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Turkey recalls ambassador to Israel for consultations



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In big boost, Modi's party emerges strongest in poll



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US First Lady Melania Trump hospitalized



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Durant shines; Golden State Warriors claim the opener



Kuwait urges world to recognize Palestine as an independent state

Palestinians mark ‘Nakba’; Gazans bury the dead; Death toll hits 60

‘Al-Nakba’: The saga



From the editor's desk

By Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan
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I wonder how many people in 2018 know about ‘Al-Nakba’. For the majority who understand Arabic, you might be thinking: “Yes, I know what Al-Nakba means”. However, this is not an Arabic language class and I didn’t mean the literal translation of the Arabic word. If you ask any Palestinian what Al-Nakba means, they will refer to the events of 70 years ago when Jewish militias backed by European powers pushed them out of their lands, expelled them from their homes and massacred their families to make way for the creation of the so-called state of Israel.

Al-Nakba refers to May 15, 1948, the day the UN gave Palestine to the Jews and humanity turned a blind eye to the massacre and ethnic cleansing that the Palestinians suffered and continue to suffer to this day as a result. Seventy years on, Al-Nakba continues, as the ‘leader of the free world’ US President Donald Trump and his family opened a new US Embassy in Jerusalem, officially declaring it to be the capital of Israel. The Israeli military celebrated the occasion by further massacring more Palestinians.

Jerusalem is a holy city for all three monotheistic religions - Christianity, Islam and Judaism - and it cannot possibly be the capital of a Jewish state or even the capital of an Islamic state or even the capital of a Christian state. It should be kept as independent and free for all. The Arabic word ‘Al-Nakba’ means the catastrophe or disaster, and unfortunately the biggest ‘Nakba’ in this saga is the sad state of affairs of the Arab world and the position that Arab governments take. Be it the Palestinian issue, the Syrian refugees issue, Iraq or the conflict in Yemen, Arab governments’ actions or lack of action is a disaster and a disgraceful ongoing ‘Nakba’ by itself.

‘Arab’ as a national identity is clearly becoming a myth, as we seem to turn our backs on our fellow Arabs in their time of need. But it doesn’t stop there - some Arab countries didn’t settle for just turning their backs, but went further by sleeping with the enemy and pressuring other Arab countries to succumb to this shameful submissive position.

God protect all the Arab people.

NEW YORK: Kuwait reiterated yesterday that East Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine, calling on the international community to recognize Palestine as an independent state, and the city as the capital of Palestine. This came in a speech delivered by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi during the UN Security Council's session held upon a call by Kuwait to discuss the latest developments in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Al-Otaibi condemned in the strongest terms the massacre committed by the Israeli occupation authorities on Monday that killed more than 60 Palestinians and wounded thousands others, increasing the number of martyrs since March 30, the Land Day, to dozens. Last Monday, the United States moved its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the move which was highly rejected and condemned by many countries, including Arab and Muslim states, all over the world.

The move angered Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank that organized peaceful protests in rejection of the US step. However, Israeli troops used excessive power against unarmed Palestinian protesters, killing dozens of them and injuring thousands others. Al-Otaibi stressed that Israel repeatedly violated international humanitarian law, human rights law as well as relevant UNSC resolutions as the Security Council did not take an action against it.

He expressed regret that the Security Council was unable to approve the draft proposed by Kuwait yes-

terday that along with other demands, calls for conducting a transparent and independent international investigation into the massacres committed against the unarmed Palestinians. If the Security Council continues to be unable to take an action on setting up an investigation mechanism, we support any move either by the UN General Assembly or by the Human Rights Council so as to ensure holding accountable those responsible for such acts, he said.

The Kuwaiti envoy called on the UN to intensify its efforts and endeavors so as to ensure that these violations will not be repeated, through submitting proposals in order to avoid using violence and excessive power by the Israeli occupation authorities. Kuwait backs taking measures aiming to contribute to providing international protection for the Palestinian people, he noted.

“We are concerned about policies, measures and actions taken unilaterally by Israel, the occupying power, which aims at changing the reality on the occupied territory, topped with the continuation and the expansion of settlement activities which are illegal measures and constitute a flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions and international law, mainly the 2334, he explained. The relocation of some diplomatic missions to Jerusalem is an explicit violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, mainly 478,476, he stated.

Such steps, which run counter to international law, contribute to undermining efforts of achieving peace

Continued on Page 11

Amir sends greetings



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah returned home yesterday after wrapping up a private visit to Ukraine. — KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated the people of Kuwait on the advent of the Holy Month of Ramadan, the Amiri Diwan said yesterday. The Amiri Diwan added that His Highness the Amir, along with

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Palestinian Embassy marks Nakba, protests

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Palestinian Embassy held a protest yesterday at its premises in Bayan on the 70th anniversary of the Nakba in Palestine in 1948 and coinciding with the implementation of the decision of US President Donald Trump to transfer the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Palestinian Embassy called on all those who support the right of the Palestinian people to the land and eternal capital of the occupied city of Jerusalem and all those who love peace and justice to protest at the embassy.

Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub said: “The United States participated in the killing of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip on

Monday when it opened its embassy. For us, this is the first American settlement outpost in Palestine.” He added that the US is financially involved in supporting settlement construction, but now it officially opened its outpost in Jerusalem.

“It was clear to the entire world that the media campaign by US and Israel proved that their claims are false and they have no right to Palestine and Jerusalem in particular. In their speeches yesterday, they wanted to prove falsehood as truth - they told a lie and believed it. As for the Palestinians, it is only ink on paper and does not mean anything to us. Jerusalem is the capital of the eternal state of Palestine. In their speeches they said Israel has

Continued on Page 11



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem speaks as Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub looks on during a protest held at Palestinian Embassy in Bayan yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

MPs pass early retirement law

KUWAIT: MPs yesterday passed the early retirement law with a big majority but all Cabinet ministers present at the voting rejected the legislation casting doubts that it will be accepted and applied. The law allows female and male Kuwaiti government employees to retire with full pension benefits after serving for 25 years and 30 years, respectively, regardless of age. The legislation, which was passed by 43 votes in favor and 16 against, also allows employees to seek retirement even earlier but they will lose some of the pension benefits especially pension pay.


There was a unanimous approval of these two points but a dispute erupted

between the government and the Assembly over an article that prevents the government from dismissing those employees prematurely. To become effective, the law must be approved by the Cabinet and signed by the Amir. If the government rejects the law, the Amir will not sign it and it will be rejected and returned to the National Assembly.

At this point the Assembly can overrule the government's rejection by passing the law with a two-third majority in this term or a simple majority in the next term. If this happens, it becomes obligatory for the government to implement it. The law was passed with little discussion because it had already been passed in the first reading several weeks ago.

