMA Secretary General Dr Salem Al-Kandari said the discussion included problems related to the Afia project and that the company sometimes rejects cases referred by doctors to undergo certain diagnostic radiology tests without mentioning the causes. KMA Treasurer Dr Mohammed Al-Obaidan said doctors' allowances were also discussed with the minister.

In other news, Chairman of the Kuwait Nursing Association (KNA) Bandar Nashmi Al-Enezi said that in collaboration with relevant bodies, KNA has set a timetable to put an end to nursing-related problems, namely financial matters. He added that KNA will continue working on getting nurses' rights despite some attempts to stop such efforts using 'fake excuses.' Speaking on the sidelines of celebrating the International Nursing Day at the Islamic Medical Center, during which 95 nurses were honored, Enezi stressed that nursing requires many sacrifices that nurses are willing to give.

Oil advisors receive KD 820,000 annually

KD 820,000 annual cost

Well-informed sources said the total number of expatriate legal and financial advisors working for Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiary

companies is 20, and that each of them is paid an average of KD 4,000 monthly, plus other incentives such as free annual tickets for the employee and their family members, life insurance, tuition allowances for up to four children, free vehicle and free fuel cards.

The sources added that these 20 employees annually cost KD 820,000, elaborating that six of them work for KPC for a total of KD 22,000 a month, five work for Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and receive KD 16,200, four work for Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) and receive KD 10,500, one works for Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) and receives KD 5,200, and four work for Kuwait Petroleum International Company (KPI) and receives a total of KD 14,900 per month.

Control center

The cost of connecting the Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) control centers to the national control center might reach KD 368,000, said informed sources, noting that MEW had contacted the finance ministry requesting its approval and that of other monitoring bodies to offer the project for bidding.

KFSD officials inspect projects' construction sites



By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: As part of preventive measures to prevent fires in buildings currently under construction during the summer, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KSF) Director Lt Gen Khaled Al-Mekrad yesterday inspected two major projects along with his deputy for prevention affairs Maj Gen Khaled Abdullah Fahd, KSF public relations and media manager Col Khalil Al-Amir, Capital prevention department manager Solafa Al-Yaseen and Mubarak Al-Kabeer acting prevention department manager Lt Col Abdul Aziz Al-Bannai.

Speaking to reporters during the tour, Mekrad stressed that KSF measures and plans to prevent possible fires at buildings under-construction includes three main elements and that the plan was launched in September. Mekrad stressed that the first element of the plan involves cooperation with contracting companies and major consultancy houses operating at various project sites to make sure KSF safety and security measures are followed.

The second element involves cooperation with various state bodies like Kuwait Municipality, the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and other relevant bodies to work on preventing any violation as one team. Mekrad said the third and most important element involves 24/7 inspection tours at all construction sites to make sure no violations are committed. Finally, Mekrad urged all contracting companies to accordingly cooperate with KSF to avoid suspending any project and the losses and delays this might lead to.



Bootleggers held with 171 alcohol cartons

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The interior ministry's relations and security media department announced that drugs control detectives arrested three Asians with 171 cartons of various brands of alcohol. Case details indicate that DCGD's enforcement department was tipped off about an expat trafficking in alcohol. An undercover agent was assigned to purchase 171 cartons from the suspect, who was arrested red-handed along with two other accomplices. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Jahra murder suspect denies charges

KUWAIT: A bedoon man accused of killing a middle-aged Kuwaiti national in Jahra and attempting to kill his son denied any connection with the murder and told the public prosecution he did not kill his friend's father. He said he was afraid of detectives during questioning following his arrest on Saturday, and told them that he committed the murder. The suspect confessed to attempting to kill the son due to previous disputes, Al-Anbaa daily reported. A security source said the denial was expected, adding that efforts are ongoing to find the knife used in the father's killing, which the suspect said he threw in the sea off Anjafa beach. Records show the suspect had been in jail and was released in April, and was charged with beating his parents. He admitted to using drugs, including shabu (methamphetamine).

Legalese

Ramadan

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed



Ramadan Mubarak everyone! The Muslim holy month of fasting is coming upon us this week. Ramadan is supposed to be a time of discipline, family bonds and forgiveness. It is also a time for us to reflect personally and also hopefully to reflect as a society together on how we can connect with each other in a more positive environment. I just wanted to wish you all a happy Ramadan, and here are a couple of common questions by my readers:

Working hours in Ramadan

Question: Is it true that working hours are reduced in Ramadan, and if so by how many hours? Also, are the reduced hours and employment benefits only for Muslims under Kuwaiti law?

Fajer: Yes, the hours are reduced to six hours according to the Kuwait labor law article 64, which states: "It is forbidden to allow workers to work for more than 48 hours per week or eight hours a day, except in such events as are specified in this law. Working hours during the month of Ramadan shall be equal to 36 hours per week" for employees working six days a week, ie six hours per day. This is for both Muslim and non-Muslim workers.

Laws to follow in Ramadan

Question: I am confused on whether I can eat in public or not, and I am not sure what the punishment is. Is it only a fine or do I go to jail until Eid? Also, can I get deported?

Fajer: Law no 44 of 1968 dictates punishments under the law for eating or drinking in public in Ramadan. The law states the following punishment:

Punishment up to KD100 and/or jail for up to one month

- i) for anyone that eats/drinks in public in during daytime in Ramadan
- ii) for anyone that assists anyone to eat/drink in daytime during Ramadan

The punishment is up to one month in jail. So theoretically speaking, someone may be punished on the first day of Ramadan until Eid, but I would think that from a realistic point of view, for first-time offenders, only a fine will be imposed.

As to answer your question on whether or not you can get deported for eating or drinking in public, under Kuwaiti law, you can get deported for committing any criminal offense - eating in public during daytime in Ramadan is a criminal offense.

As for commercial businesses that are caught serving food/beverages to the public during daytime in Ramadan, they will be punished by having their business sites shut down for two months.

If you have a concern, please email us at info@tl-legal.com

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(Former Employee)

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May God Almighty rest his soul in peace



Pakistan's Ex-PM ignites firestorm

'The clock is ticking', EU tells Brexit UK



SURABAYA: Photo shows police at the site of a blast outside the Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya (Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church) in Surabaya. —AFP

Two families stage suicide bombings

Spate of bombings rock Indonesia

SURABAYA: A family of five, including a child, carried out the suicide bombing of a police headquarters in Indonesia's second city Surabaya yesterday, police said, a day after a deadly wave of attacks on churches staged by another family. The spate of bombings has rocked Indonesia, with the Islamic State group claiming the church attacks and raising fears about its influence in Southeast Asia as its dreams of a Middle Eastern caliphate fade.

Indonesia, which is set to host the Asian Games in just three months, has long struggled with Islamist militancy, including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed over 200 people—mostly foreign tourists—in the country's worst-ever terror attack. Security forces have arrested hundreds of militants during a sustained crackdown that smashed some networks, and most recent attacks have been low-level and targeted domestic security forces. But that changed Sunday as a family of six—including girls aged nine and 12—staged suicide bombings of three churches during morning services in Surabaya, killing 18 including the bombers.

Yesterday members of another family blew themselves up at a police station in the city, wounding 10. "There were five people on two motorbikes. One of them was a little kid," national police chief Tito Karnavian said. "This is one family." An eight-year-old girl from the family survived the

attack and was taken to hospital, while her mother, father and two brothers died in the blast, he said. The children were likely led to their deaths without a full awareness of their fate, said Ade Banani, of the University of Indonesia's research centre of police science and terrorism studies. If a family believed in traditional roles, the father "has the power, so everyone has to obey", Banani said.

"The children probably don't know what's going on or don't understand." The father of the church suicide bombers was a local leader in extremist network Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) which supports IS, and the second family was also linked to JAD. "It ordered and gave instructions for its cells to make a move," Karnavian said of the Islamic State's role in the church attacks. He added that the bombings may have also been motivated by the arrest of JAD leaders, including jailed radical Aman Abdurrahman, and were linked to a deadly prison riot staged by Islamist prisoners at a high-security jail near Jakarta last week.

Abdurrahman has been connected to several deadly incidents, including a 2016 gun and suicide attack in the capital Jakarta that left four attackers and four civilians dead. Despite their apparent allegiance to IS, the church-bombing family were not returnees from Syria, police

said yesterday, correcting their earlier statements. However, hundreds of Indonesians have flocked in recent years to fight alongside IS there. Its ambitions have been reined in after losing most of the land it once occupied in Iraq and Syria, and there are concerns that jihadists will now turn their focus on establishing a base in Southeast Asia.

'Increasingly proficient'

On Sunday evening, just hours after the church bombings, a further three people in another family were killed and two wounded when another bomb exploded at an apartment complex about 30 kilometers from Surabaya. That explosion appeared to have been an accidental detonation that killed a mother and her 17-year-old child who

was not identified. The woman's husband—a confidante of the husband behind the church bombings, Dita Oepriyanto—was badly injured in the explosion. Police said they arrived after the explosion and shot dead the injured man, Anton Febrianto, as he held a bomb detonator in his hand.

"When we searched the flat we found pipe bombs, similar to pipe bombs we found near the churches," said Karnavian. Police said they also shot dead four suspects, including the second-ranking member of the JAD cell in Surabaya, in raids on houses and offices yesterday while nine others were arrested. Indonesian police have foiled numerous terror plots, but the coordinated nature of Sunday's church bombings and the subsequent blasts point to more sophisticated planning than in the past, analysts said.

"There is definitely a growing technical proficiency," said Zachary Abuza, Southeast Asian security expert at the National War College in Washington. "To pull off three near-simultaneous bombings is the hallmark of a group that is thinking." Abuza questioned the police suggestion that the attacks were ordered by the IS leadership abroad, but said it would likely boost its presence in Southeast Asia as it fades elsewhere. "(They're) going to continue to benefit from operating transnationally in Southeast Asia," he said. —AFP



IS eyes Indonesia as its dreams of a Middle Eastern caliphate fade

Jamaah Ansharut Daulah: Network behind bombings

JAKARTA: A wave of deadly suicide bombings that have rocked Indonesia's second biggest city Surabaya are linked to local extremist network Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group (IS). Here are some questions and answers about JAD:

What is JAD?

Formed in 2015, JAD gained notoriety in January 2016 for a gun and suicide attack in the capital Jakarta that left four attackers and four civilians dead. It is made up of almost two dozen Indonesian extremist groups that have pledged allegiance to IS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, according to the US State Department, which last year designated it as an extremist network. The group's spiritual leader is Aman Abdurrahman, a jailed Indonesian radical who authorized the Jakarta attack and is considered the de facto leader of all IS supporters in Indonesia.

Attacks they carried out

Apart from the 2016 Jakarta attack—the first claimed by IS in Southeast Asia—JAD carried out suicide attacks the following year which killed three policemen and injured a dozen others at a busy bus station in Jakarta. IS said it was also responsible for ordering that attack. JAD has been linked to a series of other plots in Indonesia, including a firebomb attack on a church that killed a toddler and a plan to launch a Christmas-time suicide bombing. This was foiled when the militants planning the attack were killed.

How was JAD involved?

Indonesia is reeling from a series of deadly blasts that have rocked the city of Surabaya and the surrounding region in the past two days, killing 25 people including bombers and injuring scores more. The explosions which



SURABAYA: Police take a man (2nd right) in for questioning as they patrol around the Surabaya police headquarters following a suicide attack in Surabaya yesterday. —AFP

targeted churches, a police headquarters and a low-cost apartment complex were the deadliest in years. The six church bombers—a mother and father, their two daughters, aged nine and 12, and two teenage sons—have been linked by police to JAD. In addition to themselves, 12 people died. The father of the church suicide bombers was a local leader in the network, police have said. Another family of five including a child, which carried out the suicide bombing of a police headquarters yesterday, were also part of the group. Four of the bombers died. Police say a third family, three of whom were killed in the apartment explosion outside the city, were also JAD members. That explosion may have been a premature detonation of a bomb.

What is the connection to IS?

IS has claimed responsibility for several recent attacks in Indonesia, most of which have been carried out by JAD. Although considered Indonesia's largest pro-IS coalition, JAD's structure and links to the international terror network are murky. The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict has said JAD is "in fact a generic term used for

any supporter of ISIS" and functions more as an umbrella organization than a coherent group. Abdurrahman, however, has recruited militants to join IS, is thought to have been in communication with leaders of the jihadist group, and is the main translator for IS propaganda in Indonesia, according to analysts and authorities.

Groups behind previous attacks

For years, Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) was synonymous with terrorism in Indonesia. The group was responsible for the country's worst-ever attack, the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people. In subsequent years the group carried out a string of deadly attacks, including a 2003 car bombing at the JW Marriott hotel in Jakarta that killed a dozen and a suicide car bomb the following year outside the Australian embassy that killed 10. Attacks in 2005 at tourist spots in Bali killed 20. A splinter group, led by Malaysian Noordin Top, was responsible for blasts in 2009 at the Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott hotels in Jakarta, which killed nine and injured more than 40. —AFP

Indonesia 'terror families' behind attacks, bombings

SURABAYA: Their middle-class life, with talk of holidays and a love of pets, held no clues to the dark plan Dita Oepriyanto and his wife put in motion as they led their four children to their deaths. Oepriyanto, 48, spouse Puji Kuswati and the kids - including two girls aged nine and 12 - all died on Sunday in coordinated strikes on churches in the country's second-biggest city Surabaya. To neighbors, the family was devoutly religious with an upstanding father who sold herbal medicine.

"He was once the head of the neighborhood unit. I met him almost everyday at a mosque near his house," Taufik Gani, 60, told newspaper Koran Tempo. Online photos bearing 43-year-old Kuswati's name show what appears to be the family smiling back at the camera, the two youngest girls in matching red hijab head scarves and holding flowers.

Kuswati had over 250 friends on a Facebook account packed with pictures of nature, river rafting and the family cats. She also said she was a fan of a local heavy metal band. Her last Facebook post was made in 2014. Kuswati is now Indonesia's first known female suicide bomber. Two other families connected to the family and a local extremist network have been implicated in another

series of explosions, that left most of them dead. Taken together they reveal a shocking new terror modus operandi in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country: suicide bombing parents who take their own children's lives in an attack.

Tactical benefits

That is a shift from when radical group Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) - behind attacks including the 2002 Bali bombing that killed over 200 - was synonymous with terrorism in Indonesia. "The involvement of women is new, especially with children," said Nava Nuraniyah, an analyst at the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict. "During the JI (Jamaah Islamiyah) era it was forbidden to use women" in attacks. IS by contrast has welcomed female fighters into its fold, and the attraction of using women, including young girls, in attacks is obvious, Nuraniyah added. "Women are always seen as peaceful, so security guards are also more relaxed towards women as well," she said.

There are tactical benefits

On Sunday morning, Kuswati and her two daughters, who were wearing niqab face veils and had bombs strapped to their waists, walked onto the grounds of the Kristen Indonesia Diponegoro Church, where their explosives were detonated. They had been dropped off by Oepriyanto who then drove a bomb-laden car into the Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church. Indonesian authorities have named Oepriyanto as the local cell leader of extremist network Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), which has pledged allegiance to IS. —AFP

International

Jews and Muslims celebrate an unusual coexistence in Djerba

Jewish population in Tunisia dwindled due to fear, poverty

DJERBA: Cyrine Ben Said, a Tunisian Muslim, carried candles and wrote her hopes for the future on an egg in religious ceremony at a synagogue on the southern island of Djerba. She wanted to share the rituals with her Jewish friends because, for her, Tunisia is a country of tolerance, coexistence and freedom of belief. "I'm here to share rituals with my Jewish friends in new Tunisia of tolerance, coexistence and freedom of belief ... Every one has his religion, but we have many common points: the flag, love and peace," Ben Said said.

Tunisia is home to one of North Africa's largest Jewish communities. Jews have lived in Tunisia since Roman times, and the community once numbered 100,000. But fear, poverty and discrimination prompted several waves of emigration after the creation of Israel in 1948. Many left after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, most going to France or Israel. They now number about 2,000, with more than 1,200 in Djerba. Ben Said is one of dozens of Muslims who participated in the Jewish religious ceremonies in the oldest synagogue in Africa, Ghriba, during an annual celebration held this month. The eggs, covered in people's ambitions for love and prosperity, are stored in a cellar.

The event is a powerful sign of mutual tolerance in Djerba, where the two communities have long coexisted. "The Jews and the Muslims of Djerba are all Tunisian citizens, so there is no difference between us," said Perez



Muslims, Jews join in annual celebration in the synagogue

Trabelsi, a Jewish community leader. He added that despite their small number Jewish people have a strong presence in economic life, including tourism, restaurants and the jewelry trade.

'No difference'

Each year, Muslim religious leaders and politicians from the Mufti to the head of the government take the chance to go to Ghriba to promote the message of interreligious tolerance. "This is a peaceful island that embraces its Jews and Muslims in harmony, giving a message to the world that we must abandon hatred and hostility," said Tunisian Imam Hassen Chalghoumi, as he shook hands with one of the rabbis. Ghriba synagogue was hit by an al Qaeda truck bombing in 2002 that killed 21 people, most of them German visitors.

At the entrance to the synagogue, a young Muslim, Makrem Gaagaa, welcomes visitors with a broad smile and presents headscarves to those who need one. "It's my job and my livelihood," he said. "My relationship with everyone who visits this place is good, they have their religion and I have my religion," added the guard, who has worked in the synagogue since seven years.

Most Jews in Djerba live in Hara Kbira neighborhood, their homes next to Muslim homes, where they exchange visits and gifts at religious events and weddings. "Here, there is no difference between Jews and a Muslims," says

Jewish resident Georgina, who gave only her first name. "We are good neighbors, some of them we visit all the time. They offer us food, and we give them food, too." Despite the peaceful atmosphere, security is still tight. This year, during protests against government austerity measures in January, assailants threw petrol bombs at a small synagogue in Djerba, causing shock but no casualties. In Djerba's old medina, Jewish tailor Mgriss Chabeh has worked for four decades sewing "jebba", a traditional Muslim dress.

"All my customers are Muslims and they love my work," 70-year-old Chabeh said from behind his sewing machine, in between jokes with a Muslim gold trader friend. The old medina in Djerba is full of jewelry shops, most of which are run by Jews who have controlled the trade in Djerba for decades. Nearby, a popular Jewish restaurant has a sign written in Arabic and Hebrew. "In the old city there are many Jews," said Jewish chef Gabriel Yahich. "We cook meals for them that are compatible with the Jewish religion, but we also offer traditional meals accepted by the Muslims." "For me the important thing is that trade is good, the rest is details." — Reuters

US not the first nor the last embassy to open in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM: The United States opened its embassy in Jerusalem yesterday in a most high-profile diplomatic inauguration in the holy city, but not the first nor the last. Several countries, mainly African and Latin American, have previously had their ambassadors based in Jerusalem and some are expected to return. After the 1973 Yom Kippur war, Ivory Coast, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) and Kenya severed relations with Israel in protest and closed the doors of their embassies in Jerusalem.

They later renewed relations but moved their missions to Tel Aviv. In 1980 Israel enacted a law declaring Jerusalem, including the mainly Palestinian eastern zone, its "complete and united" capital. The United Nations Security Council branded the move illegal and adopted a resolution calling on "those states that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions".

The Netherlands, Haiti and several Latin American countries complied. Costa Rica and El Salvador returned to Jerusalem in 1984, but left again in 2006. In the wake of Trump's announcement on December 6, some at least are heading back-and-Israel is hoping for more. Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales has said his country's embassy will move to Jerusalem on May 16, and Paraguay's foreign ministry said on Wednesday it would follow suit. The Israeli foreign ministry said in a statement that Paraguayan President Horacio Cartes would attend the opening ceremony, which would take place "by the end of the month".

East Europe weighs move

Romania's government, supported by the speaker of its parliament, has adopted a draft proposal to move its embassy, which would make it the first European Union member to do so. But Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, who has frequently clashed with the government, opposes the move in the absence of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

New US embassy in Jerusalem - humble but high-profile

JERUSALEM: Washington's contentious new embassy in Jerusalem is high-profile, but it's no gleaming new building changing the ancient city's skyline. Instead, Ambassador David Friedman will set up shop in existing consular offices in the leafy middle-class Arnona neighborhood on the city's southern edge for the near to mid-term. Eventually, a purpose-designed embassy will be planned and built, according to the US State Department. "Initially, the interim embassy in Arnona will contain office space for the ambassador and a small staff," a US official said, declining to give further details.

"The ambassador will continue to divide his time between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem during the initial phases of the embassy move, as this is a multi-year process." So far around \$400,000 has been spent on upgrades to the building, a US embassy spokeswoman said. US President Donald Trump will not attend the inaugural event, but Washington will be represented by Deputy Secretary of



GAZA: A Palestinian woman holding her national flag looks at clashes with Israeli forces near the border between the Gaza strip and Israel yesterday, as Palestinians protest over the inauguration of the US embassy following its controversial move to Jerusalem. — AFP

and has called for Prime Minister Viorica Dancila's resignation. On a visit to Jerusalem last month, Dancila acknowledged that at this stage she did not have "support of all parties as we would wish" to carry out the embassy move.

Czech President Milos Zeman has said he too would like to see his country's embassy transferred to Jerusalem. He did not reveal any firm plan, however, and the government has only announced the reopening of its honorary consulate in Jerusalem and the establishment of a Czech cultural centre in the city. On the other side of coin, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas his country would not move its Tel Aviv embassy to Jerusalem, official Palestinian media reported.

State John Sullivan, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, Trump's daughter Ivanka and her husband, senior White House aide Jared Kushner.

The foreign diplomatic corps has not been invited as the event is considered a bilateral one, the embassy spokeswoman said. Trump's unilateral decision delighted Israelis and enraged Palestinians, who want to make the eastern, mainly Palestinian, part of the city the capital of their future state and say that Trump's decision ignores their demands. Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat says the city will name a small roundabout adjacent to the embassy as "Trump Square". "Naming this square in honor of the president is our way of showing our love and respect for the president and the American people," he said in a statement. The question of Jerusalem is one of the thorniest issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Senior Palestinian official Saeb Erekat has called for diplomats, "civil society organizations, and religious authorities to boycott the inauguration." "Those who attend the ceremony will be sending an ominous message, a message that they encourage flagrant violations of international law and (of) the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people," he said. The building, which opened to the public in 2010, houses consular operations including American citizen and visa services. Those functions "will continue at the Arnona facility without interruption, as part of the embassy," the US official said. —AFP

The EU is sticking firmly to the international community's decades-long position that sovereignty in Jerusalem can only be decided by negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Shortly after the Trump announcement, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu travelled to Brussels for talks with EU foreign ministers. "I believe that all or most of the European countries will move their embassies to Jerusalem," he told them, earning a chilly response from the bloc's foreign policy head Federica Mogherini. "He can keep his expectations for others, because from the European Union member states' side this move will not come," she said. —AFP

North Korea will never fully give up nukes: Top defector

SEOUL: North Korea will never completely give up its nuclear weapons, a top defector said ahead of leader Kim Jong Un's landmark summit with US President Donald Trump next month. The current whirlwind of diplomacy and negotiations will not end with "a sincere and complete disarmament" but with "a reduced North Korean nuclear threat", said Thae Yong-ho, who fled his post as the North's deputy ambassador to Britain in August 2016.

"In the end, North Korea will remain 'a nuclear power packaged as a non-nuclear state'," Thae told the South's Newsis news agency. His remarks come ahead of an unprecedented summit between Kim and Trump in Singapore on June 12, at which North Korea's nuclear and missile programs are expected to dominate the agenda. North and South Korea affirmed their commitment to the goal of denuclearization of the peninsula at a summit last month, and Pyongyang announced at the weekend it would destroy its only known nuclear test site next week.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in yesterday welcomed the announcement, calling it an "initial step in the complete denuclearization of North Korea". But North Korea has not made public what concessions it is offering, and the South's JoongAng Ilbo daily pointed out that it had only invited journalists to witness the operation at the Punggye-ri site. "It is regrettable that North Korea did not invite nuclear experts to the destruction of the test site," it said in an editorial. "If North Korea has really decided to denuclearize, it has no reason not to invite them."

Pyongyang has said it does not need nuclear weapons if the security of its regime is guaranteed. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who has met Kim twice, said he was "convinced" the North Korean leader shared US goals, and promised security assurances and bountiful American investment in the isolated nation. "Those are the kind of things that, if we get what it is the President has demanded—the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization (CVID) of North Korea—that the American people will offer in spades," Pompeo said on Fox News Sunday. But verification will be key. And Thae, one of the highest-ranking officials to have defected in recent years, said: "North Korea will argue that the process of nuclear disarmament will lead to the collapse of North Korea and oppose CVID." —AFP

Net closes on toppled Malaysia's PM Najib

KUALA LUMPUR: The net tightened on toppled Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak as the new government yesterday placed on leave a controversial figure seen as his protector in a multi-billion-dollar graft scandal. Najib's Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition last week suffered a shock defeat to an alliance headed by the elderly Mahathir Mohamad, ending the corruption-nirred regime's six decades in power. Voters turned out en masse to oust Najib, angered at rising living costs, divisive racial politics in the Muslim-majority country and allegations of endemic graft among the country's ruling elite. The 92-year-old Mahathir—who ruled Malaysia for two decades until 2003, and came out of retirement to take on Najib—is now the world's oldest state leader.



Former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak

He officially got down to work as prime minister Monday, holding meetings with top civil servants and receiving his first official visitor, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. Najib became a hugely unpopular figure over his alleged involvement in plundering huge sums from Malaysian sovereign fund IMDB in a sophisticated fraud that is now being investigated in several countries. The US State Department alleges that at least \$4.5 billion dollars were looted from the fund, and funneled to the United States where it was used to buy everything from artwork to high-end real estate and a luxury yacht. Both Najib and IMDB deny any wrongdoing.

A total of \$681 million also mysteriously appeared in Najib's personal bank accounts in 2013 just ahead of a hotly-contested election. He was later cleared by Attorney-General Mohamed Apandi Ali, who said the money was a personal donation from the Saudi royal family, and ordered the closure of domestic probes into the scandal. Mahathir, however, said in a press conference that the attorney-general was taking leave. "There have been lots of complaints against the attorney-general. On that basis we gave him a holiday," he said. "When he is on leave, the solicitor-general will cover his job as the attorney general." He added that once an investigation had been carried out, Apandi could be suspended and banned from leaving the country.

Markets shrug off result

Apandi—who has ties to the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the main party in the BN coalition—came to office after Najib sacked the previous attorney general, who was believed to be aggressively investigating the matter. Mahathir has vowed that "heads must fall" in government bodies suspected of colluding in corruption, and on Monday the head of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission—which had targeted critics of Najib—resigned. A former intelligence and investigations director from the commission also lodged a report with the body, accusing Najib of seeking to prevent investigations into IMDB. Markets opened yesterday for the first time since last week's polls but did not fall as heavily as had been anticipated after Mahathir sought in a weekend speech to calm investors. Stocks initially lost 2.7 percent but quickly won back ground and closed 0.2 percent higher. Local currency the ringgit was steady against the dollar.

Travel ban

But it has not been all smooth sailing since the historic win, with concerns over the slow formation of the cabinet as different parties in the winning alliance jostle for positions. Mahathir appointed three ministers at the weekend despite previously having said he would name 10 cabinet members. Jailed politician Anwar Ibrahim, Mahathir's nemesis-turned-ally, issued a statement Sunday insisting his People's Justice Party (PKR) still supported the new premier after a senior figure from the group said the cabinet appointments were made without their consultation. Anwar, in jail on sodomy charges his supporters say are trumped up, had been widely expected to be freed today, paving the way for him to eventually become premier. But his party said that the prime minister's office had informed them an official committee that issues pardons-and would sign off on his release-would now be meeting tomorrow, without explaining why. —AFP



WASHINGTON: Demonstrators take part in a protest outside of the Trump International Hotel in Washington, DC, against the opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem yesterday. — AFP

International

Jumping ship: Brexit-hit EU staff ditch UK's passports

Britons lose EU citizenship, right to jobs

BRUSSELS: About one in 10 British civil servants at the European Commission has taken another EU nationality since the Brexit vote, but are nonetheless resigned to scant prospects of future promotion. Figures from European Union data provided to Reuters and interviews reflect a pessimistic view of the future in Brussels for nearly 900 remaining British staff on the EU executive once Britain leaves the bloc in March next year following its June 2016 referendum. They also highlight the role of nationality in EU career advancement despite a formal taboo on discrimination according to passport-as some Britons have already found to their cost.

"As Brits, our careers here are already finished," said one mid-ranking official with over 20 years service at the Commission who, like many of those switching, has now acquired an Irish passport through descent. "But no one will see me as Irish. This is basically just an insurance policy for now." President Jean-Claude Juncker gave British staff a formal undertaking in late March that the Commission would not exercise its right to dismiss them after March 29, 2019, when they lose the EU citizenship that is a normal requirement for employment.

But despite such sympathy at the top for their plight, Britons have already been voting with their feet. Public data shows that on Jan. 1 this year there were 894 Commission employees whose officially recorded first nationality was British. That was down 135, or 13 percent, from a year earlier and 240, or 21 percent, fewer than at the start of 2016. Internal data cited by an EU official showed that since May 2016 "slightly above 150" Britons retired, resigned or left at the end of the kind of temporary contract given to a quarter of the Commission's 32,000 staff; some 65 British citizens were hired, but all but four of these were on short-term contracts.

New passports

Strikingly, compared to that net decline of 85, "slightly above 100" more Britons also switched their "first nationality" to another of the 27 EU states, notably to Ireland, where many millions of British peo-

ple have roots, as well as to France. In a tweet sent on the day after the Brexit vote devastated his colleagues, one British EU official with dual nationality posted a photo of a bottle of Irish whiskey. He wrote: "Time to connect with my Irishness to numb my wounded Britishness."

Britain allows dual nationality, so those switching in the EU are not obliged to renounce their private UK citizenship. Conversations with EU officials—none would speak on the record about personal choices—shows some Britons already had dual citizenship and have merely switched to the "first nationality" recorded in Commission records. Some raced to acquire new passports after the referendum. Others also have another citizenship but have yet to formally switch to it, while many are thinking of or are applying to other countries.

Among these, notably, is Belgium. It has resisted granting citizenship to some EU officials, despite many having spent decades living in Brussels, on the grounds they have not been in the local tax system. Juncker appealed personally to the Belgian prime minister this month to show them compassion. The issue of nationality in EU careers is a delicate one. Formally, officials "leave their passports at the door", though officials also expect teams to reflect the bloc's diversity. A Commission spokesman told Reuters: "We can't see how changing first nationality ... could result in any sort of advantage. Promotions of EU officials are based on merit only."

Stiff upper lip

Even before Brexit, that view is contested by some who say privately that British colleagues have been passed over for expected promotions or removed from work that superiors feared could cause a conflict of loyalties between Brussels and London. Some British EU staff say that has offended them, arguing that, if anything, they feel the Brexit vote has strengthened their commitment to a project people back home have abandoned. "It's been painful," said one veteran staffer. "Since the referendum, I feel much less British—but the world sees me as much less European."

Ireland, other states, wary of 're-badged Brits'



'The clock is ticking', EU tells Brexit UK

BRUSSELS: The European Union yesterday warned Britain time was running out to seal a Brexit deal this autumn and ensure London does not crash out of the bloc next March adding to pressure on Prime Minister Theresa May. But May's spokesman said the "focus is on getting this right" rather than meeting a deadline. Diplomats and officials in Brussels note little progress in Brexit negotiations since the EU leaders last met, raising doubt about whether the bloc and London would be able to mark another milestone at the next top-level summit on June 28-29. "We are concerned that there is no clear stance, no clear position from the British. The clock is ticking," German EU Minister Michael Roth told his EU peers meeting in Brussels.

"We need now to be making substantial progress, but that is not happening. What is worrying us in particular is the Northern Ireland question where we expect a substantial accommodation from the British side." At home, May is stuck between a rock and a hard place with staunch Brexit supporters pushing to sever ties with the EU and others advocating keeping close customs cooperation with the bloc to reduce frictions in future trade. May's spokesman said London was working on two options for post-Brexit customs cooperation.

Under a customs partnership, Britain could collect tariffs on goods entering the country on the EU's behalf. Under a second idea, for a streamlined customs arrangement, traders on an approved list would be able to cross borders freely with the aid of automated technology. But the EU has said London must come up with a solution for the Irish border conundrum and highlights that has not happened. Both sides worry that reinstating a physical border between EU-member Ireland and Britain's province of Northern Ireland—including to manage customs—could revive violence there.

Other outstanding issues include guarantees for expatriate rights, agreeing on security cooperation and trade rules after Brexit, to ensure a deal is in place when Britain leaves in March 2019, and an adaptation period ends at the end of

New Armenian PM seeks closer ties with Russia

SOCHI: Armenia's new Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, who came to power last week after a peaceful revolution, told President Vladimir Putin yesterday he favored closer political and military ties with Russia. The meeting, in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, was the first time the two men had met and followed Pashinyan's election last week after weeks of street protests.

Some Western media had questioned whether Pashinyan, a former journalist who won power by channeling public discontent over perceived political cronyism, would keep his country, a landlocked ex-Soviet state, closely aligned with Russia, which has a military base in Armenia and a long history of selling it weapons. Pashinyan, who had previously reassured Russian diplomats he did not plan to break with Moscow, was unequivocal yesterday, telling Putin he wanted the two countries to remain firm allies, for Armenia to buy more Russian weapons and for them to forge closer political and trade ties. "We have things to discuss, but there are also things that do not need any discussion," said Pashinyan.