In another development, the National Assembly has strongly condemned the Israeli systematic attacks and massacres

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KUWAIT: Photo shows lawmakers at the National Assembly yesterday. MPs passed the early retirement law with a big majority. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Philippines asks for ‘creches’ for Filipina housemaids’ day off

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Four days after a labor deal was signed in Kuwait and after assuring the protection of its workers, a ban on skilled and semi-skilled workers from the Philippines was lifted yesterday. The lifting of the ban means new hires for skilled and semi-skilled work can now have their employment certificates processed at the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) and Filipinos will now be able to apply for jobs in Kuwait.

However, the ban on household workers stays. This was announced yesterday at a press conference by Philippine Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque at Malacanang Palace. “The ban was lifted by Secretary Silvestre Bello today,” he said. Roque said the lifting of the ban is expected to generate an additional 20,000 workers from Manila, but the door for housemaids remains closed. “The ban on domestic helpers will be lifted eventually - I just don’t know when, and what other reforms DOLE will make,” Roque said, adding that the office of the president is waiting for advice from Abdullah Mama-o, the special envoy to Kuwait, on the fate of the deployment ban.

Continued on Page 11



Arnel Ignacio

Kuwait to postpone VAT implementation

DUBAI: Kuwait will not implement value-added tax before 2021 but will push ahead with introducing excise tax, parliament's budget committee said in a statement posted on the Assembly's website yesterday. “The committee said implementation of value-added tax in Kuwait will be postponed until 2021, and that the Finance Ministry saw the need to expedite measures for excise tax on select products such as tobacco, energy drinks

and carbonated drinks,” it said without elaborating.

Their state finances strained by low oil prices, the six wealthy Gulf Arab oil exporting countries originally agreed to introduce VAT at a 5 percent rate at the start of this year, and Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates did so. But the other four countries delayed because of domestic political opposition, the potential negative impact on consumer spending, and the technical challenges involved in a new tax. None of the four have announced an official date for VAT to be imposed.

Kuwait has the most powerful parliament in the region, so the budget committee's desire to delay VAT looks likely to stick, although cabinet officials have called

for faster tax and spending reforms. Revenues from the new tax could be substantial: the International Monetary Fund has estimated VAT in the UAE will eventually rake in 1.5 percent of gross domestic product.

But Kuwait's state finances are among the strongest in the region and oil prices have surged in the last several months, so the Kuwaiti government has little immediate need for fresh revenues. Gulf governments also agreed jointly to introduce an excise tax on tobacco and sugary drinks, which will raise much less money than VAT. Kuwait's finance minister said on Monday that he expected parliament to approve the excise tax during its next session, which begins in October. — Reuters

Local

Crown Prince meets Sheikh Nasser, Ambassador to Italy

Lebanese President receives letter from Amir



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



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Deputy Amir also received Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met with the Kingdom of Belgium's Ambassador to Kuwait Pete Herbert. The two sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and latest regional and international developments. Jarallah also met the Republic of Vietnam Ambassador to Kuwait, Trinh Minh Manh, discussing bilateral relations between and latest regional and international developments. The talks were attended by senior officials at the Kuwait Foreign Ministry.

In other news, Lebanon's President Michel Aoun received yesterday a letter from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-

Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The letter was handed to Aoun by Kuwaiti Ambassador to Lebanon Abdulaal Al-Qenaie, the Lebanese Presidency said in a statement.

His Highness the Amir congratulated the Lebanese President on the success of the



Deputy FM meets envoys

country's recent parliamentary elections, added the statement. He also lauded the high-level of organization in the electoral process, which helped voters cast their ballots with ease and grace, it noted. Meanwhile, Aoun and Qenaie

discussed recent developments in the region in light of the inauguration of the US Embassy in Jerusalem and simultaneous violent events. The two sides also discussed Kuwait's request to UNSC to hold a session on the situation in the Middle East, including Gaza Strip. Afterwards, the Kuwaiti diplomat told reporters he has also conveyed His Highness the Amir's congratulations to Aoun on the advent of the holy month of Ramadan. Qenaie also expressed hope for swift formation of the new Lebanese government in order to capitalize on the democratic success attained by the country's parliamentary elections. Separately, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Bahrain's King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa over the passing of Sheikh Abdulrahman Bin Abdullah Bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Bahraini King. — KUNA



Lebanon's President Michel Aoun meets with Kuwaiti Ambassador to Lebanon Abdulaal Al-Qenaie.



DUBAI: Kuwait's Manal Al-Musallam speaks after being named the Hope Maker of 2018 by UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. — KUNA

Kuwaiti woman wins UAE Hope Makers' award

DUBAI: Kuwaiti female volunteer Manal Al-Musallam was named the 'Hope Maker' of 2018 by UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Musallam was among the five winners of the prize who were able to reach the final stages from among more 80,000 participants in the contest, which aims to revive hope in the hearts of Arab youth by encourage them to volunteer for charitable and humanitarian action.

The winner was chosen by the jury of thousands of volunteers for helping thousands of Syrian refugees children in Lebanon and Jordan. "After losing my daughter Dana in a tragic drowning accident in 2013, I founded the Dana Volunteer Team to help Syrian homeless and refugees, especially children through organizing relief campaigns to distribute aid and provide them with essential supplies," she said in a statement on the sidelines of the honoring ceremony. She pointed out that the team had so far distributed more than 330,000 food baskets; and provided direct support to 5,000 Syrian children; medical aid to more than 82,000 patients and financial aid to more than 52,000 families. The awards were presented by Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid in an extraordinary ceremony held in Dubai Monday and broadcast to millions across the Arab world. "We are investing in the business of hope because it is the most profitable endeavor for the future of our Arab world," Sheikh Mohammad said. "The Hope Makers Academy will be an inspirational human incubator. We will work to establish a culture of hope, institutionalize the act of hope and introduce global standards in our human institutions that create hope

for peoples."

"The Hope Makers Academy will provide inspirational leadership in humanitarian work. Hope is the only industry in the world where nobody can lose," he said. He praised the initiatives of the Arab Hope Makers finalists, congratulating the owners and commended their efforts. He also expressed his pride in the thousands of individual and collective stories, projects, programs and initiatives that participated in Arab Hope Makers in 2017 and 2018.

"We are proud of the 87,000 participants in Arab Hope Makers. They are truly stars in the skies of giving in our Arab world. It is our role to highlight this new generation of stars of hope. We need to inspire millions of Arab youth to be positive energies in the service of their communities," he concluded.

The other four winners are: Fares Ali from Sudan, founder of the Food for Education initiative, that seeks to fight hunger by distributing sandwiches to schoolchildren in poor areas, as well as feeding homeless children; Nawal Mostafa from Egypt, who devoted herself to the cause of female prisoners and their children; Mahmoud Waheed from Egypt, the founder of the Together to Save a Human initiative that provides shelter, medical care and psychological support for homeless senior citizens to facilitate their reintegration into society; and Siham Jarjes from Iraq, who has implemented multiple humanitarian and relief initiatives to alleviate the suffering of refugees and displaced people in several refugee camps in Iraq through distributing aid, arranging orphan adoptions.

Each of the five winners got AED 5 million (approx. \$1.36 million). At the end of the largest humanitarian gathering in the Arab world, the establishment of the AED 50 million (about \$13.6 million) Hope Makers Academy was announced to support building hope in the Arab world, provide humanitarian incubators for their projects, transfer international scientific expertise in the humanitarian field for their projects and provide executive and leadership training courses. —KUNA

Kuwaiti women mark anniversary of political rights

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti women celebrate today the 13th anniversary of attaining their political rights in May of 2005. On that date, the National Assembly's the Abdullah Al-Salem Hall witnessed a historic session that ended with the approval of 35 members to amend Article 1 of the electoral law to allow women to exercise their right to run and vote for elections. The struggle of Kuwaiti women and their long journeys had been crowned with the adoption of their constitutional and political rights with the support of their fellow men in many parliamentary assemblies.

In the 1971 parliament, MP Salem Al-Marzouq submitted a law proposal to grant educated Kuwaiti women the right to vote, and in the 1975 parliament, MPs Jassim Al-Qatami and Rashid Al-Farhan submitted a proposal to give Kuwaiti women their full political rights.

A number of MPs, including Ahmed Al-Takhim, Abdul Rahman Al-Ghunaim, Hamad Al-Juaan, Abdulmohsen Jamal, Jassim Al-Saqr, Abdullah Al-Nibari, Abbas Al-Khudari and Salah Khorshid, also submitted other proposals throughout the years. In 1999 and in recognition of the important and active role of Kuwaiti women in political life, the Cabinet of ministers announced at the end of its ministerial meeting the desire of His Highness the



Dr Masouma Al-Mubarak



Dr Aseel Al-Awadi

late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to issue an Amiri Decree granting Kuwaiti women all their political rights. On May 25, 1999, the draft law was submitted to His Highness the Amir, who approved it and was published in the official Gazette. However, the joy of the Kuwaiti women in this historic achievement was short-lived when it was rejected in the parliament of 1999 by the MPs according to the constitution.

By 2005, a significant announcement was made with the inclusion of two women, engineer Fatma Al-Sabah and Fuziya Al-Bahr respectively, in the membership of Municipal Council. In the same year, Dr Masouma Al-Mubarak was included in the formation of the cabinet as Minister of Planning and Minister of State for Administrative Development Affairs, making her the first female minister in the histo-

ry of Kuwait. Female ministers' legacy continued in the cabinet since 2005. Dr Hind Al-Sabeeh, who was Minister of Social Affairs and Labor as well as Minister of State for Developed and Planning in 2014, continues to serve since 2016 as Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs.

After failing to land a seat at the parliamentary election of 2008, Kuwaiti women entered the race again in 2009, managing to win four seats in the National Assembly. Dr Masouma Al-Mubarak, Dr Salwa Al-Jassar, Dr Aseel Al-Awadi, and Dr Roula Dashti became the first Kuwaiti women to be elected as MPs. Since the 2013 elections and onwards, Kuwaiti women maintained their presence in parliament. MP Safa Al-Hashem, winner of the 2016 elections, is the only female representative in the current parliament. — KUNA

Minister praises exceptional relations with Azerbaijan

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Adel Al-Kharafi hailed on Monday the exceptional relations with the Republic of Azerbaijan and the numerous cooperation between the two countries. In a statement, after partaking in Azerbaijan Embassy's celebration on national day, Kharafi said that more than 17,000 citizens visit Azerbaijan annually, which makes it an attractive tourist destination.

On another front, Kharafi said, in response to question on the recent grilling to a number of ministers, that his ministry would work on boosting communications with parliament committees and the legislative branch as a whole. Kharafi added that they are training young Kuwaitis to work with lawmakers in preparing reports and boost cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Adel Al-Kharafi (right) joins Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Kuwait Elkhan Gahraman (center) and the ambassador's wife in cutting the cake during Azerbaijan Embassy's national day ceremony. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

PHOTO OF THE DAY

PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) is launching a five-day campaign themed 'Relief for Gaza' as of today, aimed raising donations for aiding the Palestinian people namely the Gazans. KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said in a statement yesterday that the campaign is the latest of ongoing relief and humanitarian aid to brotherly and friendly nations, stricken with crises and hardships.

This campaign is particularly aimed at securing urgent needs such as medical supplies and medicines to treat victims of the Israeli attacks on the Palestinian people, he said, indicating that some aid had already reached hospitals and clinics in Gaza. He affirmed keenness on standing on side of the victims in Gaza and enhancing their capabilities to cope

with the current circumstances. Latest Israeli attacks on the Palestinians in Gaza resulted in martyrdom of 58 Palestinians and injury of 2,771 others.

The martyrs have left behind hundreds of orphans and widows, he has said, urging all financially capable people to donate for the Palestinians on humanitarian grounds. This campaign reflects sincere feelings of the Kuwaiti people toward their brothers in Palestine, he said. The KRCS has prepared well for securing dispatch of the aid to the Palestinian people, in coordination with the State of Palestine and neighboring countries. He urged citizens, namely businessmen, to donate to help the Palestinians cope with the current crisis. — KUNA

NEW YORK: The systematic targeting of the Rohingya villages' northern Rakhine state is against human rights as policies against this Muslim minority considered as acts of ethnic cleansing, said the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi. This came in a speech that Otaibi delivered during a meeting for the UN Security Council on the visit made by its team to Myanmar and Bangladesh. Regarding the official meetings of the Security Council in Bangladesh, Otaibi expressed his appreciation to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina as the meeting reflected deep concerns of Bangladesh in regards to the crisis of the Rohingya refugees.

On April 24, members of the Security Council arrived in the city of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, to assess the tragic situation faced by more than 1.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, he said. More than 677,000 Rohingya refugees have been displaced since August 25 last year, as they joined some 300,000 refugees who have fled Myanmar to Bangladesh, he added.

The members of the Security Council in Bangladesh held four official meetings with UN members and officials in Bangladesh, discussing situation of the refugees and the plan for safe return to their homes, where the meeting with the UN team called for more international support to the Rohingya crisis, which the plan requires \$951 million. The members

of the Security Council also met with Prime Minister of Bangladesh to assess the crisis, as the meeting confirmed Bangladesh continued support towards the refugees, he said.