"That is the strategic relationship of allies between Armenia and Russia. ... I can assure you that in Armenia there is a consensus and nobody has ever doubted the importance of the



LONDON: Britain's Minister of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Claire Perry, strokes Larry the 10 Downing Street cat in Downing Street in central London. —AFP

Even those switching passports see little hope—certainly not in senior positions, where national governments are unlikely to lobby for what one Irish official described as "re-badged Brits". Like other capitals, Dublin wants jobs for its own. The number of Commission officials recording Irish first nationality rose by 37 to 520 in the two years to January. An Irish EU embassy spokesman said the issue of British EU officials taking Irish nationality was "complex" and that the government was "continuing to monitor matters". Even without Brexit, Euro-Brits have been a vanishing breed, reflecting what many of them see as long growing indifference to the EU among British voters and successive London governments.

While they once made up closer to the 13 percent of the current EU population that Britain accounts for, they

are today just 3 percent of Commission, albeit better represented in the senior ranks, reflecting longer EU membership than most states and more effort to see "national balance" across the top jobs. Some British staffers speak of serving out time till their pension; others are sticking to EU ambitions, knowing that the Commission does hire some non-EU nationals with special skills.

Rather than linger in roles of diminishing responsibility, some are looking to follow colleagues into the private sector. A few are tempted to move to a London civil service that may grow thanks to Brexit; others see little welcome from a British establishment they feel has done little for them. Amid anger, grief and uncertainty, there is deal of British stiff upper lip: "It's not the end of the world," said one. "No one's going to be helicoptered off the embassy roof, Saigon-style." —Reuters



BRUSSELS: Polish European Affairs Minister Konrad Szymanski (left) and Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Stef Blok (center) listen to Chief EU negotiator for Brexit, Michel Barnier prior to a General Affairs council on article 50 at the European Council in Brussels yesterday. —AFP

2020. "From the European side, we can say that we have made clear our position and we hope that the British government will enter negotiations also in a full way," said Austria's Gernot Blumel, echoing a long-standing EU complaint that Britain has not made its position clear in detail on parts of the negotiations.

With May's cabinet, her ruling Conservative party and the British split on the matter, that has proven difficult to achieve and the prime minister has come under increasing pressure

at home in recent weeks to make a decision on customs. The Brexit schedule is tightening, sources said, which helps the EU negotiating strategy to pile pressure on London before the June summit but mostly is due to lack of substantial headway in the talks. Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok said it was too early to discuss an extension of the timeline, but added: "The aim is now to conclude a deal in the time schedule that has been agreed on ... I very much hope we will agree but there are no guarantees, unfortunately." —Reuters



STEPANAKERT, Azerbaijan: Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan kisses a girl as he meets with locals in Stepanakert, the capital of Azerbaijan's breakaway Nagorno Karabakh region. —AFP

strategic nature of Armenian-Russian relations," Pashinyan said he wanted to inject new energy into developing already close ties between Moscow and Yerevan and thanked Putin for the way the Russian leader had handled the Armenian street protests. Russia did not intervene militarily, but was in close contact with Armenian politicians during the protests. "...We really appreciate the balanced position which Russia adopted during our domestic crisis," said Pashinyan. "I think it was a very constructive position." —Reuters

Royal Wedding: Will raucous US in-laws out-sparkle Markle?

LOS ANGELES: As Meghan Markle's gown undergoes final adjustments for her wedding to Prince Harry, her gaffe-prone American family has been sending royal courtiers into a spin by airing its dirty laundry in public. The bride-to-be remains close with divorced parents Tom Markle and Doria Ragland but other relatives have been barred from the May 19 nuptials amid unwelcome stories of bust-ups, heavy drinking—and even an arrest. Markle, who grew up in the Los Angeles suburb of Woodland Hills, will be walked up the aisle by Tom, 73, an Emmy-winning Hollywood lighting director of Dutch-Irish descent who is enjoying retired life in Mexico.

Around the turn of the century, the future Duchess of Sussex was filmed as an aspiring teen actress by childhood friend Nimaki Priddy discussing her relationship with her father as they drove across L.A. "We aren't going to go there," she says on the video-posted to YouTube last year—as they near Tom's Los Angeles home, before adding: "We aren't on the best of terms." There has been a detente in the intervening years, however, with Markle publicly expressing her love for her father in an Instagram message in 2016 and declaring, "Your hugs are still the very best in the whole wide world." —AFP

News in brief

Explosive device in mosque

JOHANNESBURG: A device discovered in a mosque near the South African port city of Durban where worshippers were attacked by armed men last week has been confirmed as explosive, police said yesterday. The device was discovered three days after the attack at the mosque by three men armed with guns and knives. One person was killed after his throat was slit, and two others were injured. "We had a meeting with the explosive unit members who briefed us on the device they had taken away yesterday. They confirmed that its mechanism is explosive," Simphiwe Mhlongo, a spokesman for the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation told eNCA television. —Reuters

NZ PM maternity leave

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's (NZ) pregnant Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern yesterday revealed her government's plans for running the country after she gives birth and takes six weeks maternity leave. Ardern, 37, said she will continue working as close as possible to her due date of June 17 and then hand over power to her deputy Winston Peters. As acting prime minister Peters will look after the day-to-day running of government, although Ardern said she will be consulted on significant issues. "I'll still be receiving cabinet papers so I imagine it will be dialogue both ways," she told reporters. "I may from time to time call the acting prime minister and he may at times chose to call me." —AFP

Bodies of beheaded Christians

MISRATA: Libya will return to Egypt the bodies of 20 Egyptian Christians killed in 2015 by Islamic State in its former Libyan stronghold of Sirte, a Libyan security official said. The bodies were recovered in October after the area where they were buried was recaptured from the jihadist group. The Coptic Christians were beheaded on a beach in February 2015 wearing orange jumpsuits, according to a video posted by Islamic State. Their bodies will be flown from the western city of Misrata to Egypt, a Libyan official said, adding that there was an additional victim from Ghana. —Reuters

Indian minister 'stable'

NEW DELHI: Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was stable yesterday after undergoing a kidney transplant, his hospital said in a statement. Jaitley, who had largely worked from home over the past month, was admitted to the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in the Indian capital on Saturday. "The surgery has been successful. Both the recipient and donor are stable and recovering well," the hospital said. Jaitley could be out of action for about a month following surgery, a finance ministry official said. Jaitley, 65, is a prominent member of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. —Reuters

Hawaii volcanic eruption

PAHOA: A massive new fissure opened on Hawaii's Kilauea volcano, hurling bursts of rock and magma with an ear-piercing screech on Sunday as it threatened nearby homes and prompted authorities to order new evacuations. The fissure, a vivid gouge of magma with smoke pouring out both ends, was the 17th to open on the volcano since it began erupting on May 3. Some 37 buildings have been destroyed and nearly 2,000 people ordered to evacuate in the past 10 days. Seen from a helicopter, the crack appeared to be about 1,000 feet long and among the largest of those fracturing the side of Kilauea, a 4,000-foot-high volcano with a lake of lava at its summit. —Reuters

International

Pakistan ex-PM ignites firestorm
with Mumbai attacks interview

Pakistan's top civil and military leaders blast Sharif

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's top civil and military leaders yesterday condemned a suggestion by ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that Islamist militants who killed 166 people in India in 2008 had crossed the border from Pakistan. The comments - in which Sharif implied he was removed from office by the Supreme Court last year for trying to end military support for anti-India militants - led to an uproar in Pakistan, where criticizing the military is increasingly considered a "red line" that cannot be crossed.

The National Security Council (NSC), in a special meeting yesterday called by the military, rejected Sharif's comments in an interview with Pakistan's Dawn newspaper as "incorrect and misleading", the prime minister's office said in a statement. "The participants unanimously rejected the allegations and condemned the fallacious assertions," the office said, referring to military and civilian leaders. "(NSC) observed that it was very unfortunate that the opinion arising out of either misconceptions or grievances was being presented in disregard of concrete facts and realities."

The statement was a rare rebuke of Sharif by a government run by his own party, highlighting political tension in the run-up to a general election expected in July. Sharif's criticism of the military has caused divisions within his party, analysts say, with some members unhappy about his confrontational approach. The Supreme Court disqualified three-time prime minister Sharif from office in July last year over

unreported sources of monthly income of less than \$3,000 from a United Arab Emirates company, a salary he denied ever receiving.

The military, which has ruled Pakistan for about half its history, denies any interference in civilian politics. India blamed the Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) for the 2008 attack on the city of Mumbai. Ten gunmen spent three days spraying bullets and throwing grenades around landmarks. India said the gunmen were Pakistani and had arrived on the Mumbai waterfront by rubber boat after crossing the Arabian sea from the Pakistani city of Karachi in a trawler.

India blamed Pakistan for failing to act against those behind the raids. Pakistan admitted the attacks were planned on its soil but denied any official involvement, and did not confirm the gunmen had set sail from Karachi. Some Western powers and India have accused the military of supporting Islamist groups for use as tools in achieving foreign policy objectives, but the military denies that.

'Explain it'

Sharif, in the Dawn interview, obliquely criticized the military by denouncing "parallel governments". He said there should only be one constitutional government. The United States also blames LeT for the Mumbai attacks and has offered \$10 million for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Hafiz Saeed, who heads Muslim charity Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), which Washington says is a front for LeT. Efforts by Pakistan to put on trial those India says are responsible for the Mumbai attack have stalled, while Saeed operates largely freely in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Ousted Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif gestures prior to a press conference in Islamabad. Sharif was ousted by the Supreme Court over graft allegations last year. —AFP

Sharif, asked about his ouster, brought up issues of security and foreign policy - which the military controls. "Militant organizations are active. Call them non-state actors, should we allow them to cross the border and kill 150 people in Mumbai? Explain it to me. Why can't we complete the trial?," Sharif said, according to Dawn. "We have isolated ourselves.

Despite giving sacrifices, our narrative is not being accepted," Sharif said. Sharif yesterday morning told reporters that he stood by his comments, according to Daily Pakistan and Geo TV. But after the NSC meeting, Prime Minister Abbasi said he had met Sharif and the former leader told him he was "misquoted". —Reuters

Peace talks ignite
land buying frenzy
along South Korea's
fortified border

SEOUL: Forget Seoul's posh Gangnam district. With North Korea pledging to reduce tensions and renew ties with its southern neighbor, South Korea's hottest property market is now along the heavily fortified border between the two countries. Demand for property in small towns and sparsely populated rural areas around the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is surging on expectations of an influx of people and investment. Kang Sung-wook, a 37-year old dentist in the South Korean border city of Paju, has bought eight separate lots of land in and around the DMZ since mid-March.

Five were purchased without ever setting foot on them, using only Google Earth satellite photos and maps, as areas inside the DMZ cannot not be accessed by the public. Kang said buying interest jumped so sharply as relations between the former foes improved that he needed to move fast. "I was out looking since North Korea-US summit news was announced in March, and it looked like all the good ones were gone already," said Kang. "I realized then that the market was on fire." His investment along the border now totals 3 billion won (\$2.8 million) for 49 acres (20 hectares) of land.

Razor wire and restrictions

For decades, the DMZ has been a different kind of hot spot, the scene of sometimes deadly military provocations and daring defections from the North. The zone, dotted with guard posts and strung with razor wire, was established after the 1950-1953 Korean War. The two Koreas still don't officially recognize each other and remain in a technical state of war because the conflict ended in a truce, not a peace agreement. Over a million landmines were laid in border areas including the DMZ and the Civilian Control Zone in the South, said Jeong In-cheol, a landmine expert at National Park Conservation Network. But while public access is restricted, land within the 2km (1.2 mile) wide South Korean side of the DMZ and other border areas can still be purchased and registered.

Land transactions in Paju, gateway to the United Nations truce village of Panmunjom, more than doubled in March to 4,628 from February, government data shows. That far outstripped better known markets such as trendy Gangnam, where volumes were



DALIAN: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un waves to Chinese officials from the airplane before departing the Chinese city of Dalian. —AFP

up just 9 percent. In the settlement of Jangdan-myun, home to Dorasan Station - the last railway stop south of the border - transaction volumes surged four-fold from a year earlier. Land prices there rose 17 percent over the same period. Kim Yoon-sik, a realtor with 25 years experience in Paju, says owners of the land in the DMZ include those who inherited farmland from ancestors in pre-Korean war days and some long term investors. "With bids outnumbering offers, I often see sellers cancelling on preliminary contracts, it's that hot," Kim said.

Railways and construction

The surge of activity along the border is not limited to South Korea or just real estate. In the northeastern Chinese border city of Dandong, property investors are pushing up prices and even spurring buying interest inside North Korea. At last month's historic inter-Korean summit at Panmunjom, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in pledged to reconnect railways and roads along the border, and transform the DMZ into a "peace zone". China and South Korea have also agreed that if North Korea undertakes complete denuclearization, it should be guaranteed economic aid. That could start with railway projects connecting China and South Korea through North Korea. Shares of South Korea's construction and railway

firms such as Hyundai Rotem and Seoam Machinery Industry Co have soared on hopes of such projects.

False dawn?

But South Korea has seen this kind of excitement before. Border property prices spiked when former President Roh Moo-hyun met with North Korea's Kim Jong Il in 2007. Prices then plummeted as ties deteriorated when the right-wing government of Lee Myung-bak took power a year later. "For the past seven decades, the two Koreas have taken radically different paths," said Jhe Seong-ho, a law school professor at Seoul's Chung Ang University. "Deregulating of the border zones won't be a quick and smooth process even if there is an economic opening up of North Korea."

Much of the land within the DMZ is likely to remain restricted from any development for conservation purposes, a huge risk for investors, he added. Hopes are high, however, with Kim set to meet US President Donald Trump in Singapore next month after his recent summit with Moon and two trips to China to meet President Xi Jinping. "I have a firm belief that this time North Korea would pursue an open economy like Vietnam," Kang said. "Kim Jong Un wouldn't go everywhere and visit China twice if he was bluffing." —Reuters

Indian college cuts
off women's sleeves
to prevent cheating

NEW DELHI: An Indian college has been banned from conducting examinations after it cut off the sleeves of women candidates for nursing tests to prevent cheating, officials said yesterday. Video shown on Indian TV showed staff at the school using scissors and razor blades to slash the women's sleeves before allowing them into the exam building on Sunday. Many of the women can be seen carrying the ripped-off sleeves into the exam hall as dozens of police stand guard outside in the Muzaffarpur district of Bihar state.

The act sparked protests outside other exam centers and a torrent of complaints on social media. District education officer Lalan Prasad Singh said the sleeves were cut to protect the candidates but added that a probe has been launched to find who was responsible. "The school has been barred from holding exams," he told reporters when confronted over the outcry. The eastern state is notorious for exam trickery and reports of mass cheating regularly make headlines. Nearly 1,000 students were expelled by the Bihar state government in February for cheating in school exams. In February 2016 army candidates sat in their underwear to take a written exam during a recruitment day in Muzaffarpur.

Authorities have already barred students from wearing shoes in exams, to make it more difficult to smuggle in paper. In the past hundreds of parents have been arrested for helping their offspring. Some used ladders to pass notes with answers to questions into exam halls. In 2016 three top high school students were arrested after they failed on television to answer simple questions in a subject which they had already passed. An investigation found they had paid bribes to cheat in the exams. Other states also have a problem. One woman candidate for a medical college exam in Kerala claimed last year she was forced to take off her bra before entering an exam hall. —AFP

Hong Kong student
leader draws fury in
China over anthem

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong student leader has been declared an "enemy of the people" by Chinese state media for speaking out over a new law against disrespecting the national anthem, in what critics say is another attack on freedom of speech in the city. The vilification of the 21-year-old comes as concern grows there is no longer room for open political debate in Hong Kong under pressure from Beijing.

Alice Cheung, head of the Hong Kong Federation of Students, was surrounded by security officers during a meeting at the city's legislative council last week seeking citizens' views on the controversial new law, which opponents say could pave the way for political prosecutions. Cheung told the committee meeting she wanted "to vomit" every time she heard the national anthem. Hong Kong does not have its own anthem so China's is played to represent it at events. "It is proof that this murderous regime still exists and holds power," she added. Since then she has felt the full force of Chinese state

and social media, which have labeled her an independence activist.

"My family are worried about me," she said. "I feel under pressure". The city is obliged to introduce its own version of the mainland's anthem law which was fine-tuned last year and upped punishment to three years' imprisonment. Football fans have regularly booed and turned their backs when it is played at Hong Kong team matches. After Cheung's original comments she was later told by the pro-Beijing committee chairman that she could not speak again, but did so anyway saying others had been given more time to put their views forward. She was surrounded by security and voluntarily left the room with the chairman accusing her of causing "chaos".

'Enemy of Chinese people'

Her comments were widely shared on the mainland. A commentator on the website of state broadcaster CCTV said such acts must be met with a "resolute crackdown". "The separatism advocated by the 'Hong Kong independence camp' is unpopular and they will certainly become the enemy of the Chinese people and the laughing stock of history," the article read.

Cheung told AFP she had received dozens of hostile messages on Facebook in the last few days. "A few randomly asked me: 'Do you know



HONG KONG: This undated handout photo shows Alice Cheung, head of the Hong Kong Federation of Students, posing in Hong Kong. —AFP

everyone in China hates you?' Or, 'Do you know people in the mainland all want to attack you?' she recounted. "(A public hearing) shouldn't be a high-pressure venue where after you've spoken you will be framed as the enemy of the people," she added. —AFP

India police charge
billionaire jeweler
over bank fraud

MUMBAI: Indian investigators filed the first charges yesterday in a huge fraud case involving billionaire jeweler Nirav Modi and the state-run Punjab National Bank, officials and reports said. A spokesman for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) confirmed to AFP that a charge sheet had been filed in a Mumbai court over the alleged \$1.8 billion scam, which has shaken India's corporate world. Charges were laid against Modi and several senior bank officials over the alleged fraud, according to officials cited by the Press Trust of India (PTI).

The news agency said those charged included Punjab National Bank's former chief Usha Ananthasubramanian, who is now CEO of Allahabad Bank. The CBI is investigating allegations that Modi and his uncle and business partner Mehul Choksi, a diamond merchant, defrauded

Punjab National Bank, India's second-largest state-run bank, of 2.8 billion rupees (\$43.8 million). This figure is said to be just a part of the total losses. The Punjab National Bank (PNB) said in February that Modi and Choksi had defrauded it by raising credit with international branches of other Indian banks, using illegal guarantees provided by rogue PNB employees.

The federal investigation agency has arrested 19 people for enabling the defrauding of the bank with forged documents. Modi and Choksi are still on the run and believed to be abroad. Modi, the third generation of his family to go into the diamond trade, is worth \$1.73 billion according to Forbes, placing him 85th on India's rich list. The 47-year-old's high-end eponymous Nirav Modi brand has stores in several of the world's major cities. India's government is trying to reduce the crippling debts of the country's embattled state banks, including the Punjab National Bank. It recently announced a \$32-billion recapitalization plan to help them clean up their books ahead of the general election in 2019. —AFP

Analysis

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Will Mexico's economy tank if leftist wins vote?

The fiery leftist Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador looks increasingly hard to beat in Mexico's upcoming presidential election - drawing dire warnings from some in the business community that he would wreck Latin America's second-largest economy. The trillion-dollar question facing Mexicans as they prepare to cast their ballots on July 1 is: Would he? The sharp-tongued, silver-haired former Mexico City mayor, who has a double-digit lead in most recent opinion polls, is locked in an escalating clash with the business world.

After Lopez Obrador said top tycoons do not want him to win because they "don't want to stop stealing" and "think they own Mexico", two prominent business groups took out full-page newspaper ads painting the candidate as a divisive autocrat and threat to the economy. Other detractors warn Lopez Obrador would turn Mexico into the next Venezuela, whose socialist "revolution" has unravelled into economic catastrophe.

Lopez Obrador - widely known by his initials, AMLO - is trying hard to downplay such fears. But he is also accused of sending mixed messages, depending on who his audience is. The same Lopez Obrador who fires up crowds with talk of fighting the "mafia of power" and overhauling the country's economic model reassuringly tells business leaders he will respect private investment and run a fiscally responsible government.

The two-time presidential runner-up says his economic policy would be based on Mexico's economic model of the 1950s to 1970s, known as "stabilizing development". That strategy coincided with a period of rapid economic growth often called the "Mexican miracle". But critics say its principles of state-led development are antiquated and discredited. Not that things are going so well for Mexico in its current free-market economy.

So far this century, Mexico's gross domestic product (GDP) has grown an underwhelming two percent per year, on average. There are some bright spots: since Mexico entered the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Canada in 1994, the country has become a major exporter with a thriving manufacturing sector. But the boom has been isolated, and 53.4 million Mexicans - 44 percent of the population - live in poverty.

Frustrated at being left behind, and fed up with crime and corruption scandals under President Enrique Pena Nieto, many Mexicans are looking for change. In a country governed for the past 89 years by the parties of his two main rivals - Ricardo Anaya of the conservative National Action Party (PAN) and Jose Antonio Meade of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) - many see Lopez Obrador as the best bet to do things differently.

AMLOnomics

Lopez Obrador says he has a simple solution to kick-start the economy: wipe out the corruption plaguing Mexico, which he estimates sucks up 500 billion pesos (more than \$25 billion) a year, and use that money to fund public investment and social programs. Many economists say it is not so simple. "Even if you add up everything that's lost to corruption and embezzlement, you don't get to 500 billion pesos," said Marco Oviedo, an economist at British bank Barclays, who puts the real figure closer to 90 billion pesos. "The numbers don't add up," he said.

The candidate's controversial proposals to review the contracts from Pena Nieto's landmark privatization of the energy sector and halt public funding for a new \$13-billion airport for Mexico City have also raised investors' eyebrows. Raymundo Tenorio, head of the economics department at the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education, warned that Lopez Obrador's policies would lead to "financial disorder" that would hurt Mexico's credit. "If this guy becomes president, I'm just hoping he won't follow through on his promises," he said.

The respected economist Lopez Obrador has tapped to be his finance minister, Carlos Urzua, dismisses such doomsayers. He has been repeating a soothing mantra in meetings with investors in New York, London and Mexico City: a Lopez Obrador presidency will be one of macroeconomic stability, central bank autonomy, low inflation, a free-floating exchange rate and sensible spending. "We may change some things, but as far as basic economic policy we are even more cautious than the other parties," he said at a recent forum.

The business world's warnings appear to be doing little to stop Lopez Obrador in the polls. In fact, for some voters, they may have the opposite effect. "Proposing a change in direction - that is, to not do the same things we've been doing for the past 30 years - is (Lopez Obrador's) biggest success," said Cesar Salazar, an economist at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. —AFP



Sadr, Ameri set to play key roles

Iraqi political firebrands, nationalist cleric Moqtada Sadr and pro-Iranian Hadi Al-Ameri, are two former militia chieftains pitching themselves as outsiders ready to fight graft and boost services. Both look set to play key roles in determining the next leader of their war-scarred nation after their rival political alliances appeared to surge at national polls. Sadr, 44, comes from a long line of Shiite holy men, and is well known to Washington after his fighters battled US troops in Iraq following the 2003 invasion.

Sidelined for years since his Mahdi Army militia was officially dismantled, he has reinvented himself as an anti-corruption crusader - linking up in an unlikely union with Iraq's communists. Ameri, 63, heads the rival Conquest Alliance made up of former members of the mainly Shiite paramilitary units he led in the fight against the Islamic State group. How the two men shape up as kingmakers is yet to be seen - with bitter foes the US and Iran sparring for influence as international tensions spiral. Sadr, viewed as a populist and nationalist, has hit out at both Washington and Tehran - with his jubilant supporters chanting "Iran out" in videos circulated online. In an eye-catching move the black-robed cleric visited Iran's fierce rival, Sunni powerhouse Saudi Arabia, last year in a bid to bolster ties with Riyadh as it looks to get more involved in Iraq.

'Didn't happen by chance'

Running counter is former transport minister Ameri, who at one stage fought for Iran against Iraq's ex-dictator Saddam



Hussein in a war in the 1980s. A self-described friend of key Iranian commanders, he has long enjoyed support from Tehran for his Badr organization. The Badr became the best trained fighting force in the Hashed Al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilisation Units) that emerged to fight IS alongside Iraq's regular troops.

While he has lambasted Washington in the past, it remains to be seen how strongly Ameri could push for US forces who helped topple IS to now get out of Iraq. US firepower ended up aiding his fighters and the battlefield entente might have softened his stance. The victory over the militants - announced five months ago - came at a bloody price for the Hashed. But it gave Ameri the prestige and platform to make a pitch to take the helm in the country.

Since their weapons fell silent after the defeat of IS, the group's resources have been turned to more constructive ends - mending infrastructure and offering basic services. After 15 violence-wracked years of chaos since the fall of Saddam both Sadr and Ameri have benefited from widespread discontent at an Iraqi elite seen as mired in graft and sectarianism. While both are veterans well-known to Iraqis, their promise of change appeared to resonate with the 44.5 percent of voters who bothered to head to the polls. "This didn't happen by chance, this came for the sake of proving the rejection of the policy of corruption and the corrupt," said Jabra Al-Tai, a candidate for Sadr's Marching towards Reform. —AFP

Calif coastline stripped of plants prized in Asia

The tip came from a woman standing in line at a post office in a small town in northern California. A customer was shipping dozens of boxes to China, and the caller suspected they were filled with abalone, a highly-prized shellfish listed as an endangered species. But fish and wildlife officers who responded to the call instead uncovered an international smuggling ring that has been stripping the bluffs along the northern California coastline of Dudleya succulent plants and shipping them to countries in Asia where they are used for decoration.

"The poachers literally fly into the US just to get these plants so they can ship them to Korea, China or Japan," said Captain Patrick Foy, of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. "They are ripping them out of the ground and selling them between \$40 and \$50 dollars apiece." The plant, which grows in bud-like circles and resembles an artichoke, is called Dudleya farinosa and is native to the rugged coastlines of Oregon and northern California.

Foy said several suspects from Asia have been arrested in recent months in connection with the heists, including two Koreans and one Chinese national who were nabbed on April 4. The trio had entered the country as tourists and was detained as they were about to ship 1,334 of the plants overseas. An additional 1,000 Dudleya were later found in their hotel room.

'They favor remote locations'

The three men - Tae Hun Kim, 52, and Tae Hyun Kim, 46, both of North Korea, and Liu Fengxia, 37, of China - are scheduled to appear in a California court on May 16, charged with several felony and misdemeanor counts. If convicted, they face up to nine years in prison and steep fines. At least two other similar cases are pending. Foy said he believes poachers in the last year have quietly been slipping into the country, targeting remote areas along the coast and digging up "thousands and thousands" of Dudleya before stuffing them into boxes with crumpled up newspaper and putting them in the mail.

"They go in at night or during the day... and seem to favor locations that are not well traveled - places where you can park your car and walk half a mile and not be seen by a lot of people," he added. "These are people who are taking every



In this photo, two unidentified men stand beside a load of dudleya succulent plants, allegedly stolen by international poachers from remote cliffside locations along the northern California coast. —AFP

plant that they can find and they are shipping them by the hundreds of boxes at a time."

Authorities said they fear the plant, also known as "bluff lettuce", could end up on the endangered species list if the poaching continues and are warning of the detrimental effect on the environment. "They are ripping the plants out of their habitats and they are trampling other plants while they are doing it," said botanist Stephen McCabe, emeritus director of research at the University of California Santa Cruz Arboretum. "It's just disgusting that they are going into the wild and stripping whole cliffs."

The Dudleya, which can continue to grow for years once potted, is said to be highly prized in China because of its resemblance to the lotus flower. Foy said that while he understands the attraction, he was baffled as to why collectors were not simply buying similar-looking plants. "Why these ones are so much extra special, frankly I have no idea," he said. "There are perfectly other nice succulent plants out there that can be purchased for five dollars at a nursery." —AFP

Swansea loses identity, spirals downward

Buried deep in a morose statement from Swansea City's American owners before the dust settled on their Premier League relegation was one damning admission. "Perhaps the club has lost its unique identity, the special essence that made Swansea City different - better," wrote Stephen Kaplan and Jason Levien who took over two years ago. "In many ways we need to rediscover that identity both on the pitch and off it if we are to make the community proud of this football club again."

Two points from their last seven matches, including five straight defeats, condemned Swansea to relegation just when it appeared they had gained a stay of execution. A 2-1 defeat by Stoke City sealed the Welsh side's fate but the rot set in several years ago when they lost the blueprint that made them a model club. Promoted under manager Brendan Rodgers in 2011, Swansea finished 11th in their first season back in the top flight. The passing game installed by Roberto Martinez remained and the scouting network kept finding gems.

Rogers moved to Liverpool but Swansea hired Michael Laudrup and the Danish great took them into Europe after they won the 2012-13 League Cup. When things went sour for Laudrup and he was sacked early in 2014, club stalwart Garry Monk took over, first as caretaker manager, then on a full-time basis. Monk steered Swansea away from trouble in 2013-14 and the season after took them to eighth place - their highest finish in the Premier League. Then, the wheels fell off.

Revolving door

Monk was sacked just before Christmas in 2015 with Swansea 15th in the table and while Francesco Guidolin kept Swansea safe the revolving door was spinning out of control. The Italian was fired after a poor start to the following season and replaced by American Bob Bradley who lasted 85 days. Paul Clement turned the ship around and delivered a seventh successive top-flight campaign but was replaced by Carlos Carvalhal in December last year with the club bottom.

Fans groups are so disenchanted they have called on long-standing chairman Huw Jenkins to resign - blaming him for his part in the 2016 takeover and a botched recruitment policy. There were protests during the game on Sunday. "As a football club we have lost our footballing way and our footballing identity, making poor, usually reactionary, decisions time and time again," a statement from the Swansea Supporters trust said last week. "The Swansea Way, for so long a source of considerable pride, has not existed for some time."

Compared to the dire straits the club was in in 2003 when they retained their Football League status in the last game of the season, Swansea are still in good shape. They have a modern stadium, and the financial blow of relegation will be soothed by Premier League parachute payments totalling around £100 million (\$136 million) over three seasons.

The problem is that unless they find the instruction manual on running a club that seems to have been thrown out with the dirty laundry, they could find themselves in the sort of downward spiral that has swallowed up the likes of Sunderland. "We know this club has not been truly unified off the pitch for a while even though the supporters who come to the matches home and away have been magnificent," the owners said. "There have certainly been mistakes along the way and it is down to the owners to shoulder much of the responsibility." Carvalhal is expected to leave as the club begin the process of rediscovering their lost identity. —Reuters

News

No new medical fees for expats...

Continued from Page 1

In a related development, head of the National Assembly committee for the replacement of expatriates MP Khalil Al-Saleh yesterday said that reducing the number of expatriates in the country, who have topped three million, has become a "popular and government demand". He said that this goal should be fulfilled by dismissing expatriate workers who are not qualified, especially those in government jobs, because they constitute a burden on the country.

Saleh however said the panel does not support sacking highly-skilled expatriate workers and those with long experiences, especially in fields where there are not sufficient Kuwaitis. The lawmaker said any decision on foreign workers should exclude people with rare expertise even if they reach the age of 65. The committee was set up by the Assembly to press the government to speed up measures to replace expatriate employees in the government with Kuwaiti graduates.

In another development, conflicting reports emerged yesterday over plans to impose value added tax (VAT) decided by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which has asked the six member states to apply the five-percent tax any time this year. Saudi Arabia and UAE already began imposing it from January. Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf told reporters that he expects the Assembly to approve the VAT draft law at the start of the next term in October. The minister said that although the draft law was sent to the Assembly with urgency, he said he does not believe it will be approved in this term, which ends next month.

But head of the Assembly budgets

committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad said yesterday that the panel was informed by the finance ministry that it has delayed plans to impose VAT till 2021. He however said the ministry called for speeding up plans to impose selective excise duty on cigarettes and power and soft drinks, whose prices were raised by 50 to 100 percent by GCC states. The lawmaker said the ministry believes that introducing these selective taxes will earn state coffers some KD 200 million a year.

Abdusamad said that the ministry's projections for taxes and charges in the budget of 2018/2019 are KD 551 million, an increase of 11 percent from the previous year. He said total revenues are projected at KD 15 billion including KD 13 billion in oil revenues, adding that although oil prices have rebounded, there are fears they may drop again.

Hajraf also said it is important for GCC countries to keep abreast of swift global economic development through uniform economic visions. Addressing a one-day meeting of the GCC Financial and Economic Cooperation Committee held in Kuwait yesterday, Hajraf called on GCC countries to harness all capabilities and potentials to fulfill the objectives of GCC leaders by creating a strong economic bloc able to vie with other global economic groups. This meeting is considered a means and tool for attaining Gulf economic cooperation and translating GCC directives into action programs and turning ambitions into tangible reality, he said.

GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani lauded Kuwait's sincere efforts to cement and consolidate Gulf integration and cooperation among GCC member states in various fields. He pointed out the never-ending and fruitful efforts of the GCC ministers of finance in line with the GCC leaders' directives, with a view to promoting inter-Gulf cooperation and establishing the basics of the Gulf economy.

Violent storms in India kill 86...