Kuwait, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Peru led the Security Council on a field visit to Bangladesh and Myanmar, to meet with officials from both countries and to keep a close eye on the situation of refugees that reached 700,000. Since Kuwait entry into the Security Council earlier this year as non-permanent member, Kuwait has been working to defense Arab and Islamic issues.

Kosovo and Serbia

Separately, Kuwait called on Monday for doubling efforts to maintain EU-sponsored dialogue and agreements between Kosovo and Serbia to pave way for resolution of all sticky issues. Addressing a UN Security Council session on Kosovo, Otabi said that dialogue would lead to normalization of relations and establishment of good neighborly ties between Kosovo and Serbia, thus achieving regional security and stability.

Kuwait, he added, recognized the Kosovo in 2011 and has been supporting the Republic in strengthening its security, stability, justice and development. He commended Kosovo for adopting pro-European measures, particularly the ratification of a border demarcation agreement with Montenegro in 2015.

Otaibi welcomed EU-facilitated dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade as the suitable framework to iron out differences. He urged the two countries to address their differences and show a genuine political will towards full normalization of ties. Otaibi called on the international community to help the two parties overcome disputes. — KUNA

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Prime Minister inaugurates Jazeera Airways' terminal

First terminal operated by private airline in the Middle East



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Services Affairs Minister Jenan Boushehri listen to Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai as he gives a presentation during the inauguration of the new passenger terminal.



Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai presents a boarding pass to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as the terminal's first passenger.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday inaugurated Jazeera Airways' terminal at Kuwait International Airport. The terminal is the first terminal to be owned, built, and operated by a private airline in the Middle East, thus marking a significant milestone in the development and privatization of the Middle East aviation system.

Upon his arrival, His Highness the Prime Minister and dignitaries received a briefing on the terminal's facilities by Jazeera Airways Chairman and founder Marwan Boodai, who also designated the premier as the terminal's first passenger in honor of his visit. Boodai then led His Highness the Prime Minister on a tour of the

state-of-the-art facility, which was built in 11 months. His Highness the Prime Minister was joined by Minister of State for Housing Affairs and the Minister of State of Services Affairs Jenan Boushehri, and the President of the Directorate General for Civil Aviation Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah.

Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai said, "We are honored by His Highness's visit, and the ongoing support by His Highness and the government as a whole for empowering the private sector towards achieving Kuwait's vision for the year 2035."

Boodai added, "Today is a historic turning point in the development of the Middle East aviation system and a testament to the value that the private sector

brings to the development of the country. With an award-winning design and state-of-the-art facilities, the terminal will start commercial operations next Tuesday the 22nd of May, and as a result congestion currently experienced at the main terminal at Kuwait International Airport will show immediate signs of relief. We are confident that our travelers will love flying through the Jazeera terminal."

"The year 2018 is indeed a transformational year for Jazeera Airways. In addition to the start of terminal operations next week, we are also excited to announce that Jazeera Airways will welcome the first Airbus A320 NEO in the Middle East to our young fleet," said Boodai.

Terminal Highlights:

- Single security check for departing passengers.
- Checkin: 12 check-in counters, two car park check-in counters, and one fast track check-in counter.
- Annual passenger capacity: 2.5 million.
- Baggage processing capacity: 1,200 per hour.
- Gates: Four gates.
- Parking annex: 350 cars capacity, connected by an air-condition glass bridge.
- Duty Free area: over 400 sqm.
- Total plot size: 4,750 sqm.



KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh inaugurates the Kuwait Economic Society. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait Economic Society opens new headquarters

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Economic Society (KES) opened its new headquarters in Bneid Al-Gar near those of other NGOs on Monday. Chairman of the society Faisal Al-Midlej welcomed the guests and said that since KES was established in 1970, many respected and important people have been members of the board of directors. "These people worked hard during the past 48 years to make the society successful and achieve its goals. We are thankful for their efforts, which made it easy for us to have this organization," he said.

"KES serves all categories in the community in general and those who

are interested in economic affairs in particular, and today we are celebrating the launching of the new building of the society. I would like to thank all those who participated in building this new headquarters by sponsoring or donating construction material," added Midlej.

Kuwait Economic Society is an active and effective partner in economic development. "It supports the development policies of the government to improve the economic situation and support the transparency of the Kuwaiti economy. KES also raises cultural, economic and financial awareness among the community," he explained. The new building is an added value to the general development of the country. "It contains a theatre and numerous training halls or ballrooms that are completely equipped with modern technology. This makes us able to provide more training and education courses, so we can stay in contact with the community," concluded Midlej.



KUWAIT: Officials pose for a group picture during the launch ceremony.

Zain supports sustainable bus stops project

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its support to the first model of the Sustainable Bus Stops Project using alternative energy, the first project of its kind in the region, in collaboration with Hawalli Governorate, Kuwait Public Transport Company (KPTC), and National Technology Enterprises Company (NTEC).

The launch event of the project's first model witnessed the attendance of Hawalli Governor Retired General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah, Director-General of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation Ahmed Al-Hassan, Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Communications and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashti, CEO of National Technology Enterprises Company (NTEC) Jaber Al-Muhanna, as well as a number of representatives from the project's partners.

During his speech at the launch event, Khashti commented: "today I'm glad to announce Zain's support to the first model of the Sustainable Bus Stops Project using alternative energy in collaboration with Hawalli

Governorate, KPTC, and NTEC. The launch of the first bus stop today is the first step in achieving this project's end goal, which is to spread 100 similar green bus stops all over Hawalli Governorate."

Khashti added: "our contribution today comes in line with our Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Strategy, through which we are keen on utilizing tech innovation in serving the community. As Zain is a leading provider of the latest innovations, we are fully committed to make use of our resources to improve people's lifestyles. Especially that this project is in line with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's vision for the State of Kuwait to operate using alternative energy by 15 percent by the year 2030."

Khashti continued: "we make sure that our efforts effectively contribute in presenting an added value to the society while committing to preserving Kuwait's environment at the same time. The bus stop we launch today fully uses solar panels to power up the cooling devices inside as well as the Wi-Fi signal that users can benefit from. This way we have added a social value while maintaining international environmental standards."

This pioneering project aims to develop 100 environment-friendly bus stops all over Hawalli Governorate as per international environmental standards using renewable energy collected from solar power. The project also aims at highlighting the importance of public transportation



and its benefits for the environment and the community through the launch of a modern and innovative model of the traditional bus stop. The bus stops were also designed to mimic the design of the Baqadeer Tower, which is one of the most recognizable architectural building in the GCC region and Kuwait in particular.