Continued from Page 1

pylons in Uttar Pradesh state, killing 48 people, T P Gupta of the state disaster management department told AFP. Eight people also drowned in the state's Barabanki district after their boat capsized in a river due to

strong winds. Gupta said 80 people were injured by the gusts that flattened nearly 40 houses across India's most populous state.

The country has been gripped by a freak weather system since the beginning of May, with many parts of the country experiencing extreme conditions. Similar storms hit the region every year but this year has been the deadliest in decades. In the eastern state of West Bengal 14 people were killed Sunday after lightning struck a house in the state capital Kolkata, including four chil-

dren as thunderstorms separately ravaged several localities.

Lightning bolts killed 12 people in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, while two people died in both Bihar state and the Indian capital New Delhi. Indira Gandhi International Airport was closed for more than two hours because of the winds, with 70 flights diverted. Andhra Pradesh had also been hit by more than 40,000 lightning bolts on May 1, killing 14 people in a matter of hours. — AFP

Comeback cleric Sadr set to win...

Continued from Page 1

since whoever wins the most seats must negotiate a coalition government in order to have a majority in parliament. The government should be formed within 90 days of the official results.

Saturday's election is the first since the defeat of Islamic State, with the capture of its de facto capital Mosul, last year. The group overran a third of Iraq in 2014. Turnout was 44.52 percent with 92 percent of votes counted, the Independent High Electoral Commission said - that was significantly lower than in previous elections. Full results were due to be officially announced later yesterday.

Sadr and Ameri both came in first in four of the 10 provinces where votes were counted, but the cleric's bloc won significantly more votes in the capital, Baghdad, which has the highest number of seats. A document provided to Reuters by a candidate in Baghdad that was also circulating among journalists and analysts showed results from all 18 provinces. Reuters could not independently verify the document's authenticity but the results in it showed Sadr had won the nationwide popular vote with more than 1.3 million votes and gained 54 of parliament's 329 seats.

He was followed by Ameri with more than 1.2

million votes, translating into 47 seats, and Abadi with more than 1 million votes and 42 seats, according to calculations made by Reuters based on the document. Ex-Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, a close ally of Iran like Ameri, came in fourth with 25 seats. Winning the largest number of seats does not automatically guarantee that Sadr will be able to hand-pick a prime minister. The other winning blocs would have to agree on the nomination.

In a 2010 election, Vice President Ayad Allawi's group won the largest number of seats, albeit with a narrow margin, but he was blocked from becoming prime minister for which he blamed Tehran. And a similar fate could befall Sadr. Iran has publicly stated it would not allow his bloc to govern and may try to form a governing coalition between its allies, Ameri and Maliki. "We will not allow liberals and communists to govern in Iraq," Ali Akbar Velayati, top adviser to the Islamic Republic's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in February.

His statement, which sparked criticism by Iraqi figures, was referring to the electoral alliance between Sadr, the Iraqi Communist Party and other secular groups who joined protests organized by Sadr in 2016 to press the government to see through a move to stem endemic corruption. Iraqi Communist Party Secretary General Raed Fahmy told Reuters the vote in favor of the Sadr list, backed by his group, "is a clear message that we must have balanced relations with all (foreign countries) based on non-interference in Iraq's internal

affairs". "Everybody is welcome to provide support to Iraq, but not at the expense of its sovereignty and independence," he added.

During the campaign, frustrated Iraqis of all shades complained about their political elite's systematic patronage, bad governance and corruption, saying they didn't receive any benefits of their country's oil wealth. "The importance of this vote is that it is a clear message that the people wants to change the system of governance which has produced corruption and weakened state institutions," said Fahmy. "It is a message to provide services to the people, health and education, and to reduce social disparities."

Iraq has been ranked among the world's most corrupt countries, with high unemployment, rife poverty, weak public institutions and bad services despite high oil revenues for many years. Endemic corruption has eaten at the government's financial resources. Fahmy told his party's website that Abadi was "closer" to Sadr's bloc than the other main contenders. Sadr derives much of his authority from his family. Sadr's father, highly respected Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadeq Al-Sadr, was murdered in 1999 for defying Saddam Hussein. His father's cousin, Mohammed Baqir, was killed by Saddam in 1980.

Celebrations erupted on the streets of Baghdad after the commission's announcement, with thousands of Sadr's supporters singing, chanting, dancing and setting off fireworks while carrying his picture and waving Iraqi flags. Many of his supporters chanted "Iran out". — Reuters

Israel kills 55 Palestinians as...

Continued from Page 1

"The United States remains fully committed to facilitating a lasting peace agreement." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Trump in his address that "by recognizing history you have made history", Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah, in a statement yesterday, accused the United States of "blatant violations of international law". "Choosing a tragic day in Palestinian history (to open the Jerusalem embassy) shows great insensitivity and disrespect for the core principles of the peace process," Hamdallah wrote.

Along the Gaza border, crowds built throughout the day in the Palestinian enclave less than 100 km away from Jerusalem and sealed off from Israel by a blockade. Israel's military said 40,000 Palestinians had taken part in the protests and clashes. "The rioters are hurling firebombs and explosive devices at the security fence and at (Israeli) troops and are burning tyres, throwing rocks and launching flaming objects with the intention of igniting fires in Israeli territory and harming (Israeli) troops." The military also said one of its fighter jets had struck five targets at a Hamas training facility in Gaza. Earlier, a military plane and tank targeted two other Hamas posts in response to what it said was fire toward its forces by Hamas.

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of "massacres", while Amnesty International called the violence an "abhorrent violation" of human rights. Human Rights Watch denounced a "bloodbath". EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said "we expect all to act with utmost restraint to avoid further loss of life," while British Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman urged "calm and restraint". Netanyahu

defended the use of force, saying "every country has the obligation to defend its borders." Israeli military spokesman Jonathan Conriscus alleged "we have seen three different squads, fully equipped terrorist squads with weapons, trying to plant IEDs at the technical fence in three different locations".

A senior Hamas leader, Khalil Al-Hayya, said at a border encampment that yesterday's protest was timed to coincide with the "deplorable crime of moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem". He said: "Our people went out today to respond to this new Zionist-American aggression, and to draw by their blood the map of their return."

The inauguration followed Trump's Dec 6 recognition of the disputed city as Israel's capital. The ceremony took place at what until now had been a US consulate building in Jerusalem. Abbas said the new embassy was tantamount to "a new American settler outpost" in Jerusalem and that the United States "is no longer a mediator in the Middle East". Police and the Israeli military deployed massively. Around 1,000 police officers were positioned around the embassy, while Israel's army said it almost doubled the number of troops surrounding Gaza and in the occupied West Bank. Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said in a message to Gazans "we will protect our civilians with all our means and not enable the fence to be crossed".

Israel occupied the West Bank and east Jerusalem in 1967 and later annexed east Jerusalem in a move never recognized by the international community. Beyond the disputed nature of Jerusalem, the date of the embassy move was also key. May 14 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of Israel. Today, Palestinians mark the "Nakba", or catastrophe, commemorating the more

than 700,000 Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes in the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. Palestinian protests are also planned for today.

The US has lost its role as mediator in the Middle East by moving its embassy, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in London yesterday. "With its latest step, America has chosen to be a part of the problem, not a solution, and lost its mediator role in the Middle East peace process," Erdogan told the Chatham House international affairs think-tank. Moving the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was "very, very unfortunate", he said, warning it would "increase tensions and ignite an even greater fire between communities".

Erdogan urged the international community to "take swift action to put an end to Israel's increasing aggression", denouncing the embassy move as violating international law and United Nations resolutions. "The establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital is the only way for lasting peace and stability," the Turkish leader said.

"The United States, unfortunately, took its place without complaint alongside the Israeli government in this massacre of civilians and became a party to this crime against humanity," Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told reporters in Ankara. "This is a vile massacre and we condemn it strongly," he added. Yildirim said the events were "incompatible" with the US acting as a mediator or protector of world peace.

Thousands of protesters in Istanbul marched down Istiklal Street shouting slogans including "Israel's capital is the White House", responding to a call to protest from pro-government aid group IHH. Others yelled "Down with America, down with Israel" and some

urged Turkey to close Israeli missions in the country, yelling: "Shut down the Zionist embassy." "The world's Muslims are up in arms against Israel's actions which are backed by the Americans," said Istanbul protester Sidika Aydin. Omer Faruk, a pensioner, added: "We want the Turkish government to cancel and suspend all the agreements with Israel. We also expect the government to be more careful in its future ties with Israel."

The head of the Arab League said yesterday Palestinian deaths associated with the US moving its embassy to Jerusalem should be a warning to others considering a similar move. The Arab League will hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss the "illegal" embassy move. Egypt's news agency MENA reported earlier yesterday, citing an Arab diplomat. Arab League Chief Ahmed Aboul Gheit called the move a "clear violation of international law", MENA said. "The fall of Palestinian martyrs by the bullets of the Israeli occupation must ring an alarm ... bell to any state that does not find anything wrong with the immoral and illegal stance that we are watching," he said.

"It is shameful to see countries participating with the US and Israel in celebrating the former's embassy move to occupied Jerusalem in a clear and grave violation of international law and (UN) Security Council resolutions," said Aboul Gheit. "The opening of the American embassy in occupied Jerusalem represents a step of utmost gravity which I do not think the US administration realizes its real consequences in both the short and long term," he added. The Arab league is expected to hold a meeting tomorrow at the level of permanent representatives "to counter the illegal decision taken by the United States of America to transfer its embassy to Jerusalem", MENA reported. — Agencies




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Sports

Nick Williams blast lifts Phillies past NY Mets 4-2

Phillies win for the fifth time in six games

NEW YORK: Nick Williams hit a go-ahead three-run, pinch-hit homer in the sixth inning Sunday afternoon as the Philadelphia Phillies came back to defeat the visiting New York Mets 4-2. The Phillies won for the fifth time in six games to earn a split of the series shortened to two games by rain. The Mets have lost 17 of 25 since an 11-1 start. Yoenis Cespedes homered in the top of the sixth to put the Mets in position to overcome an abbreviated start by Jacob deGrom, who was lifted after throwing 45 pitches in a scoreless first tinning. The New York ace as a precaution due to the pinch count in his first outing back from the disabled list. In the bottom of the sixth, Mets reliever Paul Sewald (0-3) gave up a leadoff double to Carlos Santana and issued a one-out walk to Scott Kingery. With two outs, Williams stepped to the plate for starting pitcher Aaron Nola (6-1) and crushed a 2-1 pitch deep into the right field seats for his second career pinch-hit homer.

ANGELS 2, TWINS 1

Zack Cozart's single in the bottom of the ninth inning scored Chris Young from second base to lift Los Angeles past visiting Minnesota in Anaheim, Calif. Angels two-way player Shohei Ohtani had another impressive performance on the mound despite a no-decision. Ohtani gave up just one run on three hits and two walks in 6 1/3 innings, striking out 11. Twins reliever Zach Duke (2-2) hit Young with a pitch to start the ninth inning. Martin Maldonado followed with a sacrifice bunt, moving the runner to second and bringing up Cozart, who swung at Duke's first pitch and lined it into left field. Young scoring without a throw.

WHITE SOX 5, CUBS 3

Matt Davidson homered and knocked in two runs, including the tiebreaker, as the visiting Chicago White Sox avoided a series sweep at the hands of their cross-town rival. Lucas Giolito (2-4) survived seven walks and five stolen bases in his 5 2/3 innings to pick up the win. Giolito allowed only two hits and three runs, recording three strikeouts. Three relievers notched the last 10 outs, with Bruce Rondon working the ninth inning for his first save. Kyle Hendricks (3-3) was tagged with the loss for the Cubs, yielding six hits and four runs, three earned, over six innings. The Cubs' five-game winning streak ended.

YANKEES 6, AS 2

Giancarlo Stanton homered and had four hits as host New York beat Oakland following a rain delay of two hours, 45 minutes. Stanton helped the Yankees win for the 19th time in 22 games by producing his second four-hit game of the season, with the first three hits off left-hander Brett Anderson (0-2). After his big day, Stanton is batting .429 (15-for-35) with seven homers and 15 RBIs off left-handed pitching. Luis Severino (6-1) allowed one run and five hits in six innings. He struck out seven, won his fourth straight decision and allowed one run or none for the 21st time since the start of last season.

NATIONALS 6, DIAMONDBACKS 4

Mark Reynolds hit two homers in his season debut, and Bryce Harper and Trea Turner also homered as Washington completed a four-game sweep of Arizona in Phoenix. Reynolds hit a solo shot in the sixth inning

and added a tiebreaking, two-run homer with one out in the eighth off Archie Bradley (0-1). He also singled in his first game since his contract was purchased from Triple-A Syracuse on Saturday when Ryan Zimmerman was placed on the disabled list. The Nationals won for the 13th time in 15 games. A.J. Pollock and Ketel Marte had two hits, Jarrod Dyson had a two-run single, and David Peralta and Daniel Descalso knocked in runs for the Diamondbacks. Arizona has lost a season-high five in a row and eight of 11.

TIGERS 5, MARINERS 4

Jose Iglesias smacked a game-winning single, Niko Goodrum homered and scored twice, and Detroit edged visiting Seattle. The Mariners lost second baseman Robinson Cano for an indefinite period with a fractured fifth metacarpal on his right hand after being hit by a pitch in the third inning. Mariners left-hander James Paxton got a no-decision in his first start since his no-hitter at Toronto on Tuesday. He gave up three runs on six hits with four strikeouts in six innings. JaCoby Jones led off the ninth against Juan Nicasio (1-2) with an infield single. Goodrum advanced him to third with another single, and Iglesias then slapped an opposite-field single against the drawn-in infield.

RED SOX 5, BLUE JAYS 3

J.D. Martinez hit a two-run homer and added an RBI single as visiting Boston defeated Toronto in the rubber match of a three-game series. The win went to reliever Hector Velazquez (5-0), who allowed two hits and struck out two in two innings. Joe Kelly pitched a perfect ninth to earn his second save of the season. Toronto's Joe Biagini (0-2), recalled from Triple-A Buffalo for the start, allowed four runs, four hits and three walks in 4 2/3 innings. The right-hander struck out three.

BREWERS 7, ROCKIES 3

Freddy Peralta struck out 13 in his major league debut as Milwaukee beat Colorado to win three of four in a weekend series at Denver. Peralta (1-0), whose parents watched him pitch as a professional for the first time, took a no-hitter into the sixth inning before allowing a one-out single to David Dahl. He then struck out Charlie Blackmon and left after throwing 98 pitches. Travis Shaw and Jesus Aguilar homered and Domingo Santana had three hits for Milwaukee. Dahl and Tony Wolters homered, and Jon Gray (4-5) allowed six runs on 10 hits and fanned 10 for the Rockies.

ASTROS 6, RANGERS 1

Dallas Keuchel worked seven shutout innings while Evan Gattis and Carlos Correa both homered for a second consecutive game as Houston claimed the rubber match of its three-game series against visiting Texas. Keuchel (3-5) continued what has been a bounce-back month of May, allowing just three hits and one walk while recording a season-high eight strikeouts. After surrendering six earned runs in his final start of April, Keuchel has allowed four runs on 14 hits and three walks with 17 strikeouts over 22 innings this month, posting back-to-back wins for the first time this season. Carlos Perez smacked a solo home run, his first, off Hector Rondon to get the Rangers on the board in the eighth inning. Texas totaled three runs in the series. Rangers third base-



PHILADELPHIA: Asdrubal Cabrera #13 of the New York Mets hits an RBI double against the Philadelphia Phillies in the seventh inning of a game at Citizens Bank Park on Sunday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. — AFP

man Adrian Beltre aggravated a left hamstring injury in the seventh.

REDS 5, DODGERS 3

Luis Castillo pitched effectively into the seventh inning, and Eugenio Suarez and Joey Votto supported him with two-run home runs, helping visiting Cincinnati complete a stunning four-game sweep of Los Angeles. The Reds, who began the series with the worst record in the National League, limited the Dodgers to nine runs in four games, extending their winning streak to six straight. Castillo (3-4) allowed solo home runs to Yasiel Puig in the third inning and Yasmani Grandal in the seventh but otherwise limited the Dodgers to just two other hits and one unearned run in six-plus innings. He struck out eight and did not walk a batter.

BRAVES 4, MARLINS 3

Sean Newcomb pitched six scoreless innings, and Ender Inciarte slugged a two-run homer as Atlanta held on to win at Miami. Miami had just one hit—a double by Brian Anderson—entering the ninth. However, after singles by Starlin Castro and J.B. Shuck, Justin Bour hit his third pinch-hit homer of the season. Braves reliever Jesse Biddle allowed the two singles before making way for Arodys Vizcaino, who gave up the upper-deck homer by Bour. Vizcaino recovered to retire Miami's final three batters to pick up his seventh save of the season.

PADRES 5, CARDINALS 3

Clayton Richard yielded two runs on five hits over eight innings, and San Diego ruined Adam Wainwright's return from the disabled list, holding on to gain a split of the four-game series against visiting St. Louis. Richard (2-5) picked up the win to snap a four-decision losing streak. He walked one while equaling his career high of 10 strikeouts. Wainwright, 36, came off the disabled list to make his first start since April 23. He had missed four starts due to inflammation in his right elbow. He allowed two runs on three hits and issued a career-high six walks with three strikeouts in 2 1/3 innings.

INDIANS 11, ROYALS 2

Jose Ramirez, Yan Gomes and Michael Brantley hit home runs to back the strong pitching of Corey Kluber, lifting the Cleveland to a victory over visiting Kansas City. The Indians took two of three in the series. Staked to a 5-0 lead in the second inning, Kluber (6-2) became the American League's first six-game winner, allowing just two runs, both of which were unearned, in seven innings. He gave up eight hits and did not walk a batter, striking out four. The Indians took advantage of the Royals' inability to turn a double play on either of two fielder's choice ground balls to score five times in the second inning, with Ramirez capping the uprising with a three-run homer off Kansas City starter Danny Duffy (1-5).

GIANTS 5, PIRATES 0

Derek Holland pitched 6 1/3 scoreless innings, and San Francisco scored five runs in the sixth, including two homers, to break a season-worst, six-game losing streak with a win at Pittsburgh. Holland (1-3) collected his first road win since last May 21, going 0-9 in 12 outings away from home in the interim. He allowed four hits, struck out seven and walked five. Relievers Reyes Moronta, Will Smith and Hunter Strickland preserved the shutout and Gorkys Hernandez and Nick Hundley hit homers in the sixth-inning outburst. Pittsburgh had its five-game winning streak halted and missed a chance to sweep the series.

ORIOLES 17, RAYS 1

Joey Rickard made his return to the major leagues in style, hitting two homers and driving in five runs as Baltimore ripped Tampa Bay to win for the fifth time in six games. Rickard hit a solo homer in the second inning and got the big hit in a seven-run fourth inning, a three-run blast to give Baltimore an 11-0 lead. Danny Valencia and Rickard hit back-to-back homers off starter Blake Snell (4-3) in the second for a 2-0 lead. Later in the inning, Trey Mancini banged a third solo homer. — Reuters

Hamilton 'close' to Mercedes contract

BARCELONA: Lewis Hamilton says he is close to signing a new Mercedes contract after winning Sunday's Spanish Grand Prix watched by several members of the all-conquering German constructor's board.

In the aftermath of his dominant triumph ahead of team-mate Valtteri Bottas the defending four-time world champion indicated he will soon be inking a long-awaited new deal with the champions. An announcement before or during the Monaco Grand Prix later this month is now expected.

"All the bosses have been here and I don't think there is anyone in the hierarchy who has any concerns," said Hamilton. "We do talk about it and we are not far away from finishing things. It will happen - hopefully in the near future." The 33-year-old Englishman was so thrilled by both his own personal return to form and the team's work on improving his car's performance at the Circuit de Catalunya that he suggested, after the race, that he may sign a long-term deal.

It had been rumoured that he was reluctant to sign a new contract because he feared losing enjoyment of the racing and had reservations about the sport's future direction under new American owners Liberty Media.

But after securing his 64th career win in majestic fashion in a crushing Mercedes one-two that hoisted both

driver and team clear at the top of their respective championships, he said: "If I keep this feeling then I'm going to be racing for a long time!"

Team boss Toto Wolff was also more positive - not only about their performance, but also securing Hamilton for the long-term future. "It's almost all sorted," he said. "We don't want to lose him and I don't think he wants to go anywhere else... Everything is going fine. We have had other priorities in the last few weeks.

"We weren't happy with the performance of the cars and we needed to sort things out. Finalising a contract takes time and we both decided to park it." Hamilton, like team-mate Bottas, has less than year remaining on his current contract and has been elusive on making any firm commitments to both Mercedes and Formula One at various times in recent months.

But his emphatic win on Sunday, when he and Mercedes appeared to have rediscovered the form of past triumphant seasons, may be seen as a major turning point for all concerned. While Ferrari faltered, with four-time former champion Sebastian Vettel finishing fourth and Kimi Raikkonen retiring with power problems, Hamilton did not put a wheel wrong on his way to confidence-boosting victory.

'HIGH NOTE'

"I would like to hope that this race could be part of a turning point," said Hamilton. "I said that I wanted to come here and win the way that I won and when I came across the line I was just happy that I did as I planned.

"The team have been working very hard to understand the tyres and how the



BARCELONA: Mercedes' British driver and first place winner Lewis Hamilton (L) celebrates on the podium with Mercedes' second-placed Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas (R) and engineer Peter Bonnington after the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix at the Circuit de Catalunya in Montmelo in the outskirts of Barcelona on Sunday. — AFP

car works so I think it all came together this weekend. "We definitely go to Monaco on a high note, but we know that we still have a lot of work to do. That said, I will sleep like a baby tonight."

Hamilton will hope also that Ferrari fail to repeat the form that brought them a one-two finish in the Mediterranean principality last year where Vettel won. On Sunday, the German admitted: "No excuses - they were faster than us and beat us fair and square this time, but we can bounce back."

Wolff added that Hamilton's triumph would repair some of the damage done by his recent loss of form and confidence. "The best ones are very sensitive and fragile and that is something we know and he knows," he explained.

"He was solidly in the lead in Melbourne and suddenly he was behind the Ferrari. It is difficult to cope with and in the following races we struggled. "But having such a good weekend here and winning by a solid margin is very important for his confidence." — AFP

eSailing can help conquer high seas

LONDON: Chinese Olympic gold medallist Xu Lijia says eSailing can sharpen decision-making on the water and open up the sport to a new audience as gamers battle it out to be the first world champion.

Virtual Regatta's free Inshore game offers millions of armchair sailors the opportunity to pit their wits against the forces of nature—all without the need to get wet. The inaugural eSailing World Championship, which comprises a series of weekly challenges and playoffs, with the boat types and venues changing on a regular basis, runs from May until October.

The playoffs, involving 1,000 competitors, will be an online regatta and will last up to 14 days in September. The top four ranked women and top four men from the playoffs will qualify for the eSailing World Championship Final in Florida.

Xu, who won gold at London 2012 in the Laser Radial class, is in no doubt the online game can help professionals hone their skills. "Because it is so fast-changing it can help us become faster in reactions and decision-making and we can apply that on the water," she said at last week's world championship launch in London.

"This is a few minutes and we have to react quickly, otherwise we get left far behind." Xu, an Olympic bronze medalist on home waters in 2008, is also confident the game can open up the sport to a whole new audience. "I think almost all kids in China are brought up with technology," said the 30-year-old. "But I hope they can still go out and enjoy the real sport, see the sun shine, experience the fresh air and the water." — AFP

Sports

Road warrior Capitals grab control of Eastern final

Capitals were given a powerplay with 10 seconds left

LOS ANGELES: Evgeny Kuznetsov scored off a lucky bounce late in the second period as the Washington Capitals seized command of the Eastern Conference final with a lopsided 6-2 win over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Sunday.

Goaltender Andrei Vasilevskiy misplayed a Kuznetsov centring pass that deflected into the net at the end of the second period to make it 4-2, helping the Capitals take a two games to none playoff series lead. "We played hard and we played smart," said Capitals forward Alex Ovechkin.

"All four lines did their job. We waited for our opportunities." The series now shifts from Florida to Washington tonight where the Capitals will try to take a 3-0 stranglehold. Kuznetsov also had two assists, Lars Eller finished with a goal and two assists and Braden Holtby made 33 saves for the Capitals, who are in the semi-finals for the first time in two decades.

They are playing for a spot in the National Hockey League's Stanley Cup finals against either the Las Vegas Golden Knights or Winnipeg. The Jets have a 1-0 series lead. Russian forward Kuznetsov said he doesn't know how to explain it but he performs better in road games like Sunday's contest at Tampa's Amalie Arena. He loves the idea of sweeping the series with two wins at home but can't wait to get back to Florida if the series goes that far.

"I don't know man. The last couple of years I just been dreaming to play all games on the road. I don't know why," Kuznetsov said. "I feel bad for our fans. I

want to play in front of them, but overall I really like to be on the road."

The Capitals are also winning without their top two-way player Nicklas Backstrom who is out with a hand injury. His place in the lineup has been taken by Eller who has stepped out of the shadows to give the Capitals the extra punch they need.

Eller was instrumental on both plays when the turning point came in the final minute of the second period. He scored the eventual winner with 62 seconds left and then assisted on Kuznetsov's powerplay goal. The Capitals were given a powerplay with 10 seconds left after netminder Vasilevskiy tripped Washington's Andre Burakovsky, sending the Swedish forward hard into the end boards.

TURNING POINT

Vasilevskiy then attempted to intercept Kuznetsov's centring pass to Eller but the puck hit his blocker and went in just before the buzzer to give the Capitals a two-goal lead heading into the intermission.

Tampa tried to battle back in the third but the Capitals did a good job of slowing them down and not allowing them to utilize their speed and skill around the net. Holtby also made clutch saves when he had to. He had back-to-back stops from in close on Tampa forward Brayden Point on the powerplay halfway through the third. Washington forward Brett Connolly scored at 12:57 after taking a pass on his stick blade and then, like a lacrosse player, whipping the puck into the upper half of the net to round out



TAMPA: Braden Holtby #70 of the Washington Capitals tends goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning in Game Two of the Eastern Conference Finals during the 2018 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Amalie Arena on Sunday in Tampa, Florida. — AFP

the scoring.

Russia's Ovechkin, with his team-leading 10th goal of the postseason, Tom Wilson and Devante Smith-Pelly also scored for the Capitals. Point and

Steven Stamkos scored goals for Tampa, who may have dug a hole too deep to climb out of by losing the first two games on home ice. Vasilevskiy finished with 31 saves. — AFP

O'Brien the hero as Ireland avoid innings defeat in debut Test

DUBLIN: Kevin O'Brien became the first Ireland batsman to score a fifty in men's Test cricket as the debutants avoided an innings defeat by Pakistan yesterday. Ireland, made to follow-on, were 212 for six at tea on the fourth day at Malahide - a lead of 32 runs.

O'Brien was 67 not out, having top-scored with 40 in Ireland's meagre first innings 130 all out, with Stuart Thompson (22 not out) providing good support in an unbroken seventh-wicket stand of 55.

Earlier, Pakistan's Mohammad Amir took his 100th Test wicket and for all O'Brien's defiance the tourists remained well-placed to win this one-off match. Ireland started the day on their highly creditable overnight 64 without loss. But they lost four wickets in Monday's first session, with left-arm quick Amir—who had both openers dropped during a brief spell on Sunday before going off with a knee problem-enjoying a burst of two wickets for no runs in six balls. It was a heartening sign for Pakistan ahead of their upcoming two-Test series in England that will feature back-to-back fixtures at Lord's (May 24-28) and Headingley (June 1-5). Amir, however, repeatedly limped around the field yesterday when he was not bowling. Ireland resumed with veteran opener Ed Joyce, arguably their greatest batsman of all time, 39 not out and captain William Porterfield unbeaten on 23. At that stage they were still 116 runs behind.

The last thing Ireland needed was to gift Pakistan a wicket via a run out and yet that is exactly how an opening stand eventually worth 69 runs ended when Joyce set off for a needlessly tight single before failing to beat Faheem Ashraf's direct hit from midwicket. The 39-year-old left-hander was out for 43, including six well-struck fours.



DUBLIN: Pakistan's Sarfraz Ahmed (R) watches as Ireland's Niall O'Brien plays a shot during play on day four of Ireland's inaugural Test match against Pakistan at Malahide cricket club, in Dublin yesterday. —AFP

Fear that as soon as Ireland lost one wicket, another might follow quickly were proved correct as 69 for one became 69 for two, with Andrew Balbirnie lbw to Mohammad Abbas for nought for the second time in the match as he completed a pair.

Amir struck with his 29th ball Monday when Niall O'Brien, Kevin's brother, had his stumps uprooted for a wicket greeted with the bowler's familiar arms outstretched celebration. And 94 for three became 95 for four when Amir had Porterfield (32) edging to wicket-keeper Sarfraz Ahmed, the Pakistan captain.

At lunch, Amir had innings figures of two for 12 in 10.2 overs, with Ireland 123 for four-still 57 behind. An innings defeat was still a possibility when Amir, given a jail sen-

tence and banned from cricket for five years as a result of his involvement in a spot-fixing scandal during the 2010 Lord's Test, took his 100th wicket in 31 matches at this level when Gary Wilson was held in the slips by Haris Sohail.

But Thompson's single off all-rounder Faheem meant Pakistan would have to bat again, while Kevin O'Brien was looking increasingly assured. Best known for hitting the fastest-ever World Cup hundred, off 50 balls, against England at Bangalore in 2011, Kevin O'Brien reversed those figures to complete a Test fifty off 100 balls with a single against Shadab.

Pakistan took the new ball with Ireland 193 for six but Kevin O'Brien's response was to clip Abbas for a legside boundary. — AFP

best ever round at TPC Sawgrass with a 65 on Saturday, and was 14-under through 12 and sharing second place thanks to six birdies. It would, however, be the highwater mark of Woods's challenge. He dropped a shot at 14 then took a double bogey at the 17th where he was in the water surrounding the famed island green. His three-under 69 left him with a share of 11th place on 11-under par.

"I didn't play particularly well in the first couple days, but I turned it around this weekend and I got it rolling," Woods said. "I hit the ball well, I controlled it and I made some putts. I knew my putting was right around the corner, I knew I was close because I hit good putts that just didn't go in." "It was just a matter of time, and this weekend was it." Joining Woods in the group on 11-under was Justin Thomas-whose final-round 66 for 277 was good enough to dethrone Dustin Johnson atop the world rankings.

Thomas, who came into the week ranked second, becomes the 21st different player to hold the top spot, ending Johnson's 64-week reign.

'LITTLE BEACON OF LIGHT'

Simpson finished four shots in front of a trio of players: South African Charl Schwartzel and Americans Jimmy Walker and Xander Schauffele who all fired final-round 67s to finish on 14-under 274.

Simpson's lead was down to four shots when he bogeyed the 10th, but he moved to 20-under for the tournament with birdies at the two par-fives on the back nine, the 11th and 16th. Having holed a par putt from the fringe at the treacherous 17th he arrived at the last leading by six shots-only to find the water with his approach en route to a double-bogey six. The late stumble couldn't dim his joy in the victory, his fifth on the US PGA Tour and his first since 2013. "There's been some tough moments along the way," said Simpson, whose father died in November. "It's been a tough few months for my mom, my brothers and sisters. This is a little beacon of light for my mom, to get this done on Mother's Day." —AFP



PONTE VEDRA BEACH: Webb Simpson of the United States celebrates with his wife Taylor Dowd after winning during the final round of THE PLAYERS Championship on Sunday in Veda Beach, Florida.—AFP

Simpson marches to four-stroke Players triumph

PONTE VEDRA BEACH: Former US Open champion Webb Simpson finished a four-stroke, wire-to-wire triumph at the Players Championship on Sunday to end a four-year victory drought. A double-bogey at the final hole was just a blip for the 32-year-old Simpson, who signed for a final-round 73 and an 18-under par total of 270 at TPC Sawgrass.

"Man, it means everything to me," Simpson, who won the US Open in 2012, said. "I feel like it's my first win. I feel so similar to how I felt in Greensboro back in 2011. "To win a major championship and a few other Tour events and then go-I guess it's over four years without a win, I never doubted myself, but at the same time, that's a long time."

The North Carolina native was never headed since sharing the lead on day one and then storming five shots clear of his rivals on day two in shooting a course record-equaling 63. Simpson took a tournament-record seven-shot lead into the final round and marched to the victory as would-be challengers, including 14-time major champion Tiger Woods fell by the wayside.

Playing partner Danny Lee of New Zealand quickly cut Simpson's lead to five with birdies at the second and third. Simpson stalled with six straight pars before a first birdie of his round at the par-four seventh that took him to 20-under. Simpson gave the shot straight back in finding a greenside bunker at the par-three eighth, and as he headed to his final nine holes his biggest threat wasn't Lee but two-time Players winner Woods. Woods had produced his

Buttler smashes fifth IPL 50 to match Sehwag record

MUMBAI: Jos Buttler said he was revelling in his run of form after cracking a fifth consecutive half-century to equal Virender Sehwag's Indian Premier League record.

The England wicketkeeper-batsman's unbeaten 94 off 53 balls against the Mumbai Indians kept his Rajasthan Royals the IPL playoff race and matched Sehwag's mark set in 2012. Buttler hit nine fours and five sixes as the Royals romped home by seven wickets in the cash-rich Twenty20 league.