AUB launches social program during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced that it will continue its community service during the month of Ramadan and launch its social program for the holy month, through which it offers a number of charitable, religious and social welfare activities based on the Bank's belief in importance of its social responsibility.

Ahli United Bank declared its keenness to develop its social program for the month of Ramadan, year after year, to ensure the best activities that fit the nature of the holy month and deepen the Bank's association with the community.

This year, the Bank launched its Ramadan campaign to celebrate the holy month under the slogan 'There is some-

thing more important'. The campaign focused on a set of distinguished values which remind people of the holy month, starting by worship and getting closer to God Almighty, the practice of our religious rituals and prayers and the importance of family connection and relations in addition to the exchange of greetings and the spread of joy and happiness in the hearts of everyone.

The Bank has organized its Ramadan Quran Recitation competition, which is being held for the fourth consecutive year. This year, the competition has been developed to include eight primary categories: male and female employees, staff members' children, and from the public, male children whose ages range between 6 to 10 years old, female children between 6 to 10 years old, male children between 11 to 17 years old, female children between 11 to 17 years old in addition to the new category added this year, children with hearing deformity (deaf).

AUB announced in a press release: "As part of AUB's commitment towards charity work and in order to stimulate the concept of giving, participation and collective volunteering by the Bank and its employees, the Bank's social program will include a number of social initiatives in coop-

eration with the Red Crescent in the campaign "Sa'ed Tasa'ad" to support families with low income, various activities with Loyac in their annual campaign "Service is my Joy", in addition to others initiatives."

AUB's social program during the month of Ramadan will include a number of community initiatives to include: the preparation and distribution of necessity food supplies for needy families, visits to elderly homes, orphanages and children in hospitals to distribute girgean and gifts with an objective of easing their pain and making them happy throughout the month. This in addition to distributing food meals and Eid cloths to the needy families to bring joy into their hearts.

AUB concluded, "We believe in the importance of giving and joining efforts to ensure the continuity of aid and to fight scarcity in order to achieve real sustainable development in societies. As a financial institution that operates in line with the Islamic sharia, we always seek to help people in need specially during the holy month of Ramadan, a time when good deeds are expected and its effect reflects positively on all aspects. Wishing you a blessed month in advance, Ramadan Mubarak."

Local

MGRP employees protest 'random mergence' with manpower authority

PAAET instructors referred to prosecution for forging certificates

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Around 400 Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) employees held a meeting to discuss their demands of suspending what they described as 'the random mergence' of MGRP with the Public Authority for Manpower. The meeting was attended by four of manpower authority officials - Ahmad Al-Moussa, Kholoud Shehab, Abdullah Al-Motoutah and Mubarak Al-Jafar, who stressed that they have no say in rejecting the merger decision.

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) had explained in recent press a statement that merging both state departments had four benefits including accelerating and improving recruitment in the private sector, adjusting Kuwait's demography and fighting fake recruitment. In response, the protesting employees stressed that MGRP had already achieved three of those benefits, and that the numbers of Kuwaiti employees in the private sector had increased from 1,662 in 2001 to 74,078 in 2014, before they declined in 2015 to 63,553 in 2018.

Protestors blamed the decline on manpower authority restrictions and forcing citizens working for the private sector to get annual work permits and not protecting those laid off by the private sector. Protestors also reviewed what they had done with regards to improving the private sector's capability to employ citizens and increase their numbers, as well as fight fake employment. The protestors stressed that adjusting Kuwait's demography was the responsibility of the manpower authority and wondered what it had so far done in this regard.

Forged certificates

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) referred two people to public prosecution for forging experience certificates to use them to work as instructors at the Faculty of Basic Education. Notably, PAAET administration

had received complaints about suspicions in the documents some applicants had submitted and investigations proved that some were actually fake, which resulted in cancelling the appointment of four instructors, and two of them were referred to criminal prosecution.

School escort

Responding to social media reports about a court order accusing the public authority for disabled affairs of depriving an autistic child named Yasser of his constitutional rights, the authority's legal affairs manager Mubarak Al-Bedah said the court order only mandated the authority to provide a school escort and register him at Al-Nebras School, which the authority had been rejecting because its law does not oblige it to hire 'shadow teachers' for the disabled. Bedah added that the child has a severe mental disability and that his family has been receiving all financial incentives, in addition to tuition subsidies.

Four benefits for merging departments

Environment project

The Ministry of Public Works' (MPW) Assistant Undersecretary for Sanitary Engineering Affairs Abdul Mohsen Al-Enezi said the deep tunnel project is one of the most important environment projects the ministry is working on and will offer it for bidding in the 2018-2019 budget. Enezi explained that the project will be executed in two phases - one to protect Kuwait Bay and the other to protect the coastline from Salmiya Cape southwards. He added that the tunnels will protect fish resources in Kuwait Bay by preventing rain or any other kind of water from flowing into it.

Enezi stressed that some rain drainage lines are being used to drain washing water and some chemicals, which is a violation of the environment law. He also noted that the new tunnels will drive rain and contaminated underground water to a main processing plant in Kabd for decontamination.

days (Sundays to Thursdays) during rush hours," he explained, noting that using the left emergency lane will be allowed only during congestions from 6 am till midnight at a maximum speed of 45 km per hour. "The use of the right lane is completely banned," he underlined.

Kandari urged both citizens and expats to respect Islamic regulations and traditions, and warned that as stipulated by law number 44/1968, eating or drinking in public during daytime in Ramadan is punishable by up to a KD 100 fine and/or up to one month in jail. Moreover, Kandari urged everyone to take care of their personal belongings and not leave their vehicles open with engines running or leave any valuables inside them. He also warned that beggars will be arrested and immediately deported.

In other news, the Warrant Officers Training Institute yesterday concluded its training season for the 2017-2018 academic year under the auspices of and with the attendance of MoI's training director Maj Gen Anwar Al-Barjas. Barjas explained that the institute had organized its 9th first aid training course in the period of April 22 to May 3, 2018, its 5th handwriting training course and a wireless operator training course in the period of April 29 to May 3, 2018.

Stolen vehicle

Ahmadi criminal investigators arrested two citizens with a vehicle that had been reported stolen from a ranch in Kabd, the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) relations and security media department said. The suspects also had a large number of license plates they had collected from vehicles they had earlier stolen, in addition to used tires they had been using for stunt driving.

Minister refers suspicious hospital contract to prosecution

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah yesterday submitted the file of suspicious irregularities in a contract involving the radiation and nuclear medicine wards at the government Al-Adan Hospital and a company to the general prosecution.