"I'm really enjoying it, found some good form, it's a do-or-die situation and I'm full of confidence so want to keep it going," said Buttler, who cost the Royals \$653,840 at auction. "I'm in a good head-space and looking forward to the next game," he added after Sunday's win.

Buttler, 27, will get the chance to break the record against Kolkata Knight Riders today with his 94 coming just days after notching his highest Twenty20 score of 95 not out against Chennai Super Kings last week. That followed knocks of 67 off 26 balls, 51 (off 39) and 82 (off 58) and means Buttler has amassed 509 runs in 12 games in 2018 at an average of 56.55 and a strike-rate of 153.77.

"He has been in great form. He didn't give us any chances," conceded Mumbai skipper Rohit Sharma. The Royals' win also ensured a final-four place for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led Super Kings, who stand behind table-toppers Sunrisers Hyderabad in the eight-team table.

The Royals lies fifth with two matches remaining with the top four moving into the playoffs. This year's seven week tournament has \$8 million in prize money, including \$4m for the team crowned champions at the May 27 final in Mumbai. —AFP

Nishikori back winning in Rome, Vinci bows out

ROME: Japan's Kei Nishikori eased into the second round of the ATP Italian Open in Rome yesterday as Italy's Roberta Vinci bowed out of her final WTA tournament with a first round defeat. Former US Open finalist Vinci fell 2-6, 6-0, 6-3 to Serbian qualifier Aleksandra Krunic on the red clay of the Foro Italico.

The 35-year-old reached the US Open final in 2010 and won ten singles title in her career spanning nearly two decades. Nishikori—who had lost his two matches on clay in Spain in the previous two weeks-needed 1hr 48min to hand Spaniard Feliciano Lopez his sixth defeat in seven trips to the Italian capital 7-6 (7/5), 6-4.

"It wasn't easy match. It was windy so conditions were tough for both of us," said 24th-ranked Nishikori, who hit 18 winners to counter the seven aces fired down by Lopez. Nishikori arrived in Rome after losing his two matches on clay in Spain—retiring in Barcelona due to a recurring wrist injury problem before losing his opening-round in Madrid to Novak Djokovic.

"He used a lot of slice and great serves, but I think I handled his slice well," continued Nishikori who won his last title in Memphis in February 2016. "The first set could have gone both ways, luckily I got it and after that, I was more confident and I was playing better tennis." —AFP

Sports

Mohamed Salah breaks record and Boateng leaves Barca heartbroken

Boateng hit his first professional hat-trick

PARIS: Egyptian Mohamed Salah broke a record and Ghanaian Emmanuel Boateng left Barcelona heartbroken as they became the top African performers in the elite European leagues at the weekend. Salah scored his 32nd English Premier league goal of the season for Liverpool on the final day to better a record he shared with Alan Shearer, Cristiano Ronaldo and Luis Suarez. A Boateng hat-trick enabled lowly Levante to stun Barcelona 5-4 and shatter the La Liga champions dream of an unbeaten league season after going 36 matches without losing.

ENGLAND

MOHAMED SALAH (Liverpool)

The winger scored a record-breaking 32nd goal of the Premier League season as he set a new mark for the most goals in a 38-game campaign. Salah went into the last day of the season at Anfield sharing the record, but needed only 26 minutes to make it his personal property as he produced a clinical left-foot finish from inside the Brighton penalty area, setting Liverpool on the way to a 4-0 win that secured a Champions League place next season. Salah, who was voted the Premier League Player of the Year earlier in the day, has now scored 44 goals in 51 appearances in all competitions for Liverpool this season.



On-loan Diabate scores a late winner

WILFRIED ZAHA (Crystal Palace)

The Ivory Coast winger netted his ninth goal of the season as Palace rounded off their campaign with a 2-0 win over relegated West Bromwich Albion. Zaha fired home from Patrick van Aanholt's cross in the 70th minute to put Palace ahead. It was Zaha's fifth goal in his last six appearances, capping a superb season.

PIERRE-EMERICK AUBAMEYANG (Arsenal)

The Gabon striker marked Arsene Wenger's farewell with the winning goal in the Gunners' 1-0 victory at Huddersfield. Aubameyang scored in the 38th minute with a close-range finish at the end of a flowing Arsenal attack. Aubameyang's 10th goal since moving from Borussia Dortmund in January provided Wenger with an uplifting exit as the Arsenal manager steps down after 22 years in charge.

SPAIN

EMMANUEL BOATENG (Levante)

Boateng hit his first professional hat-trick as

Levante stunned Barcelona by ending the La Liga champions' hopes of an unbeaten season with a sensational 5-4 victory. Boateng scored twice in the first half an hour and his third shortly after the interval. He is the first player to score a hat-trick against Barcelona in a league game since Diego Forlan in 2005.

ACHRAF HAKIMI (Real Madrid)

The Madrid-born Morocco defender scored the fourth goal soon after half-time as Champions League finalists Real Madrid romped to a 6-0 triumph over Celta Vigo in their final home match of the La Liga season.

ITALY

SIMY (Crotone)

Nigerian Simy pulled relegation-threatened Crotone level after going behind to an early goal to Lazio in a 2-2 draw. The towering 26-year-old nodded in after half an hour in their home match in Calabria. It was the seventh goal this season for Simy.

FRANCK KESSIE (AC Milan)

Ivorian Kessie was in impressive form as he gave AC Milan the lead after an hour in Atalanta only for a goalkeeping error to allow

the Bergamo side to grab a late 1-1 draw. The result secured Europa League football for both clubs next season.

CHEICK DIABATE (Benevento)

On-loan Malian Diabate scored a late winner as already-relegated Benevento gave their fans a lift with a 1-0 win over Genoa in their final home Serie A match. Goalkeeper Christian Puggioni saved mid-table Genoa from conceding until four minutes to go when Diabate finished off a cross. It was his seventh goal in nine games since switching from Turkish club Osmanlispor.

GERMANY

NABY KEITA (RB Leipzig)

The Liverpool-bound Guinea midfielder signed off after two seasons with Leipzig by helping them romp to a 6-2 win at Hertha Berlin. He combined with Germany striker Timo Werner to set up the second goal for England junior international Ademola Lookman, who drilled home a superb shot on 22 minutes. Keita went off 14 minutes from the final whistle in



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah celebrates after scoring during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Brighton and Hove Albion at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England on Sunday. — AFP

Berlin after a blow to the back.

SALOMON KALOU (Hertha Berlin)

The Ivory Coast veteran netted his 12th league goal of the season on the final day when he timed his run into the box perfectly and powered home a header in Hertha's heavy home defeat to Leipzig. When Marvin Plattenhardt swung in a corner, Kalou sprinted between two defenders and drove home his header to make it 5-2 on 64 minutes.

CHADRAC AKOLO (VfB Stuttgart)

Stuttgart picked up their first win at Bayern Munich at the 17th attempt with a shock 4-1 victory over the Bundesliga champions and Democratic Republic of the Congo midfielder Akolo was among their scorers. Stuttgart, who repeatedly punished Bayern on the break, made it 3-1 on 52 minutes when Emiliano Insua picked out Akolo perfectly in the centre of the box and

the Congolese headed back across into the corner.

FRANCE

LEBO MOTHIBA (Lille)

The young South African continued good form by scoring twice in the first half as Lille came from behind at home to defeat Dijon 2-1 and guarantee another season of Ligue 1 football.

STEPHANE BAHOKEN (Strasbourg)

Cameroonian Bahoken struck the first goal of the match as Strasbourg upset third-place Lyon 3-2 to ensure they remain in the top flight next season.

JEAN-MICHAEL SERI (Nice)

Ivorian Seri netted the last Nice goal as they triumphed 4-1 at home against relegation-threatened Caen, whose lone goal came from compatriot Christian Koukou. — AFP

Cannavaro on back foot in battle for 'toxic' China top spot

SHANGHAI: Guangzhou Evergrande's seven-year domination of Chinese football could be under threat in what is shaping up to be the most fiercely contested title race in recent memory. Shanghai SIPG stand top of the Chinese Super League (CSL) on goal difference from Shandong Luneng after a third of the campaign with Beijing Guoan, Jiangsu Suning and Guangzhou Evergrande all lined up closely behind them.

Just two points separate the top five but Guangzhou Evergrande coach Fabio Cannavaro is pleading for patience from fans who grown used to seeing their side lift the CSL title—they have done it in each of the past seven years. "We respect our supporters and are very thankful to them, but we also hope that they can be more understanding sometimes," said the Italian World Cup-winner after some fans made their anger clear in the 2-2 home draw with mid-table Hebei China Fortune on Saturday.

Cannavaro, who took over from the Brazilian coach Luiz Felipe Scolari in the close season, admitted his side were fortunate to get a point against a Hebei team containing former Barcelona star Javier Mascherano and coached by former Manchester City and Real Madrid boss Manuel Pellegrini. Cannavaro's position will come under scrutiny if two-time Asian champions Guangzhou fail to see off fellow Chinese side Tianjin Quanjian, who were managed by the Italian last season, in the last 16 of the AFC Champions League on Tuesday.

The tie is poised at 0-0 after last week's first leg in Tianjin. Shandong would have gone top of the CSL with victory at mid-table Tianjin, but instead they needed a 96th-minute equaliser from former Southampton striker Graziano Pelle to rescue a point after Alexandre Pato put the home side in front.

The Guangzhou Daily said top spot appeared to be "toxic". "After drawing with Hebei, Guangzhou have not tasted victory in four matches. Maybe the top spot is toxic," the newspaper said. "Shandong also 'refused' the summit with a draw, even though they are level on points with Shanghai.

"For other top teams, Beijing Guoan also 'abandoned' the chance to go top after drawing (2-2 at home) with Guangzhou R&F." — AFP



MOSCOW: Moscow's Chertanovo club female footballers take part in a training session in Moscow. — AFP

Once taboo, Russian women's football eyes World Cup boost

MOSCOW: The sniggering kids kept pointing and staring at Margarita Chernomyrdina when she was small because she played football with the boys.

She was the first girl brave enough to try and make the junior league. Now rapt crowds watch the 22-year-old lead the women's national team in its quest to win acceptance and respect in Vladimir Putin's socially conservative Russia. The technically-gifted midfielder with the firm gaze and soft smile knows the men's World Cup kicking off in Moscow in a month could work miracles for the Russian women's game.

"I think I gave women's football a certain push," Chernomyrdina says after a spirited practice with her domestic side Chertanovo. "Girls saw that they could play football, that it was allowed, that nothing was banned, and that parents should not be afraid," she says. "Of course I think the World Cup will only help."

SOVIET BAN

Chernomyrdina has spent her life breaking taboos set in the Soviet era and cemented by modern Russia's rigid-some would say regressive-view of women's role in the world. The Communist Party brushed aside its stated equality goal and banned women's football outright in 1972 because it was a "men's sport". A brief revival in former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev's liberal perestroika era stalled under the weight of catastrophic economic woes. And Putin's Russia has had a hard time embracing the progress made by women in other parts of the world some generations ago. Many aspiring girl footballers still have to brace themselves against cultural stereotypes if they want to play their chosen sport.

That is why 17-year-old Olga Belousova giggles shyly

and looks away when discussing how others react to her devotion to the beautiful game.

"Some of my friends say it's completely normal and others say no, this is not feminine," the national junior team regular says. "I tell people that I like it, that I don't care what the others say. The most important thing is that I like it and this is mine." Sports historians have spun various theories about why women failed to make an impact on Russian pitches while the sport blossomed in places such as Germany and the United States.

One popular legend says that great goalkeepers such as Lev Yashin and Rinat Dasayev were associated in Soviet folklore with defenders of the former superpower's sovereignty. This confluence of masculinity and patriotism made football into a tool of political propaganda and left no room for women in the game. Former national team coach Sergei Lavrentyev has little time for such talk as he leads Chertanovo's afternoon training session.

"In some respects, I think it is more interesting than men's football," he says after shouting out encouragement and instructions in a gruff but amiable style. "It is more emotional, more charged up. The girls, they wear their hearts on their sleeves. I think the girls are even tougher."

'EVERYBODY JUST PLAYS'

The Russian team are making some strides. They have reached three consecutive European Championships and beat highly fancied Italy for the first time last year. Chernomyrdina hopes to avenge a 6-0 beating by England in a 2019 World Cup qualifier last year when the teams meet in Russia's next match on June 8.

But the professional Russian league has shrunk from 15 teams in 1992 to just eight. Average club match attendance is 200. Chertanovo are full of national team talent but still play in a stadium with one stand that might seat 100 or so.

Coach Lavrentyev says the main obstacle to growth is simple: society's apprehension about letting girls kick a ball means they have almost no academies in which to train. "That is why a huge event like the World Cup will help. Millions will see it and there will be a large flow of children to football schools," says Lavrentyev. "It is a real a gift, the World Cup." Viktoria Dubova is not so sure. — AFP

Costa looking for closure in Europa League final

BARCELONA: Diego Costa's return to Atletico Madrid has not been plain sailing, but it rarely is with the former Chelsea striker who has helped his Spanish club within reach of their third Europa League trophy.

Since rejoining his former side in September, and after sitting out three months because of Atletico Madrid's ban on registering players, Costa has only three league goals in 14 appearances. One of them came on his return to La Liga action, netting in a 2-0 win against Getafe on Jan. 6 before earning himself a red card for celebrating too wildly.

However, he also scored in the 1-0 victory in the second leg of the Europa League semi-final against Arsenal, earning Atletico a place in Wednesday's final and ending Arsene Wenger's last hopes of European glory with the Gunners.

Now the striker is looking to fire Atletico to victory against Olympique de Marseille in Lyon, with a personal score to settle, too. His previous appearance in a European final was abruptly ended by injury as Atletico lost 4-1 to Real Madrid in the 2014 Champions League final.

Costa went into that derby clash in Lisbon carrying a hamstring injury and even used horse placenta as part of his treatment before the game, but it didn't work and he was substituted after nine minutes.

After helping to eliminate Arsenal, Costa was hailed by coach Diego Simeone, who said these performances were the reason Atletico shelled out 57 million euros (\$68.3 million) to bring the combative player back from Stamford Bridge.

"Costa came back here for nights like this: to be important, to lead from the front," said Simeone. "This side needs an aggressive striker, a striker with anger and that's exactly what he is." Even though Costa's form has varied over the past four months, he forms an undeniably dangerous attacking partnership with Antoine Griezmann, who set up Costa's goal against Arsenal.

Costa might be able to return the favour by helping the Frenchman to win his first major trophy at Atletico before a potential summer move to Barcelona. Rumours have been swirling for some time that Griezmann will sign for Barca.

"I love working with him and with the team," said Costa. "He's thinking about winning the trophy. All the forwards have won something with this club over the past few seasons and he wants to leave his mark here, too." — Reuters

Sports

Juventus reign in Italy but European success eludes Allegri

Farewell ceremony expected to honour retiring Buffon

ROME: Juventus were crowned Serie A champions for the seventh year in a row on Sunday maintaining their dominance in Italian football while European success continues to elude the Turin giants. It was a double Roman celebration five days after Massimiliano Allegri's side won the Italian Cup title with a 4-0 win over AC Milan in the Stadio Olimpico.

"Maximo Masterpiece" headlined the Gazzetta dello Sport of Allegri who has won the league and Cup double in all four seasons since he arrived from AC Milan in 2014. "Allegri is the prophet of a team that writes history, the Turin triumph was expected, but it is still impressive, what else can one say about the extraordinariness of this Juve epoch and its incredible protagonists? Adjectives are no longer enough, the numbers speak for themselves."

Hundreds of fans gathered at the Piazza San Carlo in Turin waving flags with the number 7 after Sunday's goalless draw with AS Roma sealed another triumph with one game to go after a gripping battle with Napoli. "We're looking forward to celebrating with our fans on Saturday," said Allegri of the final game against Verona followed by an open-top bus parade through the city.

The trophy will be awarded then and a farewell ceremony expected to honour retiring skipper Gianluigi Buffon. "Four years like these don't come along often," said Allegri. "Credit goes to the lads for keeping their cool, taking things one step at a time towards our final objective."

But the Turin giants failed to reach their main goal of winning a third Champions League title and first since 1996. Allegri had led them to two finals in three seasons but this time their challenge ended in the quarter-finals to Real Madrid.

And despite speculation linking Allegri with the vacant Arsenal manager's job, club CEO Giuseppe Marotta said he was confident he would remain to target the elusive European title. "There is a lot of optimism. I believe that this relationship can continue," said Marotta. "The Champions League is something imponderable that we always see close but never manage to grasp."

"In the Champions League the difficulties are higher than those in the championship, but we have this goal ahead of us and we will definitely go for it again next season." Meanwhile, Maurizio Sarri's Napoli won 2-0 in Sampdoria

to give them the meagre consolation of a new club record of 88 points.

"It goes without saying Juve are more powerful in every way," said Sarri, who lamented that Napoli played many games after the champions.

Juventus's last-gasp 3-2 comeback victory over Inter Milan two weeks ago delivered the killer blow to Napoli's bid for a first title since the days of Argentina legend Diego Maradona back in 1990.

"We needed to go to bed early on that Saturday night in Florence," said Sarri. "The only regret I have this season is that we lost the Scudetto in the hotel and



ROME: Juventus players celebrate at the end of the Italian Serie A football match AS Roma vs Juventus at the Olympic stadium on Sunday in Rome. Juventus won a seventh straight Serie A title after a goalless draw against ten-man Roma. —AFP

not on the pitch. "The team suffered a psychological blow and felt it for the timing and the way that result came about. "We played after Juve 14 times in the last

16 rounds and seeing as Juve pretty much always wins, that badly damaged us. "This sport has become a business for everyone." —AFP

No crisis for Panini stickers as World Cup fever builds

MODENA: Between eight and ten million packets a day, each with five cards, perhaps including the coveted ones of Lionel Messi, Neymar or Cristiano Ronaldo-as World Cup fever builds the Panini sticker factory in Italy is working flat out.

With Panini, Italy are guaranteed not to miss out on the World Cup in Russia even if their team will not be competing. Created in 1960 by the four Panini brothers, the business has an exclusive contract with world football's governing body FIFA and its first World Cup album dates back to 1970.

Over the past 50 years the principle has never changed-you open, stick and exchange cards. "It's the simplicity that pays. Panini has never been in crisis because it's a simple game enjoyed by parents and children," Simona Spiaggia, head of production at the factory in Modena in central Italy told AFP. Even four-time champions' Italy's absence from the World Cup for the first time in 60 years has not dented booming sales.

"No, it's marginal," continues Spiaggia. "We produce for the entire world, apart from a part of Latin America because we have another factory in Brazil. "But for the rest of the world, everything is done here. So Italy represents just a small part."



FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 Panini sticker collection.

Since last January the machines which have remained unchanged since the 1960s, cut, mix and package at a faster rate than normal with the number of factory employees having jumped from 130 to 240 to keep pace with demand. "We have production peaks every two years with the European championships and the World Cup. But that of the World Cup is a little higher," said Spiaggia. And despite other partnership deals, notably with Disney, and inroads into cycling and basketball, football "still represents the largest part of our business," she said.

Even competition from internet collections has not yet threatened or diminished the appeal of the tradi-

tional paper album. "We're going forward with on-line. But it's a bit like books, some move to e-books, others will always prefer paper and that's the same for our collectors." Fans will be searching avidly for stars including Neymar, Messi and Ronaldo, stickers which may seem rarer but which are in fact not. "If they're rare it's because they are more sought after," explained Spiaggia. "There are fewer in circulation because they're not being exchanged, but not at the start."

In the end it's all down to chance and the shuffle of the machines. That is one thing that has changed from the early days when the mix was done with a shovel by throwing the stickers against the wall. —AFP

Resurgent Marseille flying the flag for France again

PARIS: Twenty-five years have passed since Marseille's crowning moment, but the only French club ever to have been European champions are finally dreaming of more glory on the continental stage. After a Europa League campaign that began in late July, Rudi Garcia's side now find themselves up against Atletico Madrid in tomorrow's final in Lyon, at the home of one of their great rivals.

OM will not be the favourites against Diego Simeone's formidable team, and indeed anybody brave enough at the start of the season to tip a French side to go all the way in Europe would probably not have said Marseille. But Paris Saint-Germain again came up short in the Champions League, despite the world-record signing of Neymar, and Lyon failed to reach the Europa League final in their own stadium, leaving Marseille to fly the flag. They have done that with distinction before-Basile Boli's headed winner against AC Milan in the 1993 Champions League final in Munich allowed them to become European champions for the first time. No French side has repeated that feat, with PSG's victory in the now defunct Cup Winners' Cup in 1996 the only other European trophy success for the country's clubs. Marseille have had their moments though-already beaten in the 1991 European Cup final, on penalties by Red Star Belgrade, they lost the UEFA Cup finals of 1999 to Parma and 2004 to Valencia.

Still France's best supported side, they are preparing for their fifth European final altogether, looking to give their notoriously passionate fans a night to remember. "It's fantastic. I'd really love to write history with OM. We have had a great run and given ourselves this chance," said Florian Thauvin, their outstanding player this season.

Those fans will travel the three hours by road to Lyon in big numbers, relishing the prospect of lifting that trophy in their rivals' own backyard, even if only around 11,000 tickets have been allocated to them. In a Mediterranean city that lives and breathes for its football team, there have been more downs than ups in the last quarter of a century, and fans descended on the Old Port to celebrate in style



GUINGAMP: File photo shows Guingamp's French Clement Grenier (L) vies with Marseille's Argentinian forward Lucas Ocampos (C) and Marseille's French midfielder Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa during the French L1 football match Guingamp against Olympique of Marseille (OM) on May 11, 2018 in Guingamp. — AFP

after the semi-final win over Salzburg. "When you are a player and you live in Marseille, you understand right away," Boli, now 51, said in an interview with France Televisions. "You go to the butcher, the baker, you go to pick up your daughter, the city is like that, you don't need to be told that you represent something extraordinary. You experience it every day."

MCCOURT'S 'ROAD TO GLORY'

The 1993 success of Boli's side ended up closing a golden period in the club's history-a match-fixing scandal erupted at the same time, and finished with Marseille being consigned to the second division a year later. OM have been French champions only once since, under Didier Deschamps in 2010, and since then have seen their greatest enemies, PSG, become one of the richest clubs on the

planet under Qatari ownership. PSG's budget is around four times that of Marseille, and the capital side have just won a fifth Ligue 1 crown in six years. But they have consistently fallen short in the Champions League.

Marseille will certainly settle for victory in Europe's less prestigious competition, as they look to cap their first full season since American tycoon Frank McCourt took over at the Stade Velodrome. Former Los Angeles Dodgers owner McCourt bought the club from Margarita Louis-Dreyfus in October 2016 and immediately launched his 'Champions Project', insisting: "We're going to put our club back on the road to glory."

After spending significant money to bring in experience and quality in the likes of Dimitri Payet, Luiz Gustavo and Adil Rami, Marseille are well down that road now, and it leads to Lyon this week. —AFP

Barcelona's unbeaten season ended by five-star Levante

MADRID: Philippe Coutinho hit a hat-trick but could not save Barcelona's unbeaten season as the Catalans were left stunned by an extraordinary 5-4 defeat to Levante on Sunday. Ernesto Valverde rested Lionel Messi for his team's penultimate match of the campaign but it was a defensive horror-show that allowed Emmanuel Boateng to score three times and Enis Bardhi twice at the City of Valencia Stadium. The La Liga and Copa del Rey champions trailed 5-1 after an hour and still came within a whisker of a sensational comeback as Coutinho's second and third goals, and a Luis Suarez penalty, set up a grandstand finish. But Levante held on for a thrilling victory, which ends their opponents' hopes of becoming the first ever club to finish a 38-game La Liga season as invincibles.

After drawing at home to Real Madrid last weekend, despite playing the second half with 10 men, and thrashing Villarreal, Barcelona sat just two games away from the historical feat.

It was 1932 when the last side, Real Madrid, went unbeaten in the top-flight but even that was across only 18 matches, in a 10-team division. This was Barcelona's first league loss since slipping up against Malaga on April 8 last year and while it has minimal impact on the table, Valverde will have questions to answer, not least with regards to leaving out Messi. "We are angry not to have come through this game and not to have the opportunity to finish unbeaten," Valverde said.

"But in a season some matches go your way and some don't. I think this result was harsh in all respects but at other times this season, like in Seville, we could also have lost."

This defensive collapse was reminiscent of their Champions League meltdown against Roma, which has soured an otherwise successful campaign. The unbeaten record was supposed to help alone for the European failure. "Obviously we wanted to finish the league undefeated," Sergio Busquets told beIN Sport.

"But this does not take away everything we have done otherwise this season - everything we have achieved in league, the run we managed across two seasons - but, it is a shame."

For Levante, this is their eighth win in 10 matches under new coach Paco Lopez, who took charge with the club in danger of relegation but has overseen a remarkable transformation. They move up to 15th. Paco's players exploded out of the blocks and pulled ahead in the ninth minute when Boateng nipped in at the near post after Jose Luis Morales' weaving run down the left. Bardhi hit the woodwork with a lifted finish over Marc-Andre ter Stegen but Barca failed to heed the warnings and Boateng made it two after half an hour, latching on to Sasa Lukic's threaded ball through. Coutinho pulled one back with a rasping shot before half-time but three Levante goals in 10 minutes after the interval sent the home fans into delirium.

Bardhi's blistering shot restored the two-goal advantage before Boateng completed his hat-trick as Barca's defence was ripped apart again on the break. Another counter just before the hour ended with another crisp Bardhi finish, as Barca were now staring at a four-goal deficit. The game looked dead but Coutinho scored twice in six minutes, the first a close-range finish after Ousmane Dembele's shot spilled loose, the second an instinctive shot from the edge of the area. —AFP

13 Webb Simpson marches to four-stroke Players triumph



14 Once taboo, Russian women's football eyes World Cup boost



15 Juventus reign in Italy but European success eludes Allegri



BOSTON: Jayson Tatum #0 of the Boston Celtics attempts a shot against the Cleveland Cavaliers during the fourth quarter in Game One of the Eastern Conference Finals of the 2018 NBA Playoffs at TD Garden on Sunday in Boston, Massachusetts. — AFP

Celtics humble Cavaliers in NBA opener

'Our guys played with good aggression'

NEW YORK: Jaylen Brown scored 23 points and Al Horford added 20 to power the Boston Celtics over Cleveland 108-83 Sunday, humbling LeBron James and his Cavaliers teammates in their NBA playoff series opener. The Celtics seized the lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference finals, with the winner to face either season wins leader Houston or defending champion Golden State in the NBA Finals.

The Celtics, who host game two tomorrow, jumped ahead 36-18 after the first quarter and never looked back, the Cavaliers coming no closer than 14 points in the second half. "We were great," Horford said. "We came out with a lot of energy. We fed off the crowd and we kept it going throughout the game. We're just out here playing hard and doing the best we can."

Marcus Morris had 18 points and 11 rebounds for Boston and Jayson Tatum added 16 while Brown had eight rebounds and Terry Rozier contributed eight points and seven assists. James averaged 34 points, 9.4

rebounds and 9.0 assists in the first two rounds of the playoffs but the superstar playmaker, seeking an eighth consecutive NBA Finals berth, was shut down by an aggressive, hustling Celtics squad.

"We just have to make it hard for him," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said of James. "Our guys played with good aggression. They will have to do that again tomorrow." James finished with 15 points on 5-of-16 shooting with seven rebounds and nine assists. He blocked two shots but also made seven turnovers.

"They showed two bodies (guarding James) all night," Cavaliers coach Tyrone Lue said. "When he thought he had driving lanes, they made him kick it out to other shooters." The Celtics forced James to work harder defensively and rotated several players on the four-time NBA Most Valuable Player to contain him offensively. "We lost," Lue said. "We didn't play well. We know we have to play better. They attacked us early on. We had some great shots we couldn't make and it

snowballed from there." Talented 20-something players Tatum, Rozier and Brown have filled the void left by injured stars Kyrie Irving and Gordon Hayward, combining with Horford — who has been eliminated by James four times in the playoffs-to become a formidable force that out-hustled the more experienced Cavaliers and dominated defensively.

CELTICS DOMINATE EARLY

"They are just embracing this opportunity," Horford said. "We have a great opportunity in front of us and we're enjoying it game by game. I try to lead them the best way I can, lead by example." Morris, who boasted he was the best defender to guard James, started and contained the Cleveland superstar, who has more career playoff appearances than the entire Celtics roster combined. "He's a tough player," Horford said. "He knows how to defend. He has a great feel for that."

Kevin Love led Cleveland with 17 points and eight

rebounds. Tristan Thompson had a game-high 11 rebounds off the Cavs' bench. Boston seized a 63-35 lead early in the second half but the Cavs halved their deficit, Jeff Green's jumper at the third-quarter buzzer pulling Cleveland within 78-64 entering the fourth.

Boston answered with a 7-0 run to start the fourth. A Morris dunk, Marcus Smart 3-pointer and Tatum layup stretched the Celtics' lead to 85-64 as part of an 18-4 run that would put Boston ahead 96-68 and end Cleveland's hopes. Boston surged ahead 61-35 at half-time, paced by Brown's 18 points and seven rebounds and Horford's 14 points and five assists. James shot only 3-for-8 in the first half and the Cavaliers missed their first 14 3-point attempts of the game.

The Celtics opened an early 29-9 lead and a 25-2 run helped carry Boston to a 36-18 edge after the first quarter. Brown scored 13 points in the first quarter while Horford added 11 and the Celtics owned a 14-6 rebounding edge. — AFP

Thomas Tuchel named new coach of PSG

PARIS: Thomas Tuchel has been appointed as the new coach of Paris Saint-Germain on a two-year deal, the French champions confirmed yesterday. The 44-year-old German has agreed to succeed Unai Emery, who will leave after the final game of the French season this weekend. "It is with much joy, pride and ambition that I am joining this big club, Paris Saint-Germain," said Tuchel in an English-language statement released by PSG.

"I can't wait to start working with all these great players who are all amongst the best in the world. Paris Saint-Germain has enormous potential and it is by far the most exciting proposition in football."

It was an open secret that Tuchel had been lined up as the next coach of the ambitious club from the French capital. They had been on the look-out for a replacement for Emery ever since being beaten 5-2 on aggregate by Real Madrid in the last 16 of the Champions League in early March.

That disappointment in Europe, following a humiliating loss against Barcelona at the same stage a year ago,



Thomas Tuchel

meant there was no chance of Emery's two-year contract being renewed at the end of this campaign. Tuchel was a free agent after leaving Borussia Dortmund a year ago, despite leading the team to victory in last season's German Cup. "Thomas is one of the best and most competitive European coaches to have emerged over the last few seasons," declared PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi. "He abides by very strong principles of playing spectacular and clinical football that has always been the foundation of German football, especially on the international scene. His competitive spirit, his preference for attacking football and his strong character are in line with what we have always wanted for Paris Saint-Germain." —AFP

Neymar wins French player of the year, rejects transfer talk

PARIS: Neymar was named as France's player of the year at an awards ceremony in Paris on Sunday, and later brushed away questions over his future. The Paris Saint-Germain superstar took the prize despite missing the last three months of the season due to injury.

The world's most expensive player scored 19 goals in just 20 league games for PSG before suffering a foot injury in February that required surgery in his native Brazil. He has not played since, and only returned to France from his homeland at the start of this month, fuelling speculation that he could seek to leave the club after just one season.

"I am very touched and very happy with our season. It is an honour. Without my teammates, I would never have received this award," said the 26-year-old, who collected the prize from his illustrious compatriot Ronaldo. Neymar, who joined in PSG's Ligue 1 title celebrations on

Saturday night, refused to discuss his future after collecting his award. "We talk about these things every time the transfer window comes around. I don't want to talk about anything at the moment," he said. "Everyone knows why I came here, what my objectives are. Right now, my objective is the World Cup, not talking about transfers. I spend my whole life, every transfer window, talking about it. It's a bit annoying."