The minister is taking action as part of a libel suit against personnel charged with squandering public funds and breaching rights of the Ministry of Finance. Sheikh Bassel said that the step was taken upon instructions by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to deal firmly with any suspicious acts against the public funds and take all necessary measures to safeguard the state assets. All those responsible for the violations will be brought to justice, regardless of their job positions, he said. The ministry is currently re-examining many contracts to ensure they are free of any flaws.

Strategy for medicine

In other news, the Cabinet on Monday assigned the Ministry of Health to coordinate with government authorities to speed up provision of medications and medical equipment for patients. The ministry should accelerate measures to agree with drug companies to provide necessary medicine and equipment as soon as possible, Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement after a Cabinet meeting, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The cabinet also assigned the supreme planning and development council to coordinate with Ministries of health and finance to place a strategy for medicine and medical equipment. This strategy, said Saleh, should contribute to rapid



KUWAIT: Director of the Blood Transfusion Department at the Ministry of Health Reem Al-Rodhwan speaks during a ceremony held to mark the World Blood Donor Day. — KUNA

provision of patients' needs without any delay.

80,000 blood bags

Separately, the Ministry of Health's Assistant Undersecretary for Medical Services Majeda Al-Qattan unveiled that blood donors, from 75 nationalities living in Kuwait, had donated 80,000 blood bags so far this year. The Ministry of Health uses the latest scientific means to assure the safety and purity of the collected blood, Qattan said at a ceremony held by the ministry to mark the World Blood Donor Day.

Every year, on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day. The event serves to thank voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood and to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure the quality, safety and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.

Director of the Blood Transfusion Department at the Ministry of Health Reem Al-Rodhwan said that Kuwait mark the occasion every year. The ministry had honored several government and non-government organizations for their role in promoting the culture of blood donation, she said. — KUNA

Residency affairs departments announce Ramadan hours

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Residency affairs departments in the Capital, Farwaniya and Ahmadi governorates will be open for work during Ramadan in the afternoon period from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm to receive company transactions only, the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) relations and security media department announced yesterday.

Separately, MoI's relations and security media department's acting manager Brig Tawheed Al-Kandari said MoI has made all preparations needed to ensure smooth traffic flows and security during Ramadan. Kandari said that in addition to coordination between all related bodies, fixed and mobile checkpoints will be set up at various spots. He urged road users to respect traffic laws and regulations in terms of speed limits, namely before iftar. He also called for not obstructing traffic and respecting other drivers while using parking spaces outside mosques and shopping malls. He also urged truck drivers to respect ban timings to avoid legal accountability. "Trucks will be banned on week-

Banks set working hours during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Secretary General of the Union of Kuwaiti Banks Dr Hamad Al-Hasawi announced the Ramadan working hours for all local banks' employees will be from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. The banks will receive customers from 10 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. during the month of Ramadan, in line with a circular released by the Central Bank of Kuwait, Hasawi said yesterday.

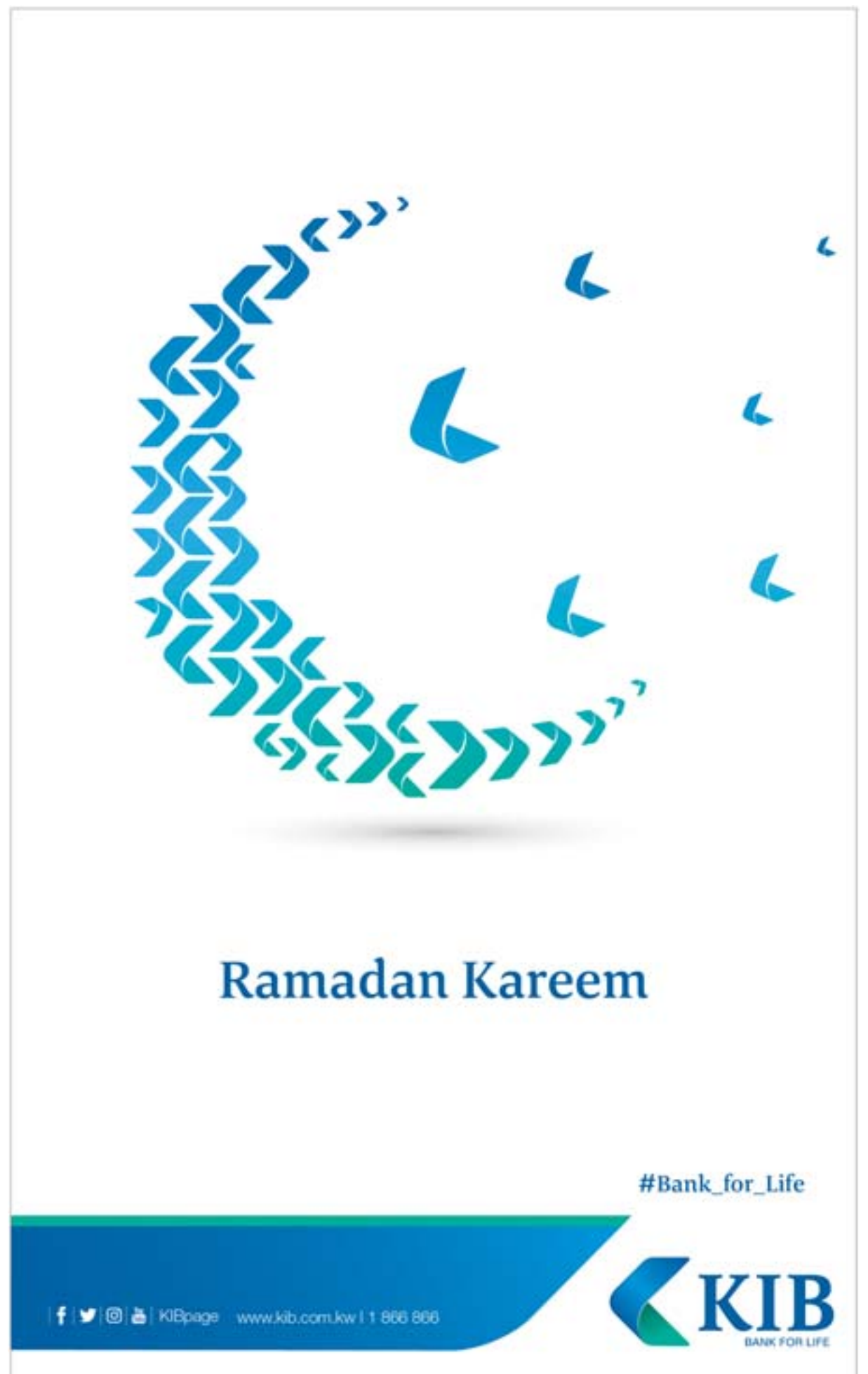
In another context, Hasawi urged banks' customers to take extra precaution while responding to calls by scammers requesting their accounts' numbers or secret numbers at pretext of winning raffles. He added that local banks should avoid under any circumstance to ask the customer to provide any secure bank account information over the phone.

Hasawi pointed out the unions' duty to protect customers' interest and funds, urging the banks and customers to adhere to what he mentioned along with any warning messages banks release online and through social media to prevent more victims of these scams. — KUNA

KNG releases detainees on occasion of Ramadan

KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti National Guard Lieutenant General Hashem Al-Refaie gave orders yesterday to release military detainees with disciplinary sanctions on the occasion of Ramadan. The resolution came under the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwaiti National Guard, and Sheikh Meshaal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of the Kuwaiti National Guard, the Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press statement.

His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah and Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince HH Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and the leaders of Kuwait National Guard on the occasion of holy month of Ramadan. His Highness hoped that the country would see many more happy return of this occasion, while Kuwait continued to enjoy prosperity and advancement. — KUNA





BJP emerges strongest in Karnataka poll

Putin drives across bridge linking Crimea to Russia



DIYARBAKIR, Turkey: Protesters hold a demonstration to denounce the bloodshed along the Gaza border and the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem as the Israeli ambassador to Turkey was asked to temporarily leave the country yesterday. — AFP

Turkey tells Israeli envoy to leave

Protests break out in London as Erdogan meets Queen, May

ANKARA: Turkey yesterday told the Israeli ambassador to temporarily leave after Ankara reacted with outrage to the killing of dozens of Palestinians by Israeli troops on the Gaza border, in the worst crisis since a 2016 reconciliation deal. Ambassador Eitan Naeh was summoned to the Turkish foreign ministry and told to “return to his country for a period of time”, said a foreign ministry official, who asked not to be named. The official said that this was also in line with Turkey recalling its ambassador to Tel Aviv for consultations.

Naeh had been in his post only since Dec 2016 after a reconciliation deal earlier that year ended a dispute over the May 2010 deadly storming of a Turkish ship by Israeli commandos that saw ties downgraded for over half a decade. That deal was strongly backed by the United States, which was keen to see Israel make up with one of its very few key Muslim partners. Ankara has reacted with fury to the killing on Monday of 60 Palestinians in clashes and protests, on the same day as the US formally moved its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, currently on a visit to Britain, had on Monday stepped up his rhetoric, accusing Israel of “state terror” and “genocide” over the killings. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu then hit back at Erdogan, saying that as a leading supporter of Palestinian Islamist group Hamas “there’s no doubt he’s an expert on terror and slaughter”. While Turkey under Erdogan has never completely severed ties with Israel, the Turkish strongman has also never shied away

from the strongest criticism. He famously walked out of a Jan 2009 debate in Davos with then Israeli president Shimon Peres, complaining he was not given enough time to respond and repeatedly saying “one minute”.

‘Move as one’

Turkey yesterday began observing three days national mourning declared by Erdogan for the Palestinian dead, with flags flying at half-mast and cultural events cancelled. Prime Minister Binali Yildirim had earlier urged Islamic countries to review their ties with Israel and said Ankara was calling an extraordinary summit of the world’s main pan-Islamic body, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), on Friday. “The Islamic world should move as one, with one voice, against this massacre,” he added.

Cavusoglu held telephone talks with around a dozen counterparts from the Islamic world. They included the foreign ministers of Jordan, Indonesia and Iran as well as the OIC secretary general Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen, foreign ministry sources said. Erdogan regards himself as a champion of the Palestinian cause and last year hosted an OIC summit in Istanbul to denounce US President Donald Trump’s

decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. The summit declared East Jerusalem - which the international community regards as annexed by Israel - “as the capital of the State of Palestine” and urged the world to follow suit.

‘Stop oppression’

Yildirim said that after the summit at 3:00 pm (1200 GMT) a giant rally would be held at the vast Yenikapi meeting area in Istanbul under the slogan of “Stop the Oppression” to express solidarity with the Palestinians. Hundreds of people also held protests for a second day in Istanbul and Ankara against Israel’s actions with slogans including “Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine”, AFP correspondents said. The demonstrations in Turkey passed off peacefully, although one man was arrested in Ankara for throwing eggs and stones at the residence of the Israeli ambassador. In Istanbul, demonstrators held placards with the slogan “the world is bigger than five”, in reference to Erdogan’s repeated complaints about the power of the UN Security Council.

In London, angry protests greeted Erdogan as he met Queen Elizabeth II and held talks with Prime

Minister Theresa May. Minor scuffles broke out as pro-Erdogan counter-protesters walked in front of Kurdish demonstrators outside Downing Street, with police wrestling some of the ringleaders to the ground. A Downing Street spokesman said a “frank discussion” on human rights was on the agenda for May’s meeting with Erdogan. “We’ve always been clear that we want Turkey to uphold its international obligations, including respect for freedom of expression and political freedoms,” he said.

Queen Elizabeth welcomed Erdogan for a private audience at Buckingham Palace ahead of the May meeting. The three-day visit comes as the Turkish leader campaigns for re-election after calling a snap poll for June 24, bringing the vote forward by a year and a half. The move is widely regarded as a plan to shore up his power in the country and comes as international pressure mounts on the president over his suppression of political dissent.

The demonstrators were later joined by a larger group protesting Erdogan’s treatment of the Kurds - as well as a handful of counter-protestors seemingly chanting in support of the president. Erdogan has already stoked controversy on the trip by meeting Germany international footballers Mesut Ozil of Arsenal and Ilkay Gundogan of Manchester City. Turkey’s football chief yesterday condemned as “slandorous” and “unacceptable” German criticism of the meeting, with Berlin’s football association head Reinhard Grindel saying the pair had been “manipulated”. — Agencies

Gaza family in agony after baby dies from tear gas

GAZA CITY: In her final embrace, Mariam Al-Ghandour hugs the tiny body of her daughter Leila tight, tears rolling down her face. “The Israelis killed her,” she sobbed. The health ministry in Gaza say baby Leila, only eight months old, died after inhaling tear gas along the border with Israel on Monday as major protests escalated into the bloodiest day in years, with at least 60 Palestinians killed. The family prefers to focus on who fired the gas rather than the series of decisions that led to a baby being a few hundred metres from the Israeli border during the protests and clashes.