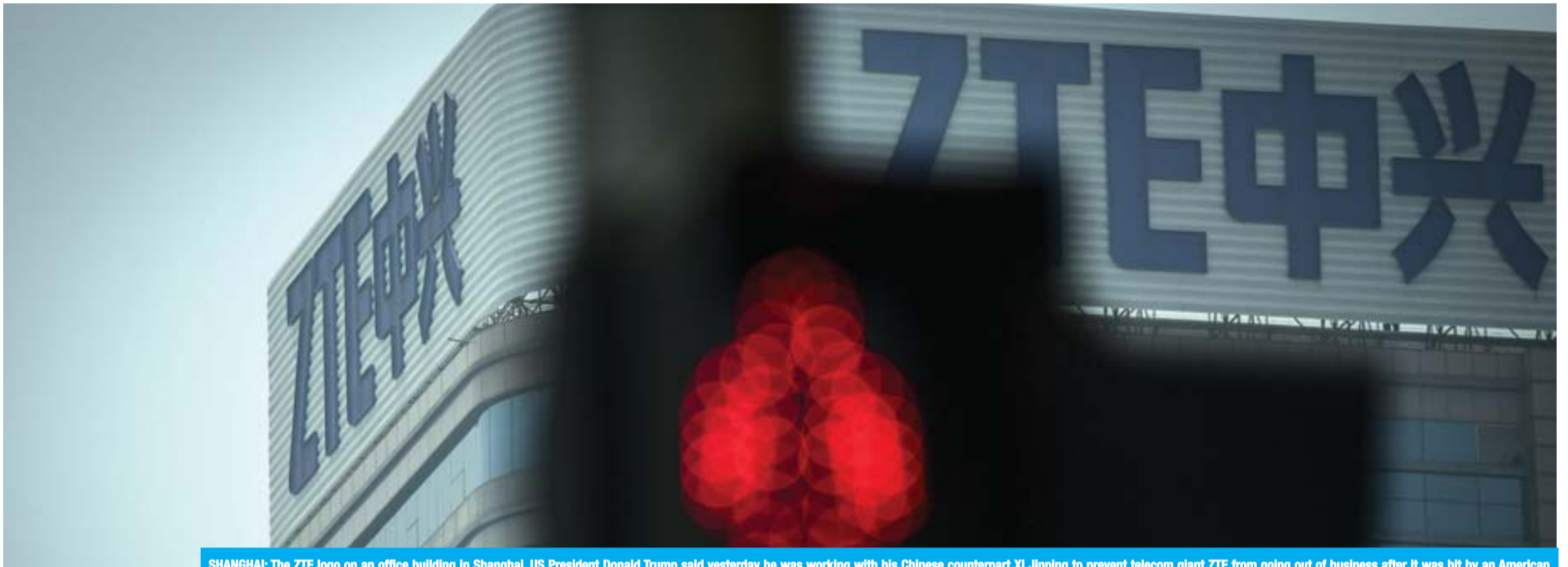
Neymar beat two of his PSG teammates to the prize, voted for by his fellow players—Edinson Cavani, Ligue 1's leading scorer this season with 28 goals, and Kylian Mbappe were also nominees, along with Marseille winger Florian Thauvin. Neymar was signed from Barcelona for a world-record 222 million euros (\$264 million) last August, and helped PSG on their way to a clean sweep of the domestic trophies.

However, his injury appeared to cost Unai Emery's team dear in their Champions League last-16 tie against Real Madrid—he was unable to play in the second leg, and PSG lost 5-2 on aggregate. He is hoping to be back to full fitness in time to lead Brazil at the World Cup in Russia, which starts in a month's time.

Club president Nasser Al-Khelaifi insisted on Saturday that there was no chance Neymar would be leaving. "I am 2000 percent sure he will stay," Al-Khelaifi said, rejecting talk of a transfer to Real Madrid. — AFP

Business

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18 ABK wins 'Bank of the Year' Award from Arabian Business Magazine**19** Al-Sayer unveils a new era of technology**21** NBK, Mastercard make GCC debut of pioneering biometric solutions

SHANGHAI: The ZTE logo on an office building in Shanghai. US President Donald Trump said yesterday he was working with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping to prevent telecom giant ZTE from going out of business after it was hit by an American technology sales ban. — AFP

Trump will help ZTE 'get back into business'

A job-saving concession to Beijing ahead of high-stakes

WASHINGTON/BEIJING: US President Donald Trump pledged on Sunday to help ZTE Corp "get back into business, fast" after a US ban crippled the Chinese technology company, offering a job-saving concession to Beijing ahead of high-stakes trade talks this week.

Trump's unexpected announcement was a stunning reversal, given Washington's tough stance on Chinese trade practices that have put the world's two largest economies on course for a possible trade war. Sources briefed on the matter said Beijing had demanded the ZTE issue be resolved as a prerequisite for broader trade negotiations.

"Too many jobs in China lost. Commerce Department has been instructed to get it done!" Trump wrote on Twitter, saying he and Chinese President Xi Jinping were working together on a solution for ZTE. The US Commerce Department last month banned American companies from selling to the firm for seven years as punishment for ZTE

breaking a 2017 agreement after it was caught illegally shipping US goods to Iran and North Korea, an investigation dating to the Obama administration.

The penalty cut off ZTE's access to key components such as semiconductors, prompting China's second-largest maker of telecommunications equipment to say last week that it had suspended its main operations. During trade talks in Beijing earlier this month, Chinese Vice Premier Liu He told US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin that China would not continue talks on broader bilateral trade disputes unless Washington agreed to ease the crushing sanctions on ZTE, two people briefed on those meetings said.

"The message was, 'we have to deal with ZTE before we continue talks,'" one of the people said. Both sources, who declined to be identified given the sensitivity of the matter, said China was willing in principle to import more US agriculture products in return for Washington smoothing out penalties against ZTE, but they did not offer details.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regularly scheduled news briefing yesterday that China "greatly appreciates the positive US position on the ZTE issue". He said that Liu would travel to Washington from today to Saturday to continue trade talks.

Linked to the trade row

Within the Commerce Department, and in US business circles, the US penalty against ZTE was widely seen as based on clear evidence of a company knowingly flouting US regulations - separate from the highly politicized trade row, the sources said. But Trump's reversal surprised and frustrated many US officials, who had viewed the penalty on ZTE as final and not open to appeal, the sources said.

"Everyone has been explicitly saying this is not part of the trade conflict. And now the President has overtly linked it to the trade dispute for better or worse, and that is not good if you're trying to maintain credibility," the

second source told Reuters. ZTE, whose shares remain suspended, did not have immediate comment. The US Commerce Department and China's Ministry of Commerce did not have immediate comment. White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters confirmed that US officials were in contact with Beijing about ZTE. She said Trump's tweet underscored the importance of "free, fair, balanced and mutually beneficial" relations between the United States and China on issues involving the economy, trade and investment.

Trump expects Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross "to exercise his independent judgment, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, to resolve the regulatory action involving ZTE based on its facts," Walters said. Washington and Beijing have proposed tens of billions of dollars in tariffs in recent weeks, fanning worries of a full-blown trade war that could hurt global supply chains and dent business investment plans. —Reuters

Al-Safat Investment awarded 'Guinness World Record'

KUWAIT: Al-Safat Investment Company broke the record on Thursday (10th May 2018) for designing and executing the world's 'Largest Vinyl-Decal Sticker in the World' on Safat Tower in Hawally district. The sticker itself named "Sabah Al-Ezz" translates to "Sabah of Pride" and has His Highness the Amir Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's portrait.

Furthermore, an adjudicator from Guinness World Records visited Kuwait to check the measurements of the sticker, along with an independent team of surveyors and engineers validating the record, thereafter announcing that Al-Safat Investment Company broke the world record of 830 square meters, as the sticker that Al-Safat put up was 937 square meters, an increase of 107 from the previously held record.

It should be noted that Al-Safat Investment created the aforementioned sticker in February 2018 to celebrate the National and Liberation days and that His Highness the Amir's portrait was chosen for the occasion to appreciate his efforts in all aspects, especially modernizing the economy and developing it.

Chairman of the Board of Directors for Al-Safat Investment Company, Abdullah Hamad Al-Terkait said that the company worked diligently for several months to document this achievement, which is presented to His Highness the Amir, as part of the company's corporate social responsibility plan to support society in general and youth particularly.

Al-Terkait highlighted that Al-Safat Investment is working towards supporting student organizations in higher education institutions, to raise awareness regarding economic development and the importance of investment institutions, as the backbone of the nation's economy as Kuwait is experiencing fast-paced development, originating from His Highness the Amir's 2035 vision (New Kuwait) that both the private and public sector partner together to implement. In terms of youth empowerment, Al-Terkait said that youth make up more than 70 percent of Kuwait's population and empowering them is the responsibility of everyone, especially institutions that deal with them directly such as the SME Fund, Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Public Authority for Youth, noting

that he's happy that there's a trend of young entrepreneurs in Kuwait, creating businesses and jobs for themselves, adding that it's a sign of high economic awareness and that it is the private sector's role to support them.

Al-Terkait added Al-Safat Investment is studying the establishment of, or participating in an investment fund that supports young entrepreneurs and captures opportunities in mainly, the "tech field". He described this particular field as having returns that sync with the company's medium-long term investment strategy, saying that the group's subsidiary and affiliate companies can support these opportunities and provide service packages that lower their operational costs, thus increasing profitability. Referring to the business environment, he added that amending regulations to improve the business sphere, is an urgent matter specifying the law governing the SME Fund, insolvency and bankruptcy laws, commercial registrar and auditors law, pointing to the importance of supporting the industrial sector and national industries, to compete regionally as that sector is essential for economic development.

New Kuwait

Moreover, Al-Terkait stated that some government mechanisms relating to business, need to substantially

improve, like using information and communication technologies to make it easier and faster to process applications and provide better services. He added that the 'New Kuwait 2035' vision aims to transform Kuwait, into a commercial and financial hub to bring foreign investment, to the country where the private sector would be the economic leader, assuring that competition between different sectors would improve productivity in an institutionally governed country. Furthermore, Chairman Al-Terkait noted that His Highness the Amir's efforts to modernize the economy, paved the way for the National Program for Economics and Financial Sustainability, which leads the way to improve the business sphere. He also added that increased competition in the private sector will not happen unless, the economy is diversified away from oil. Additionally, Al-Terkait stated that, the program can increase employment by 70,000-100,000 Kuwaitis by the end of 2021, if competent planning and efficient employment is implemented and supplementing it with good governance, in addition to categorizing jobs to fit the needs of the economy.

Al-Terkait also stressed the need to boost foreign direct investment, to promote and finance small-medium businesses before motivating public-private partnerships and finally to set clear deadlines to privatization, restructuring and reorganizing production sectors.



ABK wins 'Bank of the Year' award from Arabian Business Magazine

ABK Group demonstrates strength across the region

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was named 'Bank of the Year' by Arabian Business Magazine, highlighting the bank's series of milestones and achievements that have been recorded throughout the past year. Abdullah Al-Sumait - Deputy Chief General Manager of ABK and Fawzy Al-Thunayan - General Manager of Board Affairs, received the award on behalf of the bank during an awards ceremony held at Jumeirah Messilah Hotel - Kuwait, on 6th May, 2018.

The 'Bank of the Year' award recognizes ABK's series of achievements across various areas in line with its simpler banking strategy, growing the Bank's operations, and demonstrating the Bank's strength across the region. ABK recently launched a new core banking system; a powerful infrastructure framework that has transformed the Bank's existing IT infrastructure and operating systems entirely. This has already been successfully

deployed across its UAE operations and Kuwait with Egypt following in the near future.

A number of other products and services were introduced including cardless cash withdrawals, a service that enables customers to withdraw cash from ABK Branch ATMs using the Mobile App or Online Banking without the need of a debit card. The Bank's salary offering has also been enhanced greatly to better serve the needs of key sectors, particularly Kuwait.

ABK continues to be recognized internationally and locally and received a number of awards including: 'Best Commercial Bank by Banker ME 2018', 'Employer of the Year 2018 by Naseba', 'Best Retail Bank by Asian Banker 2018, Best Retail Bank 2018 by the European, as well as being recognized by Global Finance as one of the 'Top 10 Safest Banks in the region and 29th in Emerging Markets'.



Recognition for third consecutive year



Demand for IT, computer science skills on the rise: Oracle exec

KUWAIT: With the emergence and growth of new technologies like big data, Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and cloud computing, the demand for IT and computer science skills has consistently risen and will continue to rise for the foreseeable future globally, said Jane Richardson, Senior Director, Oracle Academy, EMEA in an interview. Excerpts:

Kuwait Times: What is the level of skills in IT in the region, especially in Cloud?

Richardson: A recent report from the World Economic Forum shows that some of the most common high-skilled jobs in the MENA region include commercial bankers, corporate finance specialists, accountants, schoolteachers, academics, engineers, quality assurance professionals and information technology consultants. The report also states that the STEM talent pool is mainly dominated by a specialization in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction (29 percent), with a smaller set of professionals specialized in Information and Communication Technologies (13 percent), Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics (8 percent).

Therefore with the emergence and growth of new technologies like big data, Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and cloud computing, the demand for IT and computer science skills has consistently risen and will continue to rise for the foreseeable future globally. This report also states that across the MENA region, substantial opportunity exists for creating high value, formal jobs in the IT sector. Changing technologies mean that employers are seeking different skills.

This trend is reflected globally. Recent studies from Oracle Academy and Burning Glass Technologies found that in the US, roughly two-thirds of the highest-paying and fastest-growing jobs in the fields of design, marketing, engineering and data analysis demand computer science skills. In both Singapore and the US, the studies indicated a trend towards "hybrid jobs," or roles that combine skill sets from different fields, including computing. An example of a "hybrid job" would be a mobile app developer demanding skills in programming, design, marketing, and User Interface (UI)/User Experience (UX).

KT: What modules in your curriculum are more popular? What does that say about the on-demand skills in the region?

Richardson: Oracle, through its flagship Oracle Academy program, advances computer science education and makes it accessible to students globally to drive knowledge, innovation, skills development, and diversity in technology fields. Oracle Academy leverages Oracle's technology leadership to deliver comprehensive programs to secondary schools, vocational schools, two- and four-year colleges, and universities. Oracle Academy partners with educational institutions to provide a variety of resources, including technology, curriculum and courseware, student virtual conferences, educator training, and Oracle industry certification and exam preparation materials.

With Oracle Academy, students develop IT and business skills using software that is used widely across hundreds of industries. We see varying interests across the wide range of Oracle Academy courses in database design, SQL, PL/SQL, Java programming and application development across different countries. Interest in cloud computing is however ubiquitous. Before students can write applications in the cloud, they have to master foundational computing - including SQL and PL/SQL skills and object-oriented programming. Data is at the core of so many modern innovations - big data, data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence among them - so developing SQL and PL/SQL skills are the basis for future growth and success.

In fact, the practice environments Oracle Academy offers in its SQL, PL/SQL, and Application Development courses are cloud based. With Oracle Application Express (APEX), users design, develop and deploy database-driven applications using only a web browser. Through full academic curriculum, Oracle Academy students and faculty gain hands-on cloud-based computing experience by using APEX.

KT: How many students and IT professionals do you target annually? Who is the ideal candidate?

Richardson: Each year, Oracle Academy reaches more than 3.5 million students in 120 countries. The program is open to accredited, degree and diploma-granting institutions. Once an institution is a member, any of its teachers and students can benefit from Oracle Academy. Additionally, educators, educational administrators, and students can join Oracle Academy as individual members and gain direct access to Oracle Academy benefits.

From the MENA region, in the 2016 - 2017 academic year, Oracle Academy has members in the UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar and Egypt.



Jane Richardson

In the UAE specifically, Oracle Academy now has members across 28 Higher Education institutions supporting over 75 University faculty members and 11,000+ students. We encourage students to consider developing foundational programming like those mentioned in our Oracle Academy and Burning Glass Technologies report, since these skills are much more in demand outside of the IT sector itself.

KT: Are there certifications tied to the training? Are they open-based industry certifications or proprietary Oracle?

Richardson: Oracle Academy curriculum is developed specifically as academic courseware; our goal is to help provide students with the skills they need to thrive in the modern global economy. Our curriculum is modular, making it easy for educators to embed it in entirety or in part in degree and diploma granting programs.

The curriculum is also aligned to national and international standards, like those developed by the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Both are recognized in the MENA region. Additionally, our Java courses can be used to prepare the students for the AP Computer Science A exam. Students who complete Oracle Academy exams included with the curriculum receive certificates of learning.

Additionally, Oracle Academy's Database Foundations and Java Foundation courses are aligned with Oracle Junior Certified Associate certifications, offered through Oracle University. Students who undertake Oracle Academy courses and then successfully complete these challenging exams can demonstrate their database and Java knowledge and skills with a distinction recognized by IT industry professionals. This qualification can help the students show differentiation: whether they are preparing for college, applying to a graduate program, or competing for a first job or internship.

Boursa Kuwait announces trading hours for Ramadan

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait would like to congratulate its customers and clients on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan and inform them that trading hours during this month will be from 10:30 am until 1:45 pm. Regular hours will resume following the Eid Al-Fitr holiday.



بورصة الكويت
BOURSA KUWAIT

Session Name	From	To
Opening Auction	10:30:00 am	10:40:00 am
Continuous Trading	10:40:00 am	01:05:00 pm
First Auction Market Session	11:30:00 am	11:45:00 am
Second Auction Market Session	12:30:00 am	12:45:00 am
Closing Auction	01:05:00 pm	01:15:00 pm
Buy-in Auction	01:30:00 pm	01:45:00 pm

CBK bonds and related Tawarruq

KUWAIT: The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the most recent issues of CBK bonds and related Tawarruq at a total value of KD 160 million for three months with a rate of return of 2.250 percent.

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	302.190
Canadian Dollar	233.955
Sterling Pound	410.280
Euro	359.600
Swiss Frank	305.900
Bahraini Dinar	803.635
UAE Dirhams	82.680
Qatari Riyals	83.910
Saudi Riyals	81.480
Jordanian Dinar	427.500
Egyptian Pound	17.133
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.918
Indian Rupees	4.496
Pakistani Rupees	2.611
Bangladesh Taka	3.619
Philippines Pessu	5.817
Cyprus pound	17.985

Japanese Yen	3.755
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.809
Malaysian Ringgit	76.640
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.880
Thai Bhat	10.410
Turkish Lira	70.200

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.404151	0.411651
Czech Korune	0.006180	0.015480
Danish Krone	0.044453	0.049453
Euro	0.355774	0.363274
Georgian Lari	0.138349	0.138349
Hungarian 0.001139	0.001329	0.001329
Norwegian Krone	0.033849	0.039049
Romanian Leu	0.064664	0.081514
Russian ruble	0.004986	0.004896
Slovakia	0.009002	0.019002
Slovenia	0.031171	0.036171
Swedish Krona	0.296751	0.306751
Swiss Franc		
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.219919	0.231919
New Zealand Dollar	0.204125	0.213625
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.230938	0.239938
US Dollars	0.298200	0.302600
US Dollars Mint	0.298700	0.302600

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003004	0.003786
Chinese Yuan	0.046165	0.049665
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036766	0.039516
Indian Rupee	0.003857	0.004584
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002682	0.002862
Korean Won	0.000273	0.000288
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072743	0.078743
Nepalese Rupee	0.002726	0.003066
Pakistan Rupee	0.001952	0.002722
Philippine Peso	0.005636	0.005936
Singapore Dollar	0.221528	0.231528
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001616	0.002196
Taiwan	0.010372	0.010552
Thai Baht	0.009153	0.009703

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.795076	0.803576
Egyptian Pound	0.014557	0.020275
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000203	0.000263
Jordanian Dinar	0.421764	0.430764
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155	0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022273	0.046273
Omani Riyal	0.778877	0.784557
Qatar Riyal	0.078744	0.083684
Saudi Riyal	0.079527	0.080827
Syrian Pound	0.001281	0.001501
Tunisian Dinar	0.117353	0.125353
Turkish Lira	0.065332	0.075632
UAE Dirhams	0.080860	0.082580
Yemeni Riyal	0.000982	0.001062

Business

Al-Sayer unveils a new era of technology

Experience the power and driving pleasure with Toyota's all-new Camry hybrid electric vehicle



KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons EST CO., a subsidiary of Al-Sayer Holding launched all-new 2018 Camry Hybrid Electric Vehicle unveiling a new era of technology. The launch event was attended by Al-Sayer Board of Directors Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, CEO along with Bengt Schultz COO, Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director, Scott McNicol General Manager Toyota Retail, distinguished guests from partner organizations, valued clients, representatives of the press and media and employees from Toyota retail and fleet sales.

Speaking about the Camry Heritage Faisal Bader Al-Sayer, "I remember when Camry was introduced two decades ago in the Middle East. Since then several generations of Camry were launched, undergoing stages of transformation till the newest 2018 model. But one of the things has not changed a fraction - our CUSTOMER'S TRUST! Business or personal, customers across different age profile are proud and happy users of Camry. Now Toyota is bringing a Camry powered with new era of technology to the Middle East - the Hybrid Electric Vehicle. Going forward our focus is aligning with Toyota to keep pace with the fast transformation of automotive technology, to drive positive changes and to set new trends in the region."

Taking ownership experience to a whole new level, the launch of the all-new Camry Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) in the Middle East, exemplifying its continuous commitment to providing environmentally friendly vehicles, while offering customers the opportunity to experience the power and pleasure of sustainable mobility through cutting-edge technology and an engaging driving experience.

Trend-setter

According to Scott McNicol "two decades ago Toyota set a new trend in industry with the introduction of Prius world's first mass produced hybrid - and since then there was no looking back. With several hybrid models currently available Toyota Hybrid sales has surpassed 10 million units worldwide. This is a testimony that customers have started embracing this exceptional technology."

The all-new Camry HEV provides a comfortable and stable ride with superior handling characteristics, thanks to Toyota's New Global Architecture (TNGA) platform, which represents an entirely new strategy to the way the company designs, engineers, and packages its vehicles. TNGA retains all of Toyota's traditional values of superlative build quality and safety while injecting a fun driving experience that plays on all the senses.

The class-leading model can be driven entirely by either electrical power with zero-fuel consumption and carbon emissions, or with a combination of a petrol engine and two electric motors depending on the vehicle speed and customer's driving behavior. The batteries in the hybrid electric drivetrain are automatically charged by either the petrol engine or when braking and decelerating, eliminating the need to plug in a power cord. Furthermore, the all-new Camry HEV does not require a special fuel yet drives like any other conventional car. In addition, thanks to its top-class fuel efficiency, visits to



petrol stations will be significantly reduced.

Stirring driving performance

Yugo Miyamoto, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, said: "We are excited to launch the all-new Toyota Camry hybrid electric vehicle to build on the success the Camry already enjoys in the region. With its stirring driving performance and state-of-the-art electrified technology, the all-new Camry HEV creates a whole new value proposition, while ensuring seamless fun and excitement for driver and passengers alike without compromising on its environmental credentials."

Miyamoto added: "Toyota has been pioneering hybrid electric technology for more than 20 years and delivers not only great fuel efficiency and low carbon emissions but also provides a smooth, comfortable, and engaging driving experience, leading to higher customer satisfaction rates. We extend our deepest gratitude to our customers in the region for their continued support, which inspires us to excel and develop cars that exceed their expectations."

Toyota continues to play a leading role in constantly innovating and developing technologies that protect the environment, which is also a strategic imperative that forms the cornerstone of the company's business. Electrification of vehicles has been an indispensable focus for Toyota since 1997 and the company has launched several hybrid

electric vehicles in the past two decades, leading to a steady rise in the adoption of its environment-friendly cars and pushing its cumulative sales of electrified vehicles to 11.47 million. This enormous sales record represents a reduction of more than 90 million tons of CO2 compared to the sales of equivalent conventional vehicles and underscores the tremendous support received from customers.

Combined power

Combining two power sources consisting of a petrol engine and two electric motors, the hybrid electric drivetrain on the all-new Toyota Camry HEV produces 176 hp and 118 hp and delivers 22.5 kg-m and 20.6 kg-m of torque, respectively. The combined power of the two power sources (petrol engine and two electric motors) is 215 hp. The drivetrain is mated to an electronically controlled Continuously Variable Transmission (e-CVT) that executes smooth yet quick gear shifts, simulating a six-speed sequential shift transmission to deliver a new level of driving pleasure.

With an exciting interior featuring a distinctive design and offering convenience and comfort with a layer of luxury, the new car's bold cabin is accentuated with a range of advanced features. This includes a wireless charging system for smartphones, dual-zone automatic air conditioning system, six-speaker sound system, multi-adjustable power front seats, and 60/40 split and reclining rear seats, among many others.

Further enhancing the driving experience, the all-new Camry HEV model introduces the latest in-vehicle information technology displays, offering a unique level of integrated information with minimal distraction. It relays information through three available interlinked displays: a 10-inch colored head-up display (HUD), a seven-inch multi-information display within the instrument cluster, and an eight-inch audio/navigation control panel that is seamlessly integrated into the center console in a modern, flush-surface design.

Safety top priority

As with any other Toyota model, safety remains a top priority for the all-new Camry HEV and employs the latest safety technologies including the brand's innovative Toyota Safety Sense (TSS) safety package, which features Pre-Crash Safety (PCS), Dynamic Radar Cruise Control (DRCC), Automatic High Beam (AHB), and Lane Departure Alert (LDA). In addition, a comprehensive array of safety features has been added to protect vehicle occupants, including six SRS airbags, Vehicle Stability Control (VSC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Brake Assist (BA), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), as well as an enhanced body structure and platform structure, among many others.

Available in nine distinctive exterior colors, the all-new Camry HEV lets customers express their individuality. On the other hand, the interior is available with two types of wood ornament. Furthermore, the all-new Camry HEV has been reared with a 17-inch alloy wheel and an 18-inch alloy wheel.



Stylish exterior with aggressive character lines



In DR Congo, home-grown digital entrepreneurs defy odds

Curious investors gather in Kinshasa for launch of 'Ingenious City'

KINSHASA: Being a digital entrepreneur in the Democratic Republic of Congo comes with many challenges, not least that internet access is very limited in a vast country of more than 80 million people. Overcoming the odds, a small vibrant tech scene is emerging in the sprawling capital, backed by funding from the DRC diaspora.

Dozens of aspiring entrepreneurs and curious investors recently gathered in Kinshasa for the launch of "Ingenious City," a dual-use meeting and office space with high speed internet for Congolese start-ups.

WapiMED, an online map where users can book and pay for medical consultations, was founded by two Congolese, Jose Zefu Kimpalou and Steve Nkashama. Their startup is self-financed for now.

"As entrepreneurs, we don't think about the risks; we think about how we can initiate change and bring about a solution to a problem," said company country manager, Daddy Kabeyal.

Kabeyal, who studied in Europe before returning to Kinshasa, joined the team last year after a career in marketing. Using their online platform, a Congolese living abroad can pay for medical treatment for relatives back home.

Fighting for funding

Access to high speed internet is not the only problem - many investors are wary of the political and security risks in DRC. The banks can provide some funding but entrepreneurs find it difficult to convince them that they are a safe bet.

"Being an entrepreneur in Kinshasa is a bit like being thrown in the middle of a boxing ring and you have to fight against someone who is stronger than you", said Baya Ciamala, known as Narsix and founder of Baziks, a music streaming app. "We need working capital. We need to invest in research and development for our projects, because it's really a new industry that requires flexibility and funds to be able to move forward and operate, and that is really not easy in Kinshasa", he added.

There are signs of change however. The country's national trade union (Federation des Entreprises du Congo) recently

launched a special unit to help young entrepreneurs. "We're going to tell the banks - here are those you should give funds to," said Serge Nawej, president of the National Commission for Young Entrepreneurs (CNJE). "We'll give our members legal advice and encourage revenue sharing," said Nawej, who hopes to reach 55,000 members by 2020. Thomas Strouvens, a Belgian citizen with Congolese roots, moved to Kinshasa five years ago, deciding to leave his job in advertising and launch a start-up last year with his co-founder Jean-Louis Mbaka.

The pair created Youdee, a real-estate website that connects owners, renters, buyers and sellers. Since launching in 2017, they

have been attracting 5,000 views per month. Strouvens and Mbaka were able to raise funds and hire eight employees in Kinshasa. "We are better organized and have a stronger tech community than people think. There's a real potential here,"

said Strouvens. "Entrepreneurs need a bit more support from the state and from the private sector, but we really don't have anything to envy from our neighbors."

'Useful to my country'

Jonathan Kiloso, who spent several years in France, recently co-founded an incubator called Start It Congo. His aim is to support six Congolese start-ups this year. "I want to be useful to my country," he said, "but it's also a business venture. In a market that isn't very competitive, the digital space presents an opportunity but you have to have an idea". Baziks backs Congolese, which aims to promote Congolese and African musicians. "Music in the DRC is like football in Brazil", said Ciamala. "We could have started our company in France but I think it's important to start in the country of origin". Baziks connects African musicians with listeners through a system of "followers". The application offers a pay-by-song service as well as a premium subscription service. Ciamala's goal is to reach two percent of the connected population in the DRC.

"It's a bit philosophical but it's also to prove that we can do things here, that we can export internationally, instead of the other way around". — AFP



Internet access very limited in a vast country of over 80 million

Mercedes-Benz to offer complimentary check-ups this Ramadan

KUWAIT: With Ramadan around the corner, A R Albisher & Z Alkazemi Company - the authorized General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait - has announced a complimentary brake and suspension check-up campaign for Mercedes-Benz cars owners throughout the holy month while highlighting the importance and safety of a well maintained and finetuned vehicle all year around. The campaign aims to provide the highest levels of safety and comfort to Mercedes-Benz cars owners, preventing them from any hassle or inconvenience during this period of the year.

Valid from the first day of Ramadan, this special offer applies on the full range of Mercedes-Benz sedans, SUVs, cabriolets, roadsters and coupes at all three authorized Mercedes-Benz Service Centers - Shuwaikh Service Centre, Al-Rai Service Centre, and Ahmedi Service Centre.

The customers can enjoy complimentary visual brake and suspension checks of their Mercedes-Benz vehicles and also avail 35 percent discount on related genuine Parts for the jobs done at any one of the service centres.

Also, A R Albisher & Z Alkazemi Company will be offering a special discount of up to 55 percent on selected items from Mercedes-Benz boutique and accessory collection. The



items range from cars mats, hub caps, alloy wheels, polo shirts, watches, caps, sun glasses, pens, key chains, wallets, model cars and Mercedes-Benz perfumes. The generous dis-



counts on these selected items is only available during the month of Ramadan while stocks last. The items are available at all the boutique and accessory shops in the service centres.

Mercedes-Benz customers can sit back and relax, while their car is being checked for brake and suspensions by trained technicians using the latest tools and equipment and also browse through the available lifestyle and accessory collections.

Ramadan timings for A R Albisher & Z Alkazemi's Service centers are as follows:

Shuwaikh Service Centre / Express Service (8:00 am to 2:00 pm); Shuwaikh Quick Lube Centre (8:00 am to 2:00 pm and 8:30 pm to 11:30 pm); Ahmedi Service Centre / Express Service (8:00 am to 2:00 pm); Al-Rai Service Centre (8:00 am to 2:00 pm); & Al-Rai Express Service (8:00 am to 2:00pm and 8:30 pm to 11:30 pm).

Wall St climbs on easing US-China trade tensions

NEW YORK: Wall Street indexes rose yesterday, helped by gains in technology stocks after President Donald Trump softened his stance on Chinese technology company ZTE Corp, signaling easing US-China trade tensions.

Trump on Sunday pledged to help ZTE "get back into business, fast" nearly a month after the US Commerce Department banned American companies from selling to the firm for violating an agreement. Trump's comments came ahead of trade talks between Chinese Vice Premier Liu He and US officials this week to resolve escalating trade disputes and drove big gains in the shares of US suppliers to ZTE.

Optical components maker Acacia Communications jumped 16.1 percent, while Oclaro and Lumentum Holdings rose 5.8 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively. "Some of the headlines point to signs that Trump might be watering down his tough talks on trade," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Spartan Capital Securities in New York. Also helping the mood was news that

China had resumed its review of chipmaker Qualcomm's \$44 billion takeover of NXP Semiconductors. NXP surged 10.3 percent and Qualcomm 3.3 percent. The Philadelphia semiconductor index was up 1.9 percent. At 9:55 am ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 120.76 points, or 0.49 percent, at 24,951.93, the S&P 500 was up 12.45 points, or 0.46 percent, at 2,740.17 and the Nasdaq Composite was up 43.40 points, or 0.59 percent, at 7,446.28.

The indexes posted solid gains last week, helped by a surge in oil prices, easing inflation fears and Apple's rally that took the iPhone maker close to \$1 trillion in market capitalization.

The S&P 500 and the Dow Jones Industrial Average were trading above their 100-day moving averages, a key technical level that many traders believe is a sign that markets could gain further. "It looks like the markets want to move up, and there seems to be a rosier outlook for geopolitics especially North Korea," Cardillo said. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Sunday that Washington would agree to lift sanctions on North Korea if the country agrees to completely dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Nine of the 11 major S&P sectors were higher, with technology and energy sectors leading the gains.

Exon rose 1.1 percent after Citigroup raised its price target on the stock. The biggest decliner was Xerox, which tumbled 7.9 percent after the US photocopier giant scrapped a planned \$6.1 billion deal with Fujifilm Holdings. Advancing issues out-

numbered decliners by a 2.39-to-1 ratio on the NYSE. Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 2.04-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq. The S&P index recorded 21 new 52-week highs and two new lows, while the Nasdaq recorded 73 new highs and 15 new lows. Stocks in Asia were also upbeat. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan rose 0.5 percent, while Japan's Nikkei also tacked on 0.5 percent.

Chinese shares came off the day's highs but still ended in positive territory after Trump's comments on ZTE Corp., which JPMorgan analysts said was "a significant positive". Shanghai's SSE Composite index rose 0.3 percent while the blue-chip rallied 0.9 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index climbed 1.4 percent.

Elsewhere in Asia, the Malaysian ringgit recovered losses after sliding 1 percent to a four-month trough against the dollar in the first onshore trade since a shock election upset last week. Malaysian stocks sank as much as 2.7 percent at one point but ended 0.2 percent higher. Veteran Mahathir Mohamad, 92, came out of political retirement to lead the opposition Pakatan Harapan (Alliance of Hope) to a stunning victory, defeating prime minister Najib Razak, a former protege whom he had accused of corruption.

Some investors were concerned that populist promises such as repealing an unpopular goods and services tax and restoring a petrol subsidy could undermine the country's finances.

But some analysts believe Mahathir's proposals could be positive for the economy. "The repeal of GST, while only marginally negative for the fiscal deficit, will be a boon for consumers, who have been upset that they bear the burden of poor fiscal management and came out to vote against the establishment," said Trinh Nguyen, senior economist at Natixis.

Oil and Iran

While tensions in the Korean peninsula have eased, US plans to reintroduce sanctions against Iran has stoked anxiety in the Middle East. Iran pumps about 4 percent of the world's oil, and the latest development has sent oil prices to near multi-year highs. Citi analyst Mark Schofield said rising oil prices risk causing 'stagflation', which could create a particularly "hostile environment" for risk assets.

Yesterday, US crude traded flat at \$70.71 a barrel and Brent was up at \$77.23, clawing back previous losses after a relentless rise in US drilling activity pointed to increased output. The United States threatened on Sunday to impose sanctions on European companies that do business with Iran, as the remaining participants in the Iran nuclear accord stiffened their resolve to keep that agreement operational. In currencies, the dollar dipped 0.2 percent to 92.33 against a basket of major currencies and was set for its fourth straight day of losses. — Reuters

US oil output to grow again this year: OPEC

PARIS: Booming oil output in the United States-which has threatened to derail other producers' efforts to drive up crude prices-looks set to expand strongly again this year, OPEC said yesterday. But rising inflation and possible trade restrictions could throw a spanner in the works for US producers in the longer term, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries said in a report. The US is not a member of OPEC which accounts for more than 40 percent of the global oil market.

But booming output of US shale producers-eager to cash in on a rally in oil prices since late last year-has proven a headache for combined efforts by both OPEC members and non-members to cut back production to combat a global oil glut. While those efforts have indeed suc-

ceeded in pushing up prices in recent months, rising crude prices have at the same time made it more attractive for shale producers-whose overheads are lower than the oil majors-to ramp up output. OPEC has repeatedly warned that booming US shale production could jeopardize the delicate balance that the overall market has managed to reach. In its latest monthly oil market report, OPEC upgraded its forecast for non-OPEC output and said that the US would account for the largest share of the projected increase. Following a contraction in 2016, "non-OPEC oil supply has seen a recovery in 2017 and 2018... This has been on the back of improving oil market conditions and rising oil prices," the report said.

Nevertheless, it was "evident that uncertainties remain as to the forecast pace of growth of non-OPEC supply for the remainder of the year," the cartel cautioned. The performance of non-OPEC supply in 2018 would depend on many factors, it said. "The continued strong development of the world economy could lead to rising inflation, and, along with potential trade restrictions, would impact oil production costs." — AFP

Global Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Dow Jones	24,739.53	24,831.17	91.64	▲	0.37	
NASDAQ	7,404.98	7,402.88	-2.10	▼	-0.03	
S&P 500	2,723.07	2,727.72	4.65	▲	0.17	
Financial Times	7,724.55	7,709.01	-15.54	▼	-0.20	
DAX	13,001.24	12,960.19	-41.05	▼	-0.32	
CAC 40	5,541.94	5,530.20	-11.74	▼	-0.21	
Swiss	8,993.51	9,019.30	25.79	▲	0.29	
Nikkei 225	22,758.48	22,865.86	107.38	▲	0.47	
Topix	1,794.96	1,805.92	10.96	▲	0.61	
Hang Seng	31,122.06	31,541.08	419.02	▲	1.35	
Straits Times	3,570.17	3,562.46	-7.71	▼	-0.22	

MENA Stock Indices						
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %	
Kuwait	6,603.51	6,633.44	29.93	▲	0.45	
Saudi Arabia	8,023.01	8,046.59	23.58	▲	0.29	
Dubai	2,892.05	2,905.03	12.98	▲	0.45	
Abu Dhabi	4,424.99	4,446.81	21.82	▲	0.49	
Bahrain	1,271.09	1,272.07	0.98	▲	0.08	
Qatar	8,816.84	8,934.39	117.55	▲	1.33	
Oman	4,686.56	4,689.66	3.10	▲	0.07	
Lebanon	1,133.20	1,133.65	0.45	▲	0.04	
Jordan	2,135.07	2,134.14	-0.93	▼	-0.04	
Egypt	17,184.02	17,022.54	-161.48	▼	-0.94	
Morocco	12,876.00	12,849.76	-26.24	▼	-0.20	
Tunisia	7,366.16	7,382.02	15.86	▲	0.22	

Global Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.3244	3.3003	2.7521	2.4267	3.2927	361.45	4.3707
Saudi Riyal	0.08114		0.2678	0.2233	0.1969	0.2672	29.33	0.3546
US Dollar	0.30300	3.7343		0.8339	0.7353	0.9977	109.52	1.3243
Euro	0.36336	4.4782	1.1992		0.8820	1.1967	131.34	1.5882
Sterling Pound	0.41208	5.0786	1.3600	1.1338		1.3571	148.95	1.8012
Swiss Franc	0.30370	3.7429	1.0023	0.8356	0.7369		109.80	1.3274
Japanese Yen	0.00277	0.0341	0.0091	0.0076	0.0067	0.0091		0.0121
Australian Dollar	0.22880	2.8198	0.7551	0.6296	0.5552	0.7534	82.70	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30300	3.7343	0.3742	3.6270	0.3831	3.6571	17.7675
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3003		12.3244	1.2348	11.9703	1.2644	12.0696	58.6386
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08114		0.1002	0.9713	0.1026	0.9793	4.7579
Bahraini Dinar	2.6727	0.80984	9.9808		9.6940	1.0240	9.7744	47.4876
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08354	1.0296	0.1032		0.1056	1.0083	4.8987
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.79087	9.7471	0.9766	9.4670		9.5456	46.3758
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08285	1.0211	0.1023	0.9918	0.1048		4.8584
Egyptian Pound	0.0563	0.01705	0.2102	0.0211	0.2041	0.0216	0.2058	

Global Interest Rates					
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.19	1.69	1.94	2.13	2.44
US Dollar	1.75	1.91	2.34	2.51	2.76
Euro	-0.42	-0.39	-0.35	-0.31	-0.24
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.49	0.64	0.75	0.92
Swiss Franc	-0.79	-0.78	-0.71	-0.64	-0.51
Australian Dollar	1.63	1.82	1.77	1.78	1.84
Japanese Yen	-0.05	-0.05	-0.04	0.02	0.11

Global Bond Yields				
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	2.54	2.85	2.98	3.12
Europe	-0.57	-0.03	0.59	1.27
United Kingdom	0.80	1.16	1.48	1.89

Commodities					
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	72.90	72.92	0.02	▲	0.03
Brent	78.38	78.33	-0.05	▼	-0.06
West Texas	70.74	70.64	-0.10	▼	-0.14
Gold	1317.68	1319.73	2.05	▲	0.16
Silver	16.62	16.62	0.00	-	0.00

Business

NBK, Mastercard make GCC debut of pioneering biometric solutions

Identity check offers authentication solution for online transactions

KUWAIT: Answering the market's growing demand for increased convenience and security associated with biometric technology, National Bank of Kuwait and Mastercard announced two pioneering biometric solutions designed to improve online and in-store shopping at a press conference held at NBK headquarters.

Isam J. Al-Sager, Group Chief Executive Officer, National Bank of Kuwait, and Mohammed Al-Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait attended the event. Khalid Elgibali, Division President - Middle East and North Africa represented Mastercard at the event which started with the announcement of the new biometric solutions and was followed by a showcase at NBK museum. Journalists were invited to test drive the Identity Check online authentication solution along with other innovative banking technologies NBK has introduced including Video Chat, Quick Pay, Ask Me and the advanced Online Banking and Mobile Banking app services.

Isam Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer, said: "Our long-standing partnership with Mastercard enables us today to introduce the most advanced and first of its kind service in the Middle East, allowing customers to use the Selfie Pay service as well as biometric cards. These new services come in line with NBK's endeavors to offer the latest technologies in the banking sector as demand for easier and safer banking services continue to increase."

Al-Sager added: "We continue to focus on bringing innovative and unique services to our NBK customers through our partnerships with leading and internationally renowned companies such as Mastercard. Leading the way with technologically advanced services is a strategy that falls in line with our long-term strategy to improving mobile services that satisfy the needs of our customers."

NBK customers will be the first in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region to experience



KUWAIT: Isam J Al-Sager (second left), Mohammed Al-Othman and Khalid Elgibali during the press conference

Mastercard's Identity Check online authentication solution, while a pilot program for an innovative biometric card with an embedded fingerprint sensor will be a first for the GCC.

Mastercard Identity Check is an advanced authentication solution that uses biometric identifiers such as fingerprint, facial and voice recognition to verify users' identity through their mobile devices when shopping and banking online. The solution works across multiple devices and platforms, simplifying consumers' lives by eliminating the need to enter a password or answer security questions.

Following the official launch, the Mastercard and NBK co-branded app, 'Mastercard Identity Check for NBK,' will be available from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Consumers can download the application and register their biometrics - whether fingerprint or face - securely on the smartphone.

Once registered, users will receive a notification

through the app prompting them to authenticate their identity using their preferred choice of biometrics to complete the transaction when making online purchases.

National Bank of Kuwait and MasterCard also announced the GCC region's first pilot program for a biometric card to conveniently and safely verify the cardholder's identity for in-store purchases. When shopping and paying in-store, the biometric card works like any other chip card. The cardholder simply dips the card into a retailer's point-of-sale terminal while placing their finger on the embedded sensor. The fingerprint is verified against the template stored on the card and - if the biometrics matches - the

transaction can then be approved with the card never leaving the consumer's hand. The biometric card works with existing EMV card terminals globally, so cardholders can use it wherever cards are accepted, without any new hardware or software upgrades required from merchants.



KUWAIT: Officials of National Bank of Kuwait and Mastercard during the launch of two pioneering biometric solutions designed to improve online and in-store shopping.

Working with Mastercard, we are introducing solutions in the region for the very first time, meaning our customers can experience the latest and most advanced authentication

technology available today. The adoption of this technology is also fully aligned with our 'mobile-first strategy', which outlines a roadmap to a more convenient future for our customers."

"We are excited to build on our long-standing partnership with NBK as we debut groundbreaking biometric technology in the region for the very first time. Our joint research with the University of Oxford has proven that 93 percent of consumers prefer using biometrics to remembering passwords."

These next-generation authentication solutions are no longer based on what you remember, but who you are - a fundamental difference that brings new levels of convenience to consumers, while further enhancing security. The development of these innovative solutions marks an important step in our ongoing quest to fulfill the needs of consumers and drive change across the region's constantly evolving payments ecosystem," said Khalid Elgibali, Division President, MENA, Mastercard.



Biometric card features an embedded fingerprint sensor

value propositions to our consumers.

Ramadan deals are shining bright at Honda Alghanim

KUWAIT: On the occasion of the Holy month of Ramadan, Honda Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Honda cars, motorcycles and marine equipment in Kuwait, is extending its warm wishes to its customers with an unprecedented offer that gives them the freedom to choose between 0 percent interest, free golden insurance or cash back up to KD 800, or free service up to 3 years along free third party insurance and car registration when buying the 2018 Civic, Odyssey, Odyssey-J, or Pilot vehicles.

This Ramadan is the perfect time to own one of Honda's renowned cars at unmatched prices. Honda Alghanim's campaign brings exclusive offers on latest models, including the all-new Civic, acclaimed as the city's ideal car, and setting new standards with its superior performance and sporty design. Equipped with a 1.5, 1.6 or 2.0 liters engine, the Honda Civic 2018 displays automatic side mirrors, a 7-inch touch screen, as well as a luxurious cabin for maximum comfort.

Customers looking for a family vehicle can



count on the Odyssey or Odyssey-J being the best in their class in terms of spaciousness, high-performance, and fuel efficiency. Known as the absolute vehicle for families, the Odyssey series provides safe performance and enjoys state-of-the-art technology owing to the rear-seat DVD entertainment system. Furthermore, a child safety car seat can be easily placed in the Odyssey and Odyssey-J, making it the ultimate car for children's daily trip to school, housewives' daily shopping routine, and weekend trips.

Ramadan's offer includes as well the Pilot, the largest car in Honda's fleet with seating for as many as eight persons. Promoting sophisticated



qualities along a unique interior and exterior features, this four-wheel-drive modern SUV has sold nearly 1.4 million vehicles since first released, making this stylish, practical, and comfortable car the perfect choice for families looking to embark on fun-filled journeys.

Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda automobiles, motorcycles, power products, and marine products in Kuwait, is committed to providing customers with flexible payment solutions and efficient and cost-effective services. Customers can take advantage of this offer by visiting any of Honda Alghanim showrooms located in Al-Rai, Shuwaik, and Al-Ahmedi.

Huawei Y7 Prime 2018, an entry level phone that delivers smooth experience

KUWAIT: Have ever wished your phone to function as good as a blockbuster, whether you are playing games, streaming videos, or taking photos?

Is your handset too old to run a bunch of apps? Is the memory too tiny? Does your phone freeze all the time? Is the Android version too outdated? Why can't you enjoy smooth experience? Where can you get a good device?

Smooth experience depends on hardware and software. Robust hardware is the key to spectacular experience. In other words, the more cores the chipset has, the stronger the phone is. The bigger the memory, the faster the phone runs. On the flip side, a mature, optimized software system means better backend management, CPU allocation, and fragment management, allowing you to enjoy the device more. Indeed, a growing number of budget phones now have octa-core processors, thanks to the fierce competition. But not all processors are as good as you think. On memory, for example, 3G RAM +32G ROM prevails. However, Samsung Galaxy J7 (2017) features 3G RAM+16G ROM. Of course, different hardware means different experience.

Software is pivotal. But most entry-level phones don't have the latest Android OS. For example, Samsung Galaxy J7 2017 runs on Android 7.0 while OPPO A83 on Android 7.1. Some are even worse. In a word, these hardware and software leave much to be desired for better user experience.

Huawei is changing that. The company is a leading player in smartphones, and a great success in



high-end market segments owing to its strong R&D and the outstanding experience the phone delivers. And its mid- and low-end handsets "borrow" some elements of such experience. The HUAWEI Y7 Prime (2018) crams in an octa-core processor and 3G RAM +32G ROM, which are strong engines for the phone. The EMUI 8.0 based on Android 8.0 takes another step ahead by leveraging both the hardware and software, delivering smooth experience easily.

Stronger chipset

Apps are evolving constantly, and their functions are getting more complicated these days. Even if the system stays the same, it requires more from chipsets and memory. The fierce competition has taken the Android hardware to a new level - Octa-core processors are seen everywhere; memory is getting bigger. These are the foundation for delightful experience on Android.

The HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 is equipped with an energy-saving octa-core chipset called MSM8937. Combined with leading techniques, it gives users better experience with less energy consumption. The phone also features a more common 3G RAM +32G ROM, making multitasking possible and easier. The more robust chipset and more generous memory are the recipe for remarkable experience including streaming music, videos, surfing, and games.

Latest Android 8.0

Google usually associates its latest Android OS

with food. Almost all Android systems represent something delicious. Android 5.0 is called lollipop, 6.0 marshmallow, 7.0 Nougat, and 8.0 Oreo.

Huawei adopts Android 8.0 for its budget phones much faster than Samsung, OPPO. The new arrival HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 is no exception. It represents another move ahead to delight customers. By building on Android 6 and 7, Android 8.0 is getting a stronger grip on apps running in the backend. This prolongs battery life to some extent, because apps go to sleep if not in use and they wake up once called. The idea is to cut back on backend power consumption without removing apps or changing user behaviors. And the phone runs faster on Android 8.0.

Optimized EMUI 8.0

Apart from stronger hardware and new version of OS, another key element for smooth experience is further optimization of the system. This depends on the phone maker's R&D. As a key player in Android smartphones, Huawei is well positioned to improve Android systems. As a result, HUAWEI Mate 9 and other premium handsets that come after it are born fast and stay fast, delivering stunning experience even after 18 months.

Huawei's EMUI 8.0 is based on Android 8.0. But it is better after deep customization. It integrates with an octa-core chipset to bring consumers the best advantages of software and hardware integration as well as the superior performance of CPU. Furthermore, leveraging machine learning algorithms, the device learns users' behaviors and habits to ensure better mobile performance. EMUI 8.0 features the next generation file enhancement system to reduce file fragmentation, which means the HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 preserves their speed and responsiveness overtime. With EMUI 8.0, the HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 will bring users a smoother and much better experience. Unlike other phone makers, Huawei has introduced better hardware and software to entry-level phones, delivering premium experience to wider audience as soon as possible. When HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 comes, smooth experience - games, videos, and web browsing - is finally within your reach.

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah weekly draw on 13 May 2018 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 6 - 10 May 2018. From April 15th onwards, the daily draws were replaced with weekly draws, in which five winners will receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:

- * Perin Ibrahim Al-Hajal
- * Mohammad Saleh Khalil Al-Temimi
- * Waleed Hamad Mohammed Al-Sumait
- * Mohammad Ibraheem Mohammad Al-Khabaz
- * Hamad Abdullah Saad Al-Maayouf

Gulf Bank Al-Danah's first quarterly draw for KD 200,000 prize was held on 28 March, and the second Al-Danah quarterly draw, for the prize of KD 250,000 will be held on 27 June while the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 26 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1 million will be held on 10 January 2019, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Gulf Bank encourages you to increase your chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into your Gulf Bank account using

the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking.

Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience, as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2018 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.



Topkap Palace

Enjoy Istanbul with Turkish Airlines and touristanbul

DUBAI: Turkish Airlines, flying to more countries and international destinations than any other airline, offers a free layover service to all international transit Turkish Airlines passengers who fly through Istanbul with a 6-24 hour layover. Since its launch in 2009, touristanbul has already benefitted almost a quarter of a million passengers who were able to enjoy a taste of Istanbul.

With its customary Turkish hospitality, Turkish Airlines takes pride in curating a delightfully different experience for its pas-

sengers and going beyond expectations with its array of unique products and services. The national flag-carrier offers the complementary touristanbul service including transfers, access to historical sights of interest as well as a sampling of Turkey's famed cuisine. Passengers can catch a glimpse of the varied history and cultural fusion which has made Istanbul such a vibrant and charming city.

To enjoy the benefits of touristanbul, passengers must have an international transit flight through Istanbul with Turkish Airlines and layover of 6-24 hours. Tours depart daily from the Hotel Desk at Istanbul Ataturk Airport, with a daily schedule taking place 8:30 to 11:00, from 09:00 to 15:00, from 09:00 to 18:00, from 12:00 to 18:00 and from 16:00 to 21:00. The tour program includes a combination of some Istanbul's highlights such as Topkap Palace, Sultan Ahmet Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Grand Bazaar, Galata Tower, Dolmabahce Palace and many more.

KFH unveils Ramadan program 'increase good deeds in Ramadan 4'

Al-Ruwaieh: Bank CSR achievements key milestone in sustainable development



Distributing iftar meals

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has unveiled its comprehensive Ramadan program themed "Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 4" that includes various social and humanitarian events and activities stemming from the bank's endeavors to solidify its commitment towards the society, while supporting all social and humanitarian initiatives.

"Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 4" program aims at strengthening KFH's social role, while reinforcing ties with various segments of society. This program is the launchpad of comprehensive program full of activities, events, visits and voluntary work.

Executive Manager Group Public Relations and Media at KFH, Yousef Abdullah Al-Ruwaieh said that KFH will continue its efforts to support all activities of interest to the society in line with the bank's strategy and social responsibility message, especially in the Holy month of Ramadan.

He added in a press release, that KFH has prepared a comprehensive program in Ramadan that encompasses different activities that encompass all social segments, indicating KFH will distribute over 20000 breakfast meals at different places including Nayef Palace, Souq

- Distributing over 20000 iftar meals in Ramadan
- Strategic partnership with Ministry of Interior
- Daily field visits

Al Mubarakeya, and Alshamlan mosque. The bank has signed an agreement with Nahtam voluntary team to launch "Ramadan Aman" campaign to distribute 100000 meals.

KFH organizes breakfast feasts to workers on duties during Iftar time in recognition of their efforts and responsibilities. KFH has signed a cooperation agreement with 'Agrivage', a startup business created by a group of Kuwaiti students, with the purpose of preserving the environment by recycling food waste and converting it into usable rich soil.

This comes as part of KFH social responsibility and

commitment towards the youth initiatives and the environment.

'Agrivage' won coveted INJAZ-Kuwait award, INJAZ AlArab award in addition to the honoring by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

'Agrivage' initiative is considered as highly important especially in the holy month of Ramadan. KFH support to 'Agrivage' and the signing of the cooperation agreement as the first institution in the private sector confirms the great interest KFH attaches in the activities of interest to the environment in collaboration with the

concerned parties.

KFH voluntary team will be present at different places to meet the public directly and distribute Ramadan presents and confectionaries (Qerq'e'an) at Discovery mall, The Kuwait Society for the Handicapped, Kuwait Down Syndrome Society and Dasman Diabetes Institute. KFH will organize a number of visits to health centers, hospitals and nursing homes to congratulate patients on the Holy month of Ramadan while distributing gifts.

Al-Ruwaieh concluded that KFH voluntary team will provide voluntary services to the public and will assist civil defense and security men and distribute food and beverages to worshippers. KFH is keen on reinforcing the human values among society individuals.



Yousef Al-Ruwaieh



Health

Workshop and conference held on Damon's philosophy, clinical practice

The workshop highlights the development of the Damon System



(From left to right) Professor David Bearn, Dr Faraj Behbehani, and Dr Richard Cure.



By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Quality Source Company held Damon Introductory and Damon Advance sessions by Dr Richard Cure and Dr David Bearn on Thursday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Farwaniya. The course was held for two days and explored Damon's philosophy, clinical practice and evidence.

Dr Faraj Behbehani, CEO of Quality Source and an orthodontist consultant at Basma Dental Center, told Kuwait Times that the workshop highlights the development of the Damon System. "I founded Quality Source Medical Services in 2007 before establishing my clinic in 2009. The company is interested in taking international agencies with scientific importance in the field of dental products. One of the companies that we

have contracted exclusively with is the American 'Ormco' company." He added that Ormco is specialized in the materials used in orthodontics. "They have a strategic product that was famous in the world of orthodontics, called Damon system, which has the self-linking feature".

Behbehani explained "When we move the teeth we slide it in the wire. If the amount of friction between orthodontics and the teeth was less, then the movement will be easier and the pain less. This system has existed for a long time and has been developed. I used it personally in Kuwait in 2007. The common name for this system is the quick orthodontic because it is easier than the regular one and saves approximately 6 months of treatment." He noted "The sessions will cover the scientific side of Damon system where 85 people were

registered, about 80 percent of whom specialized in orthodontics in Kuwait."

The first day session was titled 'Understanding Damon: Where Biology meets Mechanics' and was presented by the two professors from UK. Bearn who is a professor of Orthodontics at the University of Dundee, examiner for intercollegiate membership in orthodontics and lead researcher on Ormco Clinical Trial. Alongside him was Dr Cure, head of dentistry studies, director of orthodontics at the university of Warwick.

The Damon System is a consumer branding approach to help you better connect with patients and capitalize on their growing demand for faster, aesthetically-pleasing orthodontic treatment that delivers remarkable results and a new, beautiful smile.

The system is not just about revolutionary braces

and wires, it's a whole new way of treating patients. Traditional treatment often requires removal of healthy teeth and the use of palatal expanders to make space. This approach is often uncomfortable, takes longer, and can leave a narrower arch and a flat profile. Damon smiles are full, natural 10-tooth smiles achieved with light biologically-sensible forces, and are specifically designed to improve the overall facial result of each patient where Damon braces use a slide mechanism to hold the wire, which allows teeth to move more freely, quickly and comfortably. Damon braces are designed to be discreet, comfortable and easy to keep clean. Without the elastic ties which attract and collect plaque, Damon braces make dental hygiene easy during treatment. Plus the Damon System is available in clear brackets for those image conscious patients.

CLINIC

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What's On

Fann Way Art holds 'Al Mashreq' art exhibition at Al Hamra Center



Nasser Sharaf, founder of Fann Way with Sheikh Duajj Al Sabah. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



By Faten Omar

Fann Way Art and Events Co in collaboration with Al Hamra Luxury Center organized the "Al Mashreq" art exhibition to display paintings inspired by the spirit of Arab and Islamic civilization yesterday at 'The Gallery'. "The exhibition is a collective of 45 artworks created by 29 artists from the State of Kuwait, Middle East and Europe" Nasser Sharaf, founder of Fann Way said.

He added that the Al Mashreq exhibition introduces people to art of calligraphy, patterns, gilding, portraits, horses and architecture where the participating works are dominated by plastic creativity in all aspects. Along with this, is the use of constructive interdependence with the latest modern techniques in the concept of formation, using them in all classical and modern art styles.

Fann Way was established in 2017 and

focuses on the exhibition of art and formwork for art lovers and exhibitions in the field of art. The company is dedicated to take a bigger role in bridging art and Kuwaiti Society through offered services where its mission is to maintain the younger generations love for creating art. Fann Way is also taking part in social responsibility through community services such as volunteering in culture and social activities, arranging charity art exhibition and introducing Kuwaiti art to public.

"The Gallery" in Al Hamra Luxury Center was officially opened in July 2017. There have been more than seven art exhibitions held here. Each exhibition has varied between showcasing international and local artists and also includes space to host art courses and lectures for those who are interested in this matter, especially in the fields of portraiture, painting, photography, and calligraphy.



Celebrate the Holy Month of Ramadan with Marina Hotel

In celebration of the holy month of Ramadan, Marina Hotel will be reviving the traditions of this occasion by offering many cuisines for all guests to share iftar and ghabka meals with families and friends.

Facing the beautiful views of the Arabian Sea, the Atlantis restaurant offers tasty food in a perfect ambiance. The wide variety of the buffet includes Arabic and International dishes and allows guests to gather with their families and friends during the sunset which makes it the perfect place to break their fast. The Atlantis will serve iftar till 08:30 pm

Kamar Al Marina tent features traditional Arabic decorations and warm colors to reflect the spiritual meaning of Ramadan. To allow our guests to enjoy this atmosphere, Marina Hotel chefs have prepared a special ghabka buffet which includes exceptional oriental desserts as well as seasonal drinks complemented by a selection of tea flavors and Arabic coffee. The tent is located inside the Six Palms and can accommodate up to 200 guests for ghabka and suhour from 21:00 to 02:00 am. It will be sponsored by KLM Airlines for the entire period of the month.

For private functions and corporate events, Salva Sabah Al Ahmed Theatre and Hall is the perfect venue. This exquisite hall can accommodate up to 500 guests at a time and the staff provides special personalized attention to all details. It also offers a selection of different menus for iftar and suhour at exclusive prices and is fully equipped to cater for groups and organizations. Nabil Hammoud, General Manager, said: "As the month of Ramadan comes, we would like to wish our guests and their families a Ramadan Mubarak and invite them to our hotel to enjoy the Arabic hospitality and the wide selection of local and international food especially made for this occasion.

Apart from the amazing iftar, ghabka and suhour offerings, guests are invited to avail a special room rate throughout the month for 2 persons where they can relax and enjoy their stay in the luxurious rooms that are specially designed and have all the requisite facilities and luxurious amenities. They can also use the state of the art fitness centre.



Marina Hotel is located right in the heart of one of the most prominent places in Kuwait. Guests can visit Marina Mall, which is among the best shopping malls in Kuwait and is only walking distance from the hotel. They can also go to Marina Crescent which houses a variety of international restaurants and coffee shops. Make this Ramadan a truly memorable one by sharing special moments with family and friends at The Marina Hotel Kuwait.

ICSK charity fund a big success

10th May 2018 proved to be another blessed day for ICSK (Senior) as joy gripped the hearts of six special people. Through the kind hearts of the students, staff and able leadership of Dr V. Binumon, the Principal, a substantial amount of money was collected during the month of March as charity and birthday funds, in order to provide monetary aid to people who were most in need of it.

With great privilege and pleasure, ICSK presented the monetary aid to the six special guests in an assembly conducted on May 10, 2018. Ragi Manemma, Jainaph Shek, Sita Maya Gole, Devananda Kumar Kollu, Jackeline Ababon, and Leonila Himantog were the lucky ones and each received KD 150,000.

As Aristotle once rightfully said, "To give away money is an easy matter in any man's power. But to decide to whom to give it, and how large and when, and for what purpose and how, is neither in every man's power nor an easy matter". The guests received the aid with gratitude and joy filling their hearts. Each one of them left the school with a smile from their hearts and in turn the ICSK family felt fortunate enough to be able to help.



Malabar Gold & Diamonds celebrated International Nurse's Day



Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the BIG 5 global jewelry retailer celebrated the International Nurses Day in association with Al Adan Hospital on 12th May, 2018 at the Al Adan Hospital. International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on every May 12th, which is the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth.

Nursing is a profession within the health care sector focused on the care of individuals, families, and communities so they may attain, maintain, or recover optimal health and quality of life. Nurses may be differentiated from other health care providers by their approach to patient care,

training, and scope of practice.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has taken the initiative to celebrate the International Nurses Day as a token appreciation to the Nurses for their selfless contribution. Commenting on the celebration, Mr Lukman Alavi, Deputy Branch Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds said, "We thank Al Adan Hospital for associating with us to celebrate the International Nurses Day. As we celebrate a very special day, the day of the nurses, and we appreciate to all those who serve in nursing". Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also honored 62 Nurses by giving certificate & memento as a token of appreciation for their service. Cake cut-

ting ceremony along with some fun games has been arranged as a part of the event.

"We thank Malabar Gold & Diamonds for their gesture towards us & also celebrating 'International Nurses Day' with us and it was indeed a new experience for all of us here", said Mr Sadiq Abdul Hadi Al Feeli, Nursing Director, Al Adan Hospital said during the event. The event also marked the importance of 'World Hygiene Day' which falls on May 05th. The day is declared by the 'World Health Organization' and encourages patients and their family members to join health workers in their efforts to practice good hand hygiene.

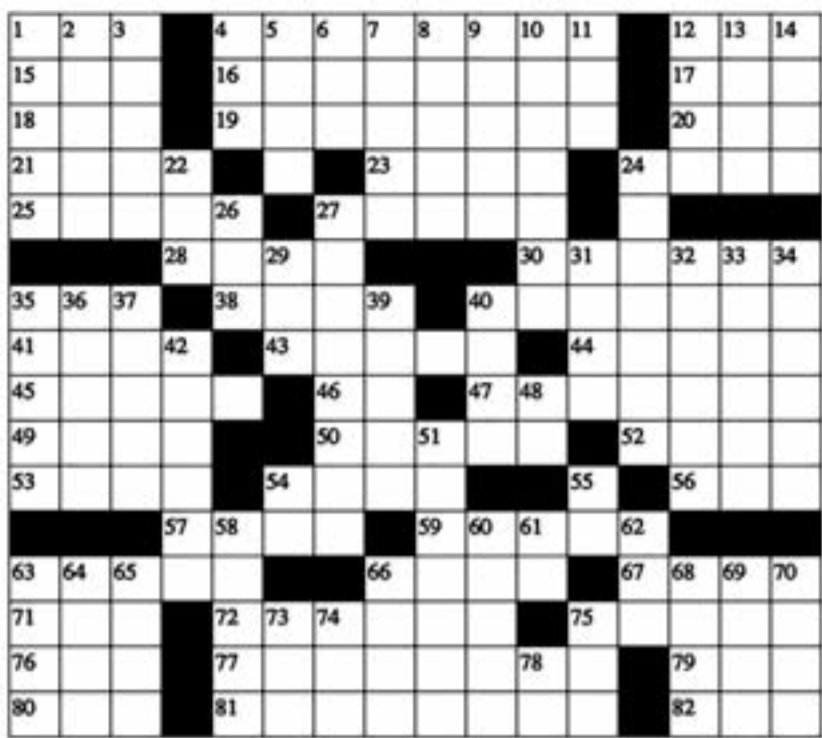
Congratulations!



Congratulations Cia on your graduation and best wishes for your next adventure! With love and pride from daddy, mommy, Aliya, Sean, family and friends.

Stars

CROSSWORD 1909



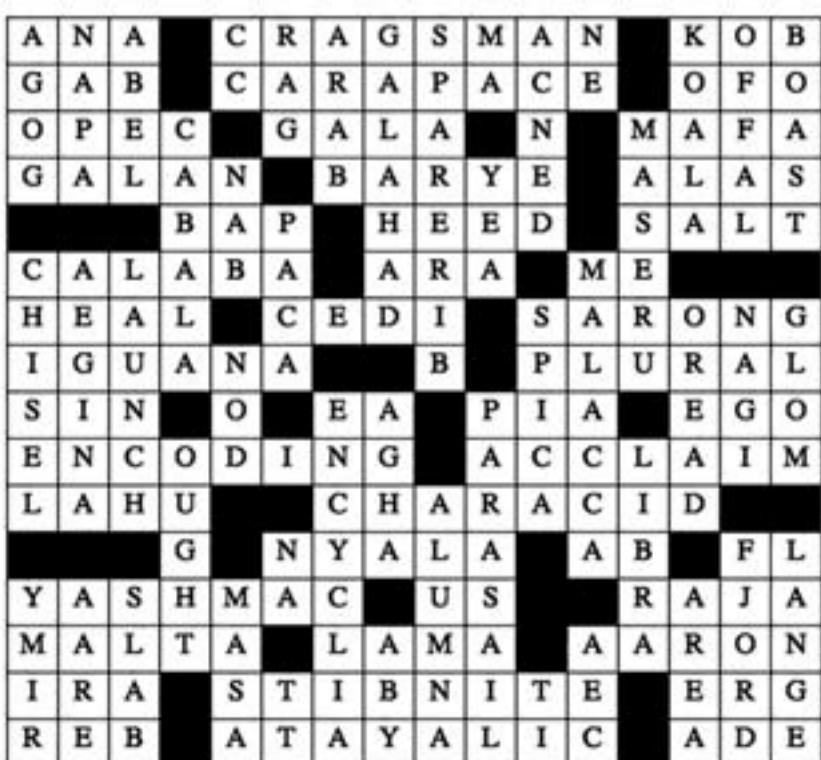
ACROSS

1. A loft for storing hay.
4. A flexible pipe for conveying a liquid or gas.
12. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
15. A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
16. A city in the northern panhandle of Texas.
17. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
18. A coenzyme derived from the B vitamin nicotinic acid.
19. Someone who performs magic tricks to amuse an audience.
20. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
21. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
23. An informal conversation.
25. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
28. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
30. Special design or visual object representing a quality, type, group, etc.
35. A person active in party politics.
38. A financial institution that accepts deposits and channels the money into lending activities.
41. An organic compound that contains a hydroxyl group bonded to a carbon atom which in turn is doubly bonded to another carbon atom.
43. A board with the alphabet on it.
44. A person who gives a name or names.
45. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
46. Unknown god.
47. Coarse fabric used for bags or sacks.
49. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
50. A member of a Muslim Turkic people of western Asia (especially in Kazakhstan).
52. (Sumerian) Water god and god of wisdom.
53. An aromatic ointment used in antiquity.
56. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
57. (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
59. Overgrown with ivy.
63. Green algae common in freshwater lakes of limestone districts.
67. Marked by or showing unaffected simplicity and lack of guile or worldly experience.
71. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
72. A mountain peak in central Washington.
76. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
77. Having or showing excessive or compulsive concern with something.
79. The rate at which red blood cells settle out in a tube of blood under standardized conditions.
80. God of the earth.
81. Consisting of or resembling mother-of-pearl.
82. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet.

DOWN

1. French biochemist who (with Francois Jacob) explained how genes are activated and suggested the existence of messenger RNA (1910-1976).
2. Similar to the giraffe but smaller with much shorter neck and stripe on the legs.
3. Any of many long-legged birds that wade in water in search of food.
4. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
5. A strategically located monarchy on the southern and eastern coasts of the Arabian Peninsula.
6. A shape that sags.
7. Any plant of the genus Erica.
8. Peruvian shrub with small pink to lavender tubular flowers.
9. A Greek epic poem (attributed to Homer) describing the siege of Troy.
10. A defeat of the Persian army by the Greeks in 479 BC.
11. The longest division of geological time.
12. (informal) Exceptionally good.
13. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
14. Surrealist Spanish painter (1904-1989).
22. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
24. A feeling of anger caused by being offended.
26. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
27. (Judaism) An eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem.
29. The United Nations agency concerned with the international organization of food and agriculture.
31. The imperial dynasty of China from 1368 to 1644.
32. A thin plate or layer (especially of bone or mineral).
33. A member of the people inhabiting an area of northern Mongolia and eastern Siberia.
34. The boundary line or the area immediately inside the boundary.
36. Lake in northwestern Russia near the border with Finland.
37. Of or relating to or affecting a lobe.
39. Deciduous South African tree having large odd-pinnate leaves and profuse fragrant orange-yellow flowers.
40. A small cake leavened with yeast.
42. A supply of food especially for a household.
48. A state in northwestern North America.
51. Of or relating to or characteristic of Zaire or its people.
54. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
55. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
58. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
60. Left-hand page.
61. That is to say.
62. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
64. Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
65. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
66. A relative position or degree of value in a graded group.
68. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
69. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
70. A card game in which players bet against the dealer on the cards he will draw from a dealing box.
73. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
74. A committee in the executive branch of government that advises the president on foreign and military and national security.
75. A doctor's degree in dental surgery.
78. A bivalent and trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

The week opens with good energy for you. Your performance in an early meeting brings confidence and positive attitudes regarding a new project or plan. You gain support for the suggestions you make regarding new methods of operating. Later in the morning you discover a helpful hint about the working of new software or perhaps this is a new security system. The day drags as you long for the end of it to come; time sometimes drags when we are anxious. Someone turns to you for help concerning a very personal situation; think about this as you don't want to get caught in a lie. The heavens are aligned to bring you insight to what the cause is for this problem. Enjoy your evening knowing you have come to the aid of someone dear.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You long to find enjoyment and relief from daily pressure. The fun and entertaining activities in life hold a strong appeal; a chance to get away may present itself from a surprising source. This is a good period to share time with loved ones or those who know you very well; the outside world can wait for a bit, no worries. Your thoughts are your own as you review some past activities you'd rather not share with anyone; these are your cherished memories, and you're entitled to them. Your support system is valuable now as you realize exactly who's on your side and who's not. Tonight an unexpected visitor delivers dinner and a movie; you're due to take some time for yourself and let others do for you what you normally do for them.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your good qualities are well known by many; someone who cares for and respects you lends a kind ear and agrees with your opinion. You may feel prickly and not in the mood to be with those who irritate you; remember it's not a bad thing to do what's best for you. Working through inner turmoil is called for and positive vibrations are available to help with this. Your good taste and quirky ways are strong and influence your ideas. This is a good time to create new ways of doing something most people have to do; a successful invention could be indicated. Being outdoors brings good energy. Your evening goes smoothly as you find that you're ahead of schedule on something important around the house. Relax and be happy this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The feelings of others take precedence today as your sensitivities are in tune with those around you. Communication to large numbers of people is done with ease and clarity today; many look to you for leadership. Remain honest with yourself as you learn more about cosmic or mystic questions you may have regarding oracles such as tarot cards or rune stones. Just because you have never tried something doesn't mean it's not worth taking a look at. Someone could object to your style or opinions. Avoid arguments with those who reject change and/or growth; they're usually afraid of new ways of thinking such as you now actively seek. Your inner workings become clearer as you continue educating yourself about new thoughts and theories.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are able to influence others with ease. Words flow as you express your thoughts and ideas to others who are looking for answers. An in-depth conversation with loved ones relays encouraging news. Something you say could reveal your plans to the wrong person; take care. Some members of your circle disagree with a life choice you make; perhaps they can't break away from old ways and ideas but they're also worth listening to! An argument you could avoid but choose not to could result in long lasting emotional wounds. Tread lightly around a sensitive situation at home that you have instigated and made worse; it's okay to be wrong once in a while. Take a yin yoga class this evening for the most optimum sleep you have had in a long time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Cleansing is an empowering, positive event you should enjoy and welcome; there could, however, be some parts that are difficult. People who aren't good for themselves ask to join you for a celebration; while you have learned a powerful lesson, and choose to stay away from them, so have they; if they're capable and if they have not learned, you can send them off to teach someone else! The areas affected by shedding outmoded energy are finances, associations, physical well-being and attitudes. Your focus on a positive future won't be distracted or knocked off-track. Hold tightly to your logic as you fight the urge to daydream and wish the day away. Friends pull you out of your daze by insisting on a visit to the theater to take in a newly released movie.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your mind isn't on the work of the day, but instead lingers upon your hopes and wishes and if-ones. Important tasks await your attention and you make progress quickly as you're the best at what you do! You have worked hard to get where you are, but personal circumstances threaten to dominate your time and energy. You insist on the sex life you need and could reconsider your current source if those needs aren't met; this could also indicate an emotional need not being filled. Be mindful your current phase can create an energy of wanting to control things; beware the tendency to become a control freak. A daring challenge later this evening just might unnerve you and possibly cause a deep rift between friends depending on how you handle it.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your passions run high and demand fulfillment. This energy could be directed at political, religious, social or emotional/sexual matters. Your mental and emotional considerations undergo transformation down to the cellular level; you refuse to deal with hurt feelings or anyone who attempts to make you feel guilty. You choose to address things directly and honestly for this is the only true path to peace and productivity; the stars are aligned for organization and things being put right on every level. A new customer or client represents a prosperous project or association. Your ability to take care of business in a timely manner is well known and much appreciated. Pay attention to the vibrations of in-born intuition regarding choices.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

The urge to nourish and care for others could lead you to adopt a pet or perhaps even take in a foster child. You desire to share your many blessings with others. Your ways are not those of tradition, you prefer to work smarter not harder. You might receive criticism from someone older! You're invited to a quick lunch by someone who respects you. You get your message across perfectly at a meeting you dreaded and receive respect for your input. You figure out what causes a problem between coworkers; you know how to repair this without causing any problems. Going with the flow is effortless for you during the new cycle you have entered; you eagerly join in a fun hobby with several nice new friends you have become fond of.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your intuitive side indicates that something worrisome could be on the horizon. Tap into this and create positive energy in its place for a more acceptable outcome. Visually appealing things are available for purchase today; you find one item you'll treasure forever. Congratulations! Time seems to slip away as you rush to complete a project on deadline; focus and don't allow frustration or panic to rule you. You can overcome whatever restrictions you encounter. Friends need your help on a tricky domestic project that could end up requiring quite a bit of time but end in total success. You sit back and watch someone. You're unfulfilled in the romance department; you can definitely do something about this if you truly wish.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

This is not the time for giving advice; you could feel the strong desire to stay near home and hearth sharing time with loved ones. There could be a problem with someone you care for; do you feel like a beautiful bird in a gilded cage, longing for freedom only you can change your circumstances; take a few moments and listen to your heart. If you need encouragement, accept it from a kind person who has your best interests at heart today. You could realize that someone has been avoiding you, figure out the role you have played in this. Someone could be offended by something new you're trying. You could have a deep conversation with someone you respect. Perhaps a movie or delicious dinner out with someone who thinks as you do tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your new attitudes and goals don't fit with your current work situation. You may experience thoughts of changing the field you work in; if you're in retail you may want to change to food, for example, but whatever the change is, it's near! You could have to use other, primitive methods of communicating. Confrontation with younger people could prove very unpleasant; this is a result of children growing into adulthood. There could be some strong disagreements but remember who's in charge and who's not; if this isn't with children, elders are indicated. Someone comments on your excellent taste or attitude. Pulling things together in an organized way helps reach your goals of rearranging and creating perfect feng shui.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Movie Actresses 1

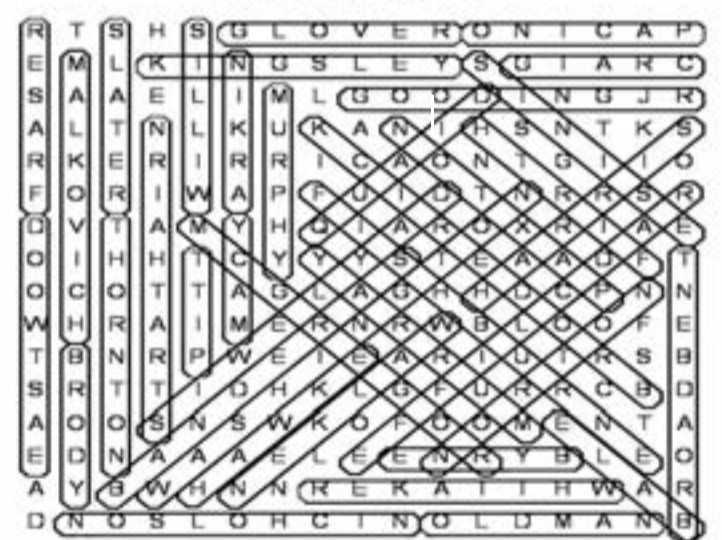
Find and circle all of the Movie Actresses that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a movie for which Jodie Foster won an Oscar.



- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ADAMS, Amy | GUTHBERT, Elisha | LANE, Diane |
| ALBA, Jessica | DAVIS, Hope | LANGE, Jessica |
| ALLEN, Joan | DENCH, Judi | MCDORMAND, Frances |
| BARRYMORE, Drew | DIAZ, Cameron | MORRE, Helen |
| BENING, Annette | FANNING, Dakota | MOORE, Demi |
| BERRY, Halle | FOSTER, Jodie | PALTRON, Gwyneth |
| BIEL, Jessica | GUGINO, Carla | PAQUIN, Anna |
| BLANCHETT, Cate | HATHAWAY, Anne | RIZZI, Christina |
| BLETHYN, Brenda | HUNTER, Holly | SWANK, Hilary |
| BLUNT, Emily | HUSTON, Anjelica | THERON, Charlize |
| CLOSE, Glenn | JOLIE, Angelina | THOMPSON, Emma |
| CONNELLY, Jennifer | KEENER, Catherine | WATSON, Emily |
| CUSACK, Joan | | |

Yesterday's Solution

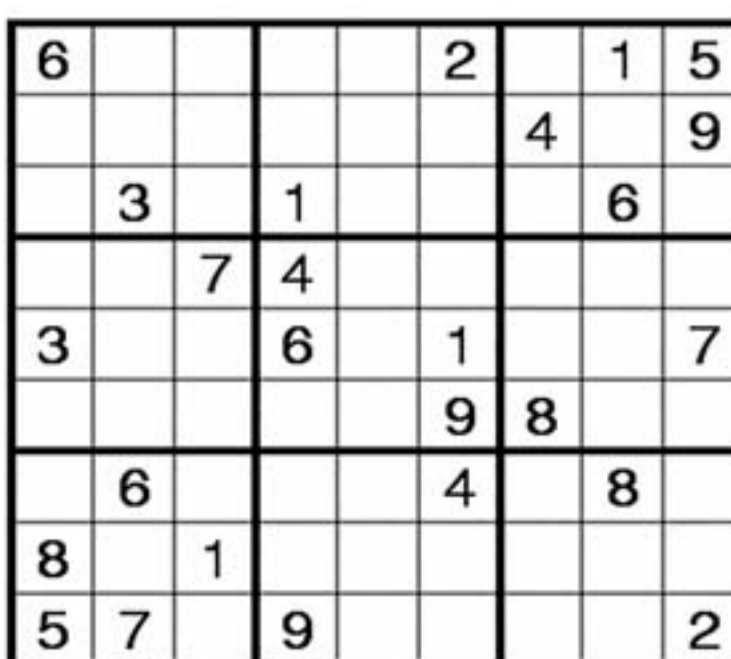
Movie Actors 3



- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| ARKIN, Alan | GLOVER, Danny | PACINO, Al |
| BALE, Christian | GOODING JR, Cuba | PAXTON, Bill |
| BANDERAS, Antonio | HARRIS, Ed | PITT, Brad |
| BROADBENT, Jim | HAWKE, Ethan | QUAID, Dennis |
| BRODERICK, Matthew | KINGSLEY, Ben | RADCLIFFE, Daniel |
| BRODY, Adrian | MACY, William H. | SINISE, Gary |
| BYRNE, Gabriel | MALKOVICH, John | SLATER, Christian |
| CRAIG, Daniel | MCGREGOR, Ewan | STRATHAIRN, David |
| DAY-LEWIS, Daniel | MURPHY, Eddie | THORNTON, Billy Bob |
| EASTWOOD, Clint | MURRAY, Bill | WALKEN, Christopher |
| FIRTH, Colin | NICHOLSON, Jack | WASHINGTON, Denzel |
| FISHBURNE, Laurence | NORTON, Edward | WHITAKER, Forest |
| FRASER, Brendan | OLDMAN, Gary | WILLIS, Bruce |

The hidden movie title is: THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Classifieds

Tuesday, May 15, 2018

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DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Relatively hot with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear later on.

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate northerly wind to north easterly wind, with speed of 10 - 30 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 14/05/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	35 °C	26 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	36 °C	27 °C			
ABDALY	36 °C	21 °C			
BUBYAN	35 °C	-- °C			
JAHRA	36 °C	25 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	35 °C	26 °C			
SALMIYAH	33 °C	26 °C			
AHMADI	34 °C	27 °C			
NUWAISIB	35 °C	24 °C			
WAFRA	36 °C	21 °C			
SALMY	35 °C	21 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	05/15	Relatively hot	37 °C	26 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 32 km/h
Wednesday	05/16	Relatively hot with a chance for rising dust over open areas	36 °C	25 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Thursday	05/17	Hot	39 °C	26 °C	VRB-NW	10 - 32 km/h
Friday	05/18	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear later on	38 °C	27 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:27
Sunrise	04:56
Zuhr	11:44
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:33
Isha	20:00

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	36 °C
MIN. Temp.	26 °C
MAX. RH	44 %
MIN. RH	15 %
MAX. Wind	NW 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

CHANGE OF NAME

I have changed my name from Taher to Taher Ali Mukkhi, in future be called and known by new name. (C 5398) 14-5-2018

ACCOMODATION

For Filipino ONLY Farwaniya block 1, near gulfmart. Available 25 of May, Contact 94418396 or 69972330 23-4-2018

EMERGENCY
112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is **1889988**

Airlines

American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	a22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
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Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1

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JOB VACANCY

Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Kuwait is looking for Full-time live in domestic worker (Ambassador's residence).

General Requirements

- Minimum 2 years' experience with good references
- Ability to communicate in English
- Possibility to work from July, 2018
- Transferable residency

Deadline for all application is Thursday, May 24, 2018

Submit CV & Related documents to: E-mail Kuwall@mofa.go.kr / Fax 2537 8629



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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 15/5/2018							Departure Flights on Tuesday 15/5/2018						
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time				Airlines	Flt	Route	Time			
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	THY	767	Istanbul	13:40		
JZR	239P	Amman	00:40	WAN	312	Asyut	13:45	JZR	144	Doha	13:55		
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FEF	341	Sohag	13:50	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00		
KAC	102	London	00:50	KAC	672	Dubai	13:55	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:00		
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	WAN	134	Doha	14:05	JZR	552	Alexandria	14:05		
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10		
JZR	267	Beirut	01:25	KNE	233	Riyadh	14:10	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15		
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	KAC	618	Doha	14:10	FEG	342	Sohag	14:50		
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00		
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	516	Tehran	14:20	ETD	9890	SGN	15:00		
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:25	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00		
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15		
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50	KNE	234	Riyadh	15:30		
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45		
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:05	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55		
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00		
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:50	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00		
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	KAC	562	Amman	15:20	KKK	1269	Amman	16:10		
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	16:15		
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	502	Beirut	15:35	KLM	446	Amsterdam	16:15		
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	UAE	854	Dubai	16:20		
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	SAW	705	Dammascus	16:00	JZR	142	Doha	16:20		
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	JZR	534	Cairo	16:10	MSR	607	Luxor	16:20		
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	OMA	644	Muscat	16:25		
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	8511	Doha	16:20	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	16:25		
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	118	New York	16:20	QTR	1087	Doha	16:25		
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20	MSR	613	Cairo	16:25		
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	FEG	241	Alexandria	16:45	LMU	5511	Cairo	16:25		
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	JZR	125	Bahrain	16:55	JAI	571	Mumbai	16:25		
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00	QTR	1077	Doha	16:25		
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	KAC	303	Mumbai	16:25		
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	MSC	404	Asyut	16:25		
MSC	403	Asyut	05:00	JZR	145	Doha	17:35	THY	771	Istanbul	16:30		
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35	GFA	511	Bahrain	16:30		
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40	RJA	643	Amman	16:30		
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20	JZR	164	Dubai	16:35		
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	167	Paris	16:35		
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	RJA	640	Amman	19:00	WAN	311	Asyut	16:35		
BAW	157	London	06:10	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	KAC	413	Bangkok	16:35		
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	PAL	669	Manila	16:35		
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	KAC	171	Frankfurt	16:35		
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	NIA	0161	Cairo	19:30	KAC	501	Beirut	16:35		
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35	JZR	778	Jeddah	16:35		
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:35	BAW	156	London	16:35		
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40	KAC	165	Rome	16:35		
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:40	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	16:35		
JZR	529	Asyut	07:30	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	KAC	117	New York	16:35		
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	16:35		
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:05	KAC	671	Dubai	16:35		
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05	KAC	561	Amman	16:35		
JZR	561	Sohag	08:20	KAC	620	Doha	20:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	16:35		
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	QTR	1088	Doha	20:25	KAC	741	Dammam	16:35		
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	JZR	172	Frankfurt	20:45	JZR	535	Cairo	16:35		
JZR	605	Ahmedabad	08:45	KAC	553	Alexandria	20:50	UAE	856	Dubai	16:35		
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	553	Alexandria	20:50	JZR	482	Istanbul	16:35		
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	KAC	101	London	16:35		
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	16:35		
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	KAC	515	Tehran	16:35		
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15	KAC	541	Cairo	16:35		
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	168	Paris	21:20	KAC	617	Doha	16:35		
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	GFA	564	Amman	21:50	WAN	133	Doha	16:35		
SAW	703	Damascus	10:30	KAC	219	Bahrain	21:50	KAC	155	Istanbul	16:35		
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ICV	675	Luxembourg	22:05	QTR	1071	Doha	16:35		
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	FDB	056	Dubai	16:35		
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	IRA	674	Lar	16:35		
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:15	SYR	342	Damascus	16:35		
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25	SVA	513	Riyadh	16:35		
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30	SAW	704	Damascus	16:35		
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	WAN	136	Doha	22:30	GFA	514	Bahrain	16:35		
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	PIA	239	Sialkot	22:50	MEA	415	Bahrain	16:35		
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	JZR	185	Dubai	22:50	JZR	776	Jeddah	16:35		
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00	QTR	1075	Doha	16:35		
ETD	0995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	13:00	MSC	501	Alexandria	23:10	JZR	176	Dubai	16:35		
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	THY	764	Istanbul	23:15	SAW	702	Damascus	16:35		
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30	MSC	412	Asyut	16:35		
				FDB	071	Dubai	23:35						
				JZR	241	Amman	23:40						

Lifestyle | Movies

LEAVE THE MOVIE AT THE BEDROOM
DOOR, SAY CANNES COUPLES

Hepburn and Tracy, Bogart and Bacall, Joel Coen and Frances McDormand: movie magic often has real-life love stories behind it, but star couples at Cannes say you must tread carefully when mixing work and romance. Spanish Oscar winners Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem, who have replaced Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt as the smouldering A-list pair on the Cannes red carpet, have already teamed up on nine movies. After the premiere of their new thriller, "Everybody Knows", which opened the festival, Cruz said dryly that while she enjoyed working with her husband, she wouldn't want to do it all the time.

"It's not something that we plan on doing every two years." Cruz said she and Bardem, who have two children, were paid equally for the film and have strict ground rules about leaving the push-and-pull of their personal relationship far from the set. "It would not make your life better, I think, if you used certain things from your private life (on a film)," said Cruz. "So the fact that we know each other and trust each other so much only helps." Asked by a waggish reporter what was like to be the "only man in the world who likes working with his wife", Bardem responded sternly: "That's a question in very poor taste."

China's Zhao Tao, who influential movie website IndieWire last week called "one of the greatest actresses in the world", has made a half dozen films with her spouse, director Jia Zhangke, including "Touch of Sin" and "Mountains May Depart". Their latest is another Cannes contender, "Ash is Purest White". She calls her husband "Director Jia" while shooting, just like the rest of the cast-keeping their shop talk and pillow talk sharply separate. "When I come home and we get back to our own family we have nicknames for each other but that is something that just belongs to both of us privately," she said.

Zhao said their relationship had grown more "dynamic" and collaborative since they made their first picture together, "Platform", in 2000. "Back then, if the director thought a scene was good, I tended to think 'Yeah, it's good enough,'" she said. "Now it's more of a



Spanish actor Javier Bardem (left) and Spanish actress Penelope Cruz pose as they arrive for the screening of the film "Todos Lo Saben (Everybody Knows)" and the opening ceremony of the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos

dialogue about the characters-how I want from a female perspective to make a character come alive. I think he's very responsive to my opinions and suggestions." Jia, who won the Golden Lion top prize at Venice in 2006 for "Still Life", told AFP their sometimes hard-fought consensus covered even ostensibly trivial details like costumes.

He said their shared love of Quentin Tarantino's "Kill Bill" movies led the couple to occasionally borrow some of the eye-watering colors of its costumes. They revived the look in "Ash is Purest White", whose first chapter set in the 2000s recalls Tarantino and the Hong Kong action movies that inspired him with their ultra-stylish violence.

"We were just on the same page," Jia said of his wife. Another on-screen, off-screen partnership that made a splash at Cannes this

year was Spanish director-producer pair Raul de la Fuente and Amaia Ramirez, who presented their animated docudrama "Another Day of Life" after a few cinematic kisses for the cameras. Ciro Guerra and Cristina Gallego also managed to co-direct their critically-acclaimed Colombian narcodrama, "Birds of Passage", despite the recent end of their romantic relationship.

'Really terrifying'

It's often a cinema passion project that brings lovers together in the first place, as with A.B. Shawky and the producer of his debut feature "Yomeddine", Dina Emam. "We didn't start dating until maybe right before production," Emam told reporters in Cannes. The film, set in an Egyptian leper colony using non-professional actors who were not able to read or

write, proved to be more of a bonding experience than they bargained for. The two survived a "really terrifying" shakedown by amateur security guards, byzantine bureaucracy and the vagaries of crowd funding a complex project that surprised everyone-particularly the filmmakers themselves-by getting into Cannes' vaunted competition. "It was a grueling shoot, I can't sugarcoat it," said Shawky, at 32 the youngest director in the Cannes competition.

Emam agreed: "There's no amount of planning that could have prevented the things that happened on this shoot-I think maybe we were a little cursed." But after their baptism of fire, Shawky and Emam decided they were ready to take the next step. "As soon as we were done with the film we decided 'I think we've gone through the hardest thing we'll ever go through in our lives-I think marriage will be a piece of cake,'" she quipped. — AFP



Chinese actor Liao Fan (left) and Chinese actress Zhao Tao during a photocall for the film "Ash is Purest White (Jiang hu er nv)".



Egyptian director A.B. Shawky (left) and producer Dina Emam pose during a photocall for the film "Yomeddine" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Beyond Mandela: Comrades take spotlight in Cannes documentary



(From left) French distributor Raphaelle Delauche, French co-director and screenwriter Gilles Porte, French-Russian producer Nadia Turincev, South African author, political communist activist Sylvia Neame, South African anti-Apartheid campaigner and former political prisoner Andrew Mlangeni, French director Nicolas Champeaux, French actress and producer Julie Gayet and French producer William Jehannin pose during a photocall for the film "The State Against Mandela" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Half a century after the historic trial at which Nelson Mandela escaped the gallows, one of his fellow prisoners will walk Cannes' red carpet Monday for the premiere of a documentary about those who stood with him in the dock. Andrew Mlangeni is one of the last two surviving defendants of the 1963-1964 Rivonia trial of Mandela and nine others who faced a death sentence on charges of plotting guerrilla warfare and carrying out acts of sabotage against South Africa's apartheid regime.

Mandela's impassioned three-hour address to the court, during which he declared that a democratic South Africa was an ideal "for which I am prepared to die" was the most significant of his career, conferring on him a demi-god status that overshadowed the sacrifices of his co-accused. "The State Against Mandela and the Others", a French-produced documentary based on the recently released audio recordings of the proceedings, attempts to redress the balance by giving center stage to his fellow travellers.

Using animation, interviews and archival footage it shows how the defendants turned a trial aimed at dealing a knockout blow to the anti-apartheid movement into a searing indictment of white supremacist rule. "We decided we had to conduct this not as a criminal trial but a political trial," says Ahmed Kathrada, one of three former prisoners-one black (Mlangeni), one white (Denis Goldberg) and one of Asian origin (Kathrada) — interviewed for the feature, Kathrada, who died last year, is one of the heroes of the documentary by former Radio France Internationale journalist Nicolas Champeaux and filmmaker Gilles Porte, which uses stark black-and-white animation to recreate the courtroom clashes. Born into a family of Indian Muslim immigrants, he refused, like his comrades, to appeal his sabotage conviction to avoid the indignity of being seen to beg for clemency.

'It's life!'

The film also shows how the preening prosecutor, depicted by Franco-Dutch artist Oerd van Cuijlenborg as a culture figure in flapping black robes, underestimated the

"semi-barbarous blacks" as they were described by the state. Powerful testimony from Mlangeni, who watched his parents work for whites "for peanuts", and Mandela's mentor Walter Sisulu, who complained of constant harassment of his family by the police, moved the world-and the judge. At the end of the eight-month trial, which was condemned by the UN Security Council, the judge decided to spare the men the noose.

Mandela, Kathrada, Mlangeni, Goldberg and four others were sentenced to life in prison, a verdict 85-year-old Goldberg greeted with immense relief. "It's life! And life is wonderful," he recalls shouting across the courtroom to his mother. But Mandela's ex-wife Winnie was already steeling herself for the long road ahead, with two young children in tow. "That's when my 'Amandla' (Power) started," she says in one of her last interviews before her death last month, uttering the rallying cry of the anti-apartheid movement with a clenched-fist salute.

Poetry in animation

For Champeaux, a former South Africa correspondent who gained access to the 256 hours of digitized recordings, the trial had the makings of an epic tale that needed to be shared with an international audience. "There's the bad guy, the traitor, the love story, the suspense, the inscrutable judge, the families trembling in the gallery," he told AFP. But it is also a reminder, he said, "that when you are wedded to a cause, those close to you suffer." Explaining the decision to use 45 minutes of animation-about a third of the film-Porte said the drawings allowed a film bursting with historical information "to breathe a bit". "Animation also lends a bit of poetry," the co-director of the award-winning 2004 French-Belgian comedy "When the Sea Rises" said. Above all, the documentary shows that South Africa's tortured path to democratic elections in 1994, four years after Mandela's release from prison, was the work of a single-minded, multi-racial group, not a single superhero. For Porte, it is a reminder "that all great things that happen in this world are achieved collectively." — AFP



(From left) French producer David Rosier, German director Wim Wenders and his wife Donata Wenders, Swiss producer Samanta Gandolfi Branca, Italian producer Ignazio Oliva and Italian producer Stefano Bugliosi pose as they arrive for the screening of the film "Pope Francis - A Man of His Word" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos

Film shows 'fearless' pope taking on church

There is a killer moment in the new film "Pope Francis-A Man of His Word" when you realize what he is up against. The Argentine is dressing down the cardinals and bejeweled princes of the Curia who run the Catholic Church, lacerating them for their greed, back-stabbing and lust for power. The scandal-hit, Italian-dominated body is full of people leading immoral double lives who "possess a heart of stone and a stiff neck," he tells them in German director Wim Wenders' remarkable insight into the leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics. "Pay a visit to the cemeteries" and look at those "who thought they were immortal, immune and indispensable," Francis urges them in the feature, which premiered late Sunday at the Cannes film festival.

"You see the sharp faces of some of these cardinals who are rich and ambitious," said Wenders, who interviewed the reforming pontiff over several months for the portrait. "But you can also see other archbishops thinking, 'Yes, this is why we elected you.'"

As Francis said, you cannot combat the diseases of the world without examining yourself first. "The picture that emerges of Francis from Wenders' unprecedented access is of a man determined to radically transform the vast wealthy institution into "a poor church for poor

people". And Wenders, the maker of such classics as "Wings of Desire", "Paris, Texas" and "The Buena Vista Social Club", believes this pontiff has the steeliness to do it.

Enemies digging in

Many in the Curia "think he is going too fast and too far," according to Wenders, and have been digging in with traditionalists to resist him. "But I think the opposite," said the filmmaker. "I think Francis is stepping on the brakes in order to take them all along. "Yet also he is fearless. He knows what has to be done and he wants to push it as far as he can knowing that he is not young anymore." For Wenders, a lapsed Catholic who rediscovered his faith in a "friendly God" after the death of his doctor father, the 81-year-old is a revolutionary. "When you look him in the eye you see this is a very loving man who really likes people. He is as honest as a man can be and you see the courage in his eyes.

"His message-that we are equal and we have to treat each other as equals is why people say he is a communist. We cannot leave people behind in the dust. It is a tough message and he doesn't hesitate with it." Francis is a radical just like the medieval saint from whom he took his name, Wenders argued, "who like him wanted



German director Wim Wenders poses during a photocall for the film "Pope Francis - A Man of His Word".

to go back to early Christianity... when the church was an organisation of poor people."

"St Francis of Assisi was also the first ecologist," said Wenders, who was "amazed" by the depth of the pope's understanding of climate change and his warning that the global "mania for growth" is threatening mankind. "That growth is coming at the expense of the poor majority... who are suffering first and worst from climate change," said Wenders. The director said the Vatican contacted him out of the blue asking whether he would be interested in talking to the pope. — AFP

Real 's Navas more scared of Cannes red carpet than Salah

Real Madrid goalkeeper Keylor Navas has revealed that he was more scared of walking the red carpet at the Cannes film festival than facing Liverpool's lethal striker Mohamed Salah. The Costa Rican-known as "God's Goalkeeper" for his strong Christian faith-said he found showing a film about his life at the festival more stressful than a Champions League final. "It's a delicate question," he told reporters at Cannes Sunday where he was screening "Man of Faith", which recounts his rise from humble origins to become one of Real's millionaire galactics.

"The Champions League final I know. The red carpet is new...it's a bit stressful," he admitted. The 31-year-old was part of the all-con-

quering Madrid side that won the European title in 2016 and 2017, and will face the English team in two weeks' time in this year's decider. A day after Madrid beat Celta Vigo 6-0 in La Liga, Navas flew to Cannes to promote the film, which also features Real's legendary trainer Zinedine Zidane playing himself and a dressing room scene involving other members of the side. Navas said the idea of the film was not to grandstand him but to "show people that with faith and God's help" you can realize your dreams.

Liverpool's free-scoring Egyptian marksman is a devout Muslim whose 44 goals so far this season have inspired Reds' fans to chant that they might consider converting to Islam themselves. — AFP



A video grab shows Real Madrid's Costa Rican goalkeeper Keylor Navas (left) and his wife Andrea Salas arriving on the red carpet after the screening of their film "Hombre de fe (Man of Faith)" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Lifestyle | Gossip



Prince album to be streamed on TIDAL

TIDAL are releasing a never-heard-before Prince album next year. Jay-Z's streaming service has been given the seal of approval of the late 'Purple Rain' hitmaker's estate - putting an end to their legal battle - to put out the material for 14 days exclusively, before it's made available in physical form. The 'Encore' rapper, who has promised to "honor Prince's enduring legacy", said: "Our only goal is to share Prince's music with his fans as he wanted. "After thoughtful and honest conversation with him, he chose TIDAL as his partner for 'Hit n Run Phase One' and 'Hit n Run Phase Two', and we will continue to respect and honor Prince's enduring legacy and wishes with this new collection." Troy Carter, the entertainment adviser of Prince's estate, added: "I'm very pleased this is resolved, and we get to honor the relationship between Prince and Tidal with this album. We look forward to fans hearing the new music and experiencing the genius of Prince." It's a surprise move, as Prince's record label sued Jay's Roc-Awired company in 2016. NPG Records claimed at the time that the Jay Z-owned company did not have the rights to the late music legend's digital catalogue and therefore should not have shared his songs on paid-for service TIDAL. The 'Kiss' singer's estate agreed to sell his songwriting rights to Universal - meaning his music could become more widely available to stream - but Jay's company insisted they had exclusive rights to the work. According to the New York Post newspaper, TIDAL - who put out Prince's final albums, 'Hit n Run Phase One' and 'Hit n Run Phase Two' - began lobbying a Minnesota court before the Universal deal was struck, claiming the '1999' singer had granted them exclusive rights to his catalogue of master recordings. TIDAL submitted a legal letter to probate court Judge Kevin Eide and claimed they would seek injunctive relief if any deals struck by Prince's estate - which still has ownership of his songs - violated the agreement they made with the star. According to TIDAL, Prince had agreed to grant them streaming rights to a 'Hit n Run' remix album, another new LP and the rights to his back catalogue. However, a source claimed the streaming service only had a one-year deal to stream Prince's music and were not entitled to rights in the long term. In 2015, the singer - who died from an overdose in April 2016 - pulled all his music from other streaming apps such as Spotify. An official release date for the record is yet to be announced.

Spielberg reveals 'The Post' came together 'instantaneously'



Steven Spielberg says 'The Post' came together "instantaneously". The 71-year-old director is a veteran of the movie business, and Spielberg has revealed that the drama film - which focuses on The Washington Post newspaper's attempts to publish the Pentagon Papers, a report into the US' military involvement in Vietnam - was the easiest film to make of his entire career. He shared: "There is only one category 'The Post' falls into, which is that it happened instantaneously. "A lot of my movies take a long time to develop, I buy books, I do all the scripts, years go by, I make other movies instead. It percolates and comes back into my life and I finally get around to making them. "In my entire span of 49 years professionally directing, I've never had a film come together this quickly." Spielberg also denied the suggestion that Donald Trump's shock win in the 2016 US election convinced him to make the movie, which stars Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks. In fact, Spielberg claimed he was primarily motivated to tell the story of Katharine Graham, who led The Washington Post's coverage of the Watergate scandal. He told The Hollywood News: "I think the issues are much bigger than one administration. Had the election gone a different way, I would have still felt a real urge to tell this story. "The first thing that attracted me to do 'The Post' was Katharine Graham, her story. Her evolution as a real person of real potential power that did not really have the facility to exercise that power because she hadn't quite found her center of gravity, she hadn't been able to find how to use her own voice." — Bang Showbiz

Childish Gambino video targeting gun violence gets 100 million hits

Graphic music video by Childish Gambino has racked up more than 100 million views in just over a week on YouTube with its powerful takes on gun violence and racism. "This Is America" - by actor and recording artist Donald Glover's edgy alter ego - is a raw take on racism, gun violence and consumer society hit the nine-figure mark in a week, just behind global hits such as Adele's "Hello" (four days) and "Wrecking Ball" by Miley Cyrus (in six days). The four-minute video begins with a shirtless Glover dancing to soothing rhythms in an empty warehouse and singing "We just wanna party" and "We just want the money." Glover suddenly pulls out a handgun from the back of his pants and executes a hooded man sitting in a chair. A heavier, more foreboding beat drops, and Glover raps "This is America - don't catch you slipping up." "Yeah, this is America," he says. "Guns



in my area." Later in the video, Glover guns down an all-black church choir in a sequence some commentators have interpreted as a reference to the 2015 murders of nine black churchgoers by a white supremacist in Charleston, South Carolina. At several points, children in school uniforms join Glover in his hypnotic dance as violence occurs in the background. The video, directed by Hiro Murai, ends with a terror-stricken Glover fleeing as from a lynch mob. One of the clips producers, Ibra Ake, told NPR: "there's a communality there and people can relate to a lot of that stuff. I don't think we are as cerebral or as calculated as people think. Our goal is to normalize blackness." Glover's video follows an appearance over the weekend on the hit comedy show "Saturday Night Live." The 34-year-old actor and musician is to appear as Lando Calrissian in "Solo: A Star Wars Story" being released on May 25.

Shinoda performs Bennington tribute



Mike Shinoda paid tribute to his late bandmate Chester Bennington at his first solo concert since the singer's death. The Linkin Park musician performed songs from his forthcoming EP 'Post Traumatic', at KROQ's Weenie Roast festival at the StubHub Center in California, on Saturday (12.05.18), where he also played a piano-led version of the band's seminal songs

'Hybrid Theory' and 'In the End' in Chester's honor. 'Place To Start' on Mike's three-track EP helped him cope with the grief of losing his best friend and bandmate, so it was no doubt an emotional performance. Speaking previously about the R&B track, he said: "I wanted to put this out as soon as possible because I'm living it. "And a lot of other people are living it, too." His set was his first proper performance since the band's frontman took his own life last July, aged just 41. Mike, also 41, recently admitted he has no idea what the future holds for the 'Numb' hitmakers. He previously insisted the group - completed by Brad Delson, Dave Farrell, Joe Hahn and Rob Bourdon - would continue together following the tragic death of Chester, but he since revealed he doesn't have an "answer" to fans asking about what comes next. He confessed: "I'm unable to say what will happen with the band. There's really just no answer, and it's funny because if I even say anything about the band's future, that becomes the headline, which is stupid because the answer is there is no answer. "Fans think they want to know what the future is: Believe me, I want to know what the answer is. But there just isn't one." Mike will be performing songs from 'Post Traumatic' when he appears at Reading and Leeds Festivals this August in the UK.

Salma Hayek offers a solution to the gender pay gap

Salma Hayek says actors must take pay cuts if they're serious about gender equality. The 51-year-old actress has spoken about Hollywood's gender pay gap during a Women in Motion talk at the Cannes Film Festival, where she called on her male co-stars to take a proactive approach towards the problem. Salma - who has been a vocal supporter of the Time's Up and #MeToo campaigns - explained: "It is not just the producers. It is actors too. "Time's up. You had a good run but it is time now to be generous with the actresses." The Mexican-born star subsequently claimed that one way to achieve equality would be for actors to spurn "inflated fees". She said: "If actors ask such inflated fees it will leave nothing for actresses. If the movie's budget is \$10 million, the (male) actor has to understand that if he is making \$9.7 million, it is going to be hard for equality. "Otherwise they will kill the movie. I will be hated for saying this. I hope I can get another job..." Earlier this month, Benedict Cumberbatch called 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. Benedict explained: "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."

Portman set to make an appearance in Avengers 4?



Natalie Portman could make a surprise appearance in the fourth 'Avengers' movie. The Academy Award-winning actress played the part of Jane Foster in the 'Thor' franchise, and director Anthony Russo - who is helming the project alongside his brother Joe - has hinted at Natalie returning to the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Asked whether the character of Jane was still alive, Anthony and his brother became coy and refused to commit to an answer because it might've given fans an insight into their plans. He told HuffPost: "When we say spoiler, [we mean] potential spoiler." Jane last appeared in a Marvel movie in 2013's 'Thor: The Dark World', but Natalie has previously admitted to being open to a return to the franchise. The 36-year-old actress shared: "It is really an incredible thing to get to be part of. As an actor it is like a completely different scale. "Because when you are making those movies, you are working with so much blue screen and so much fantasy. Your imagination has to be so much larger." By contrast, Natalie said in 2016 that she was "done" with Marvel films. She explained: "As far as I know, I'm done. I don't know if, maybe one day, they'll ask for an 'Avengers 7' or whatever. I have no ideal! But as far as I know I'm done. But it was a great thing to be a part of."

Shawn Mendes hadn't been to many gigs before finding fame



Shawn Mendes hadn't been to many concerts before starting a career in music. The 19-year-old Canadian singer/songwriter - who became prominent in 2013, after posting his covers on the video-sharing app Vines - has revealed he resorted to watching his favorite acts' live performances on YouTube, and claims to have watched every live video of Ed Sheeran on the site, because he's not had the chance to see his idol yet. He said: "It's funny I didn't get to see a lot of shows growing up when I was a kid, and then all of a sudden when I started doing music I started watching a lot more shows. "One in particular, I've watched every single Ed Sheeran live video that is on YouTube, but I've never seen him perform live at an actual gig. I'm hoping I

see him one day." The 'In My Blood' hitmaker - who releases his third self-titled studio LP on May 25 - also revealed that his dream collaboration would be Alicia Keys, after he helped mentor the 'No One' hitmaker's team on 'The Voice' in the US, earlier this year. He said: "My dream music collaboration would probably be Alicia Keys. "I got to do a thing with her in America, and then when I was hanging out with her after already loving her because of her music and her style, she also on top of that is one of the best people in the entire world. If I got to collaborate with her it would be a dream." Shawn Mendes has teamed up with O2 to offer O2 customers Priority Tickets to the singer's 2019 UK arena tour, available to purchase from May 16 at 10am.



These pictures show an installation view of the exhibition "Marc Camille Chaimowicz: Your Place or Mine..." at the Jewish Museum in New York. — AP photos



Is it art or is it decor?

A British artist's playful work

The furniture, drapes, wall coverings, ceramics, textiles and other works by London-based artist Marc Camille Chaimowicz are as cross-disciplinary as they are distinct. They reflect and draw inspiration from the home, but are closer to sculpture or performance art than home goods. Tending toward muted pastel pinks, lavenders and greens, Chaimowicz pieces are better known in Europe than in the United States. Until now, that is. "Marc Camille Chaimowicz: Your Place or Mine..." billed as the first exhibit in the US devoted solely to him, opened at The Jewish Museum in New York in March and remains on view through Aug 5.

"We gave the show a playful and ambiguous title to reflect the playfulness and ambiguous nature of the work, and as a nod to the fact that this museum itself was once a home," says associate curator Kelly Taxter, who organized the exhibit at the Fifth Avenue museum, in a mansion built in 1908. Chaimowicz doesn't delineate between fine arts, crafts and design, she says. "His work is very abstract and, at the same time, it's utterly approachable. Everyone recognizes a chair and understands wallpaper. So there's an immediate understanding, and there are also multiple layers of poetry behind it."

The show includes works made between 1978 and 2018, including some never-before-exhibited pieces and three new commissions. Born in post-war Paris to a Polish Jewish father and a French Catholic mother, Chaimowicz was 8 when his family moved to Britain. He has lived and created in three London apartments over the past 40 years, and these apartments served as both subjects and sources of his work, says Taxter.

The show is arranged thematically into five main sections: The Entrance, The Library, Here and There., The Salon and The Public Garden. In The Entrance, a row of coat hooks display jackets and trousers decorated with Chaimowicz' silk-screened patterns, which resemble wallpaper patterns. It's a hint of the work throughout the exhibit that emphasizes decoration. And it's of course an image of something one might see in a home.

'Artist's books'

The Library features an entire gallery devoted to decorative "artist's books" made by Chaimowicz. The books somehow straddle the artistic, poetic and political realms. This section also features two lampshades designed for this exhibit. Starting in 1975, Chaimowicz shifted his focus primarily toward home interiors as an inspiration and starting point for his pieces. "His apartment itself was a work of art," says Taxter.

The small gallery called Here and There features a combination of self-portraiture and staged images showing partial views of interiors, in which Chaimowicz is always looking elsewhere. Enormous panels covered in patterns made using a roller brush - "much like families in Poland might have painted an apartment," says Taxter - are propped up as sort of movable wall coverings, to be rearranged and overlapped on a whim. "The beauty of these large panels is that he could arrange them differently in his apart-

ment without having to repaint the walls each time," she says. "They allow for a great deal of flexibility."

Because his work is so site-specific, the exhibit draws on the building's ornate interior and views onto Central Park. One piece, "A New Curtain for KT" (2018), features sheer woven and embroidered curtain fabric in pale greens and pinks near a soaring gallery window overlooking the park. "End Game," also from this year, has a pair of panels of mirrored glass, each about the size of a door, inset with diamond shapes and featuring chrome knobs where one might place door knobs. The work is set against a wall at the end of the exhibit and is not meant to be opened, but the panels are so inviting - and so resemble real doors - that some visitors have mistakenly tried to go through them, Taxter says. — AP



Belgium's new 'frites' stands more than just a chip off the old block

In Belgium, where hot, salty chips smeared with mayonnaise are a national institution, tampering with traditional "frites" sounds like a recipe for trouble. But the capital Brussels is giving a futuristic makeover to some of the official stalls where the famous potato delicacies are sold to eager locals and tourists. Eight nondescript "fritkots" owned by city authorities will be decked out with dazzling mirrored facades and special lighting. City planners and operators alike say the upgrade will make the stalls - which are due to reopen in late 2019 - as memorably Belgian as the food they sell.

"Without frites Belgium doesn't exist," said fritkot operator Vuistema Kemal, whose stall in central Brussels is one of those being upgraded. He said that chips "represent Belgium around the world". Brussels planners launched a competition last year to find a new design for what they call the "Fritkots of the Future". "We thought 'and what if we give a model? - a model that is identifiable just like the telephone booths of London,'" said Marion Lemesre, a senior economic affairs official for the city of Brussels.

'Part of Belgian culture'

The issue is a serious one in Belgium, whose claim of inventing "frites" is disputed by its bigger neighbor France. Belgium's "fritkots" even hit the international headlines when German Chancellor Angela Merkel nipped out to one in the middle of an EU summit in Brussels after Brexit talks went on for too long. The competition was won in January by Studio Moto, an architecture firm based in Ghent, a city in the northern Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. Studio Moto co-owners Mo Vandenbergh and Thomas Hick said their main goal during the design process was to maintain the identity of each individual chip shop. "People are a bit particular about their fritkots," Hick told AFP.

He said that the fritkot is "part of Belgian culture, Brussels culture, and replacing them is something sensitive, so we really had (to keep) in mind we couldn't put something standardized." While all the stands will have the mirrored facade and lighting effect, each revamped fritkot is to have two colors unique to the location. One color will be used for the sign on top of the fritkot, and the other will be for the interior tiling. Brussels has dozens of privately owned and operated fritkots too, but only locations owned by the city of Brussels are set for remodeling, including the fritkot outside the Atomium museum, a key tourist draw, as well as Place de la Chapelle, near the city's famed antiques market. The city will also finance the creation of two new fritkot locations, one of which will be



Josiane Devlaeminck serves Belgian fries to customers at the Atomium 'fritkot', the Flemish word for fries stand, in Brussels. — AFP

placed at another popular historic landmark, Mont des Arts, in the city center.

Chocolate and chips

Along with chocolate, "frites" are a rare unifying factor in a young country, founded only in 1830, that has throughout its short history been deeply divided between French- and Dutch-speaking communities. They also play into Belgium's inferiority complex about France. Belgium claims frites were invented in the southern French-speaking city of Namur. But France of course lays a rival claim to the invention of what has become known in the United States in particular as the French fry. Kemal, who has operated his stall at Place de la Chapelle for 34 years, said the newly

designed stalls will help put Belgium's frites on the map. "What is good I think, is to unify all the designs of Belgium, of all fritkots in Brussels," Kemal said. "So the tourists, the foreigners who come, they can discover it easily."

The designers said they were working with the individual operators to make sure they work as well in practice as in theory. "We are not trying to reinvent anything in particular," Hick said. "We are trying to go back to the basics as much as possible." They will include special low-flammability timber and solar panels on the roof to reduce their environmental footprint. "I see this as a positive sign of renewal for the city." — AFP



Josiane Devlaeminck prepares Belgian fries at the Atomium 'fritkot', the Flemish word for fries stand, in Brussels. — AFP photos

'Shouting into the void': Miscarriages color mom-to-be's art

Artist Ashley MacLure's world is filled with fairies, young girls riding giant moths - and anguished, bleeding women. A grimacing young woman rendered in black and white is curled in a fetal position, splashes of crimson staining her bottom. Here she is again, leaning against a bloodied wall, her abdomen nothing but a large oval hole. There's a self-portrait in charcoal pencil - a close-

year during an episode of "Dancing with the Stars" that she had six miscarriages during an eight-year span. Now a mother of three, she told ABC's "Good Morning America" the losses were rough on her marriage. "We don't talk about it as fluidly as we should," says Dr Jessica Zucker, a Los Angeles psychologist and mother of two who lost a baby and launched a social media campaign -

to Milford, Massachusetts, after earning a degree in illustration from Rhode Island School of Design. "It's very surreal. You're mentally in a different space, starting to think about the future. And then, suddenly, you're not."

Make audiences uncomfortable

MacLure, who teaches at Blackstone Valley Technical Regional Vocational High School in Upton, Massachusetts, sought solace in her paints and brushes. She began somewhat jarringly by painting diseased ovaries and uteruses - a cathartic escape as she battled feelings of failure and fears that she might never be a mother. She's since done a series of paintings on clear glass dinner plates - a fragile domestic item that seemed like the perfect medium for capturing maternal anguish. MacLure's more whimsical work has been showcased in juried exhibitions, and some has won critical acclaim. Not these paintings. Galleries don't know what to do with a likeness of her husband holding her as blood flows beneath them, or a plate depicting her naked and curled in a fetal position with a bright red blotch on her belly. "They don't want to make audiences uncomfortable," she says. "People want to see flowers and sailboats and landscapes and pretty things. I'm all about making people uncomfortable." Even so, MacLure is gaining a following. Women she's never met who have experienced the pain of miscarriage have been connecting with her, posting comments and sharing their own stories of loss and healing. Among them is Lauren Lowen, a fellow illustrator who miscarried. Like MacLure, she's now expecting her firstborn this summer. "I saw her art flash up on my feed, and I found it poetic and beautiful," says Lowen, of Nashville, Tennessee. "Her work really moved me. Miscarriage is a unique form of heartbreak." Men, too, have sought out MacLure. Cambridge entrepreneur Chris Tolles reached out after his wife twice miscarried.

The couple now has a 2-year-old daughter, but Tolles still feels a "profound connection" to her art. "Suffering is a real thing, and it's best shared," he says. "People talk about miscarriage as though a baby just disappears, but the reality can be really gory and awful. Her work embodies that attitude of, 'Here's real life - take it or leave it.'" For MacLure, an only child, fast-approaching motherhood is bit-



Artist Ashley MacLure sits for a photo with a self-portrait she created with ink, charcoal, gesso, wood, and recycled materials, at her home in Milford, Mass.

tersweet. Six years ago, she lost her own mom. "I'm so grateful that I get to be a mom - to pass on all the positive things my mom taught me, and teach the strength and resilience I've learned along the way," she says. "I'm also excited to know this whole new person." — AP



Artist Ashley MacLure holds her painting 'The Dream' created from acrylic paint and color marker on a glass plate, at her home in Milford, Mass.



Artist Ashley MacLure sits for a photo with one of her paintings at her home in Milford, Mass. — AP photos

up of a face pinched by sorrow. In her artist's mind, this is what miscarriage looks like. And while MacLure's story seems destined for a happy ending - she and her husband are expecting their first child this summer - the high school visual arts teacher hopes her provocative works will help take away the enduring stigma of pregnancy loss. "It's my way of shouting into the void," she says.

As many as one in four pregnancies ends prematurely in miscarriage, the American Society for Reproductive Medicine says. With miscarriage so commonplace, women increasingly are pressing for society to stop treating it as taboo. Among them is figure skater Nancy Kerrigan, who revealed last

#IHadAMiscarriage - to get people talking openly.

"The unfortunate consequences are that a majority of women are reporting shame, self-blame and guilt," she says. "Loss is devastating, but the women who live these losses are strong. What they have to share is deeply important." MacLure, 30, who's had two miscarriages, says other women's stories can make her feel like an impostor. But her grief and pain - both physical and psychological - are no less real. That's captured in her art, which is honest and edgy - some might say brutally so. "One moment, you're elated. And then it's just over," says MacLure, who grew up in North Providence, Rhode Island, and moved

JUMEIRAH: MOST FAVORED HOTELS AMONGST KUWAITIS

By Faten Omar

Kuwaiti travelers to Jumeirah Carlton Towers recorded an increase of 8 percent in occupancy rates in Q1 of 2018 compared to the same period last year. Room revenues from Kuwaiti travelers doubled in European hotels in general in Q1, including London, Frankfurt and Mallorca, with the increase accounting for 220 percent. The most favored hotels amongst Kuwaitis are Jumeirah Frankfurt and Grosvenor House Suites by Jumeirah Living. Kuwait Times spoke to Luc Delafosse, Regional Vice President of Jumeirah Europe and General Manager of Jumeirah Carlton Tower, to learn more about Jumeirah's operations in Europe.

Luc Delafosse, Regional Vice President of Jumeirah Europe and General Manager of Jumeirah Carlton Tower. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Kuwait Times: Tell us more about Jumeirah's overall operations in Europe.

Delafosse: The operations of Jumeirah in Europe are composed of five properties currently in operation. Three are in London, where we have the famous Jumeirah Carlton Tower, Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel and Grosvenor House Suites. We operate Jumeirah Frankfurt in Germany, and it has an ideal location in the city center. We also have a nice resort in Mallorca in Spain.

KT: How did Jumeirah's European hotels perform in 2017? Have you seen any particular significant movements in terms of source markets?

Delafosse: In the last few years, Jumeirah's European hotels witnessed a great performance, where we recorded a good growth in the market. Also, our Jumeirah hotel in Dubai has always enjoyed a very positive performance. We are aiming in 2018 to remain up in summer in Europe.

KT: What trends are you noticing within the tourism industry in Europe? How have these trends affected Jumeirah, especially to attract Kuwaiti tourists?

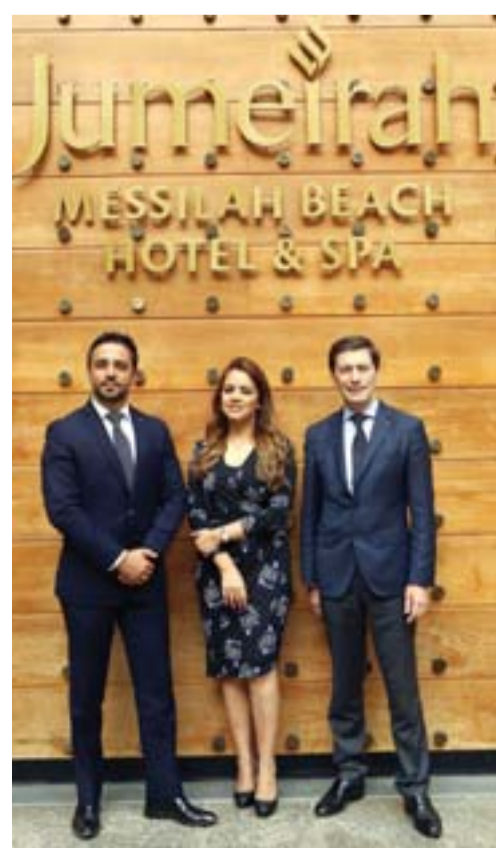
Delafosse: Jumeirah is always very active in the region. For example, we frequently visit Kuwait along with our partners. I will stay in Kuwait for a week, and I'm visiting 15 to 20 travel agencies every day. We have a global sales management team traveling the world including GCC countries. We have strong ties with Kuwait and GCC and I'm very pleased to see Jumeirah is doing extremely good in these markets.

We notice that Kuwaitis are very good travelers. Kuwaitis love to travel on weekends; people are increasing the number of trips they make yearly. They want to increase the number of nights that they are staying and they want good value for their money. What I noticed about the

Kuwaiti market is that Jumeirah is maintaining a great relationship with the people, and this is what matters.

KT: In Europe, Jumeirah manages a diverse portfolio. What is Jumeirah's competitive advantage as a luxury operator?

Delafosse: Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts is known for its luxury portfolio. Our properties are all unique and elegant modern business hotels in the heart of Europe's financial capitals.



Jumeirah has become an iconic brand in the region. The focus now is to develop it outside the region, and we have strong values for that. Our focus is on services, where we want to develop them for our guests. Also, we want to have the best products and would like to be recognized as one of the best hotel companies for the food and beverage experience.

KT: What is Jumeirah's plan to attract Kuwaitis and the GCC nationals during Eid and summer?

Delafosse: Our three properties in London have the best locations. Summer is a low season in GCC countries and high season in Europe. Our special offer is to book for five nights and pay for four. We always have special offers for the summer.

KT: What are your greatest challenges in the role of marketing, particularly in this digital age where consumers are constantly changing?

Delafosse: The greatest challenge in the digital age is to be able to communicate. The marketing team is working on choosing the right channel to reach the right people, and this is not easy. We are considering digital marketing to reach out.

KT: Are there key markets that offer greater opportunities for expansion, and what are your plans to introduce new properties?

Delafosse: Next year, we will open the fourth Jumeirah's property in London, and are looking for big cities and big hits in Europe to be our target.

Decorated graduation caps reflect joy, angst of students

The black letters contrast sharply with the graduation cap's red fabric. They spell: "Vuela tan alto como puedas sin olvidar de donde vienes." "Fly as high as you can without forgetting where you come from." That's the message that Brenda Romero, who crossed the border from Mexico with her mother when she was 2, wants to spread as she graduates Saturday from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Her decorated mortarboard is part of an emerging trend in which students are pushing against the formality of graduation ceremonies and choosing to stand out in a sea of monochromatic caps and gowns by expressing joy, angst or, increasingly, political opinions.

Photos shared on social media show mortarboards adorned with expressions of gratitude toward family members and hope for the future, with phrases like "The best is yet to come" and "On to my new dream." Plenty also highlight the cost of higher education. "This hat was \$95,990," one cap reads. Another states: "Game of Loans. Interest is coming." And caps proclaiming that "Nevertheless, she persisted" abound. The informal practice, which is not necessarily encouraged by institutions, has been around for years and is used by students to express their individuality. But over the past couple of years, it has taken a more political tone, said Sheila Bock, a folklorist and professor at UNLV.

"That desire of wanting to make aspects of one's self visible that are otherwise invisible has always been there," said Bock, who is researching how and why students decorate their mortarboards. "But within the last couple of years, those types of assertions - particularly as they relate to citizenship, places of origin, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation -

have taken more significance as they move into this mode of public display." Bock has been tracking what students put on their caps through social media posts, as well as by attending commencements, photographing mortarboards and interviewing dozens of students.

Romero, who is earning a degree in human services, has been shielded from deportation and granted a work permit through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. She was able to attend community college and later UNLV because the federal program was authorized shortly after she graduated from high school, allowing her to work sometimes up to three jobs to pay portions of tuition and fees not covered by scholarships. She said she looked up quotes to put on her cap for about a semester. She chose to also include marigolds - the flowers used to decorate altars for the Day of the Dead - to honor her grandfather, who died last year. "This quote really resonated with me just because of my parents' struggles and everything that they had to overcome so that I could graduate," said Romero, who now works at a law firm and plans to apply to law school. "It pays tribute not just to what I'm doing, but to where I come from and everything that has made me who I am." Previous UNLV ceremonies have featured caps with messages like "Si Se Puede, Here To Stay" and "I ex, 2 kids, 9 jobs, 1 husband, 1 addiction, 13 years, 127 credits, 66K loans = 1 college grad!!!" Last May, a student placed a photo of President Donald Trump next to the question "What does my political science degree mean now?" Some students leave politics and finances aside, and instead include Bible verses or show their love for each other. — AP



UNLV student Brenda Romero decorates her graduation cap at her home in Las Vegas. — AP

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2018



This photo shows an aerial view of the Yellow Sea National Forest Park in Dongtai, eastern China's Jiangsu province. — AFP

Sleeping in a tent: A lifelong love affair

By Molly Sprayregen

I don't remember the first time I slept in a tent. It feels that doing so was always part of me. I remember when I was very young, curling up beside my siblings on family camping trips, falling asleep to the sound of our crackling campfire mingling with our dad's voice telling us stories. At summer camp, I would lie in my tent with my best friends, telling jokes, playing games, and huddling together in the middle when it rained and water seeped through the sides. There was the time when my friend Sally woke me up in the middle of the night, telling me to peek outside because the stars were shining so brightly and she didn't want me to miss it. When I was a counselor, I would sing my campers to sleep outside their tents before crawling into my own, breathing in the crisp, mountain air as I drifted off to the lullaby of a rushing river.



In this file photo provided by Molly Sprayregen, Molly, left, and her co-counselor smile beside their favorite tent while leading a backpacking trip for teens in Mt Robson Provincial Park in the Canadian Rockies.



National Outdoor Leadership School students' tents are setup while on a backpacking course in India as a rainbow can be seen from their tents while they explore India's Pindari region. — AP photos



A tent glows in the light of a headlamp as students on a Spring Semester in the Rockies get ready to sleep after a long day of ski touring in Wyoming's Absaroka Mountains.

Sleeping in a tent has brought me closer to the people I love and to nature. It has taught me I don't need as much as I think I do to be happy. It has trained me to be tough and resourceful. There are so many benefits to sleeping in a tent, so many reasons people love it. Grace Brofman grew up with me at summer camp and went on to become a wilderness trip leader. As a child, she loved tents' communal aspect. "We'd all cuddle up together and squeeze five people into a four-person tent when it was raining," she remembers, "and we loved being together." Now, her tent is her refuge, a place to reflect. "It's a lot calmer

because you don't have all of these things blinking around you. You probably don't have your phone next to you. You don't have a TV. It's probably one of the only times you can really be alone with yourself," Brofman says.

Mountain or glacier or river or valley

Another camp friend, Ellie Levitt, says that when she sleeps in a tent, "The promise of tomorrow - the guarantee that when you wake up, you have at least a few more miles to hike, maybe days - always helps me sleep better at night." Those who have dedicated their professional lives to the wilderness and to instilling a love of the outdoors in others swear by the tent. "The relationships our students build when they are forced to interact really intimately and personally with folks they may not have otherwise interacted with is really special," says Bix Fier, director of programs at Big City Mountaineers, a Colorado-based organization that guides disadvantaged youth on wilderness trips. "There's something so unifying about those experiences."

Marco Johnson has been an instructor with the National Outdoor Leadership School, known as NOLS, since 1985. "Getting away from the things we focus on in town, be it our job or the responsibilities of family or

schoolwork or bills or even knowing what's going on in the rest of world," he says, lets us focus "in a much more connected way" with the people and world around us. Sleeping in a tent helps his students consider their priorities, he says: "They come back from having lived in a tent, realizing, 'Oh, I can live a lot more simply than I thought I could.'"

For me, one of the best parts of sleeping in a tent is the places it allows me to go. Some of the most beautiful locations in the world are accessible only by hiking trail, only to those willing to spend days or weeks trekking to them

and sleeping in a tent along the way. There is nothing like waking up beside a mountain or glacier or river or valley that you worked so hard to get to, nothing like the humbling feeling of being one tiny point within a vast wilderness. "Sure, sleeping in a tent is awesome," Johnson says. "But open the door and stick your head out. Sleep with your head out and look around." — AP



A National Outdoor Leadership School student spends time relaxing by their tent in the Wind River Range of Wyoming.



Students cook meals in their camp between a glacier and alpine lake in the Pacific Northwest of the US.

Her way: 3 new lifestyle books coming from Martha Stewart

Martha Stewart's next three lifestyle books will be showcases for "the Martha way." Houghton Mifflin Harcourt told The Associated Press yesterday that Stewart's new series would feature her take on everything from entertaining to decorating. The first release, "The Martha Manual," is scheduled for January 2019. In a statement issued through her publisher, Stewart said the book would be a "go-to-resource" for mastering "the Martha way."

The magazine publisher and television host has released dozens of books, with recent works including "Martha's Flowers: A Practical Guide to Growing, Gathering, and Enjoying" and "Martha Stewart's Newlywed Kitchen: Recipes for Weeknight Dinners and Easy, Casual Gatherings." — AP



Martha Stewart