Leila is an outlier - 13 years younger than any of the other victims and one of only two females. The vast majority have been killed by live ammunition fired by Israeli snipers but Leila was caught up in a cloud of tear gas, only temporarily painful for adults but potentially more dangerous for infants. Mariam, herself only 17, explained that she had a dentist appointment “so I left Leila with my brothers at home”. “My little brother took her and went to the border,” she said.

At the back of the room, 11-year-old Ammar sobs uncontrollably as he looks at the corpse. He says he mistakenly thought his sister was at the border with his mother and oth-



GAZA: The mother of Leila Al-Ghandour, a Palestinian baby who died of tear gas inhalation, holds her at the morgue of Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City yesterday. — AFP

er family members. “So I took her with me on the bus.” He added: “I feel I am the reason (for her death).”

Close to the border he eventually found his mother Heyam and handed Leila over to her. They stayed only a few minutes. Heyam insisted, before tear gas rained down on them. “I could barely breathe,” she said. “We got away from the gas and gave Leila to my sister and went looking for two other children so we could leave.” She drank juice but was crying a lot. Then she went silent. I thought she was sleeping.” It was only when they got off the

bus that they noticed her skin had turned blue. “I rushed to the hospital. They told me she had been dead more than an hour,” Heyam said.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians rallied near the border fence on Monday, with smaller numbers seeking to breach it and clashes erupting. Israeli forces on the border used tear gas and sniper fire in response. At least 60 Palestinians were killed throughout the course of the day. Another was killed on Tuesday, taking to 115 those who have died since protests broke out on March 30. Only one Israeli soldier has been reported wounded. — AFP

Saudi car show puts women in the driving seat



RIYADH: Saudi women check out cars at an automotive exhibition for women in the Saudi capital on May 13, 2018. — AFP

RIYADH: A car show in the Saudi capital is drawing in many women, who from next month will be allowed to drive in the kingdom as part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s modernization plans. The event also attracted banks ready to offer financing for women buyers. “Anything related to cars these days is attracting Saudi Arabian women. I want to know more about cars and prices,” said Shaimaa Al-Fadl as she climbed into a car at the exhibition and adjusted the rearview mirror.

The royal decree will end a conservative tradition seen by activists as an emblem of the Muslim kingdom’s repression of women. The decision could

change the lifestyles of millions of women. About 10 million women over the age of 20 live in Saudi Arabia, a number that includes foreigners, though it may take years for women drivers to be a major presence on roads.

“I need a car every day for work,” government employee Maha Adel Rahman said. “Add to that the trips I need to make for my family. Moreover, transportation costs here are high. The decision to drive will save me a lot of money.” While the decree could save families money and encourage women to seek jobs, it could also be bad for one class of employee - the chauffeurs who traditionally ferry women around town. — Reuters

International

Tehran upbeat on nuclear deal hopes after EU talks

With few options, Iran, Europe try to save JCPOA

BRUSSELS: Iran's foreign minister said yesterday that efforts to save the nuclear deal after the abrupt US withdrawal were "on the right track" as he began talks with European powers in Brussels. Mohammad Javad Zarif met EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini ahead of evening talks with his counterparts from Britain, France and Germany - the three European signatories to the 2015 landmark deal who are scrambling to preserve it.

Tehran has warned it is preparing to resume "industrial-scale" uranium enrichment "without any restrictions" unless Europe can provide solid guarantees that it can maintain the economic benefits it gained from the nuclear agreement despite the United States reimposing sanctions. Zarif gave an upbeat assessment after a "good and constructive" meeting with Mogherini. "I believe we're on the right track to move forward in order to ensure that interests of all the JCPOA remaining participants, particularly Iran, will be preserved and guaranteed," he told reporters. The deal's official name is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA.

Mogherini said it had been a "very productive" meeting but indicated it was the start of a long road. "We are working on the measures that we can start to put in place and we will look at the content of that," she said. "One thing is absolutely sure is that the European Union is determined to preserve this deal that is essential to our security and the security of the region." Zarif's meetings in Brussels cap a whirlwind global tour, including trips to both Russia and China, the two other signatory nations, in a bid to bolster support.

'Respect the deal'

But European diplomats have sought to play down expectations of yesterday's meeting, stressing the enormous challenge of finding a way around US sanctions punishing foreign businesses trading with Iran,

which have global reach. The European Union insists the deal is working, pointing to repeated UN inspections verifying the Islamic republic's compliance with its side of the bargain. EU leaders aim to show a united front on preserving the Iran deal when they meet for a pre-summit dinner in Sofia on Wednesday, European Council President Donald Tusk said.



Mogherini says meeting with Zarif 'very productive'

"I would like our debate to reconfirm without any doubt that as long as Iran respects the provisions of the deal, the EU will also respect it," Tusk said in a letter to the leaders on the eve of the summit. Mogherini and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker will outline to the leaders what measures the bloc could take to shield its now substantial economic interests in Iran, he said. European firms, especially those from France and Germany, rushed to invest in Iran following the 2015 accord, under which Tehran agreed to freeze its nuclear programme in return for the repeal of punishing international sanctions.

German exports to Iran totalled nearly €3.0 billion in 2017, while French exports soared from €562 million in 2015 to €1.5 billion in 2017 and oil giant Total has pledged to invest some \$5 billion in the South Pars gas field.

'Malign behavior'

When he quit the deal last week, US President Donald Trump gave businesses a

maximum of six months to wind up operations in Iran or face penalties under American sanctions. Washington's decision to go against its European allies' advice and abandon the deal has pushed them closer to Beijing and Moscow on the issue as diplomats try to keep the pact alive. French President Emmanuel Macron held phone talks with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin yesterday, according to a Kremlin statement, which said they had "confirmed Russia and France's commitment to make the deal work".

Zarif was in Moscow to meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Monday, a day after visiting leaders in Beijing. Washington has long complained that the nuclear deal does nothing to stop Iran's ballistic missile program or its interference in conflicts across the Middle East from Syria to Yemen. On Sunday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington still wants to work with Europe to counter Iran's "malign behavior" and was working hard to thrash out a more wide-



BRUSSELS: Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif meets European Union Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini yesterday at the EU headquarters. — AFP

ranging deal with its European partners.

Ahead of yesterday's meeting, British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said the European powers would not shy away from pressing Iran on these issues. "Our meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif in

Brussels is a chance to discuss how we can continue to support sanctions relief with Iran while they maintain their nuclear agreement obligations, but also raise our worries about Iran's wider, disruptive behavior in the Middle East region," Johnson said. — AFP

Latam states in quandary over US embassy move

MONTEVIDEO: US President Donald Trump's decision to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, enraging Palestinians, has left several Latin American countries pondering whether to follow suit. To date, two nations have done so: Guatemala and Paraguay, both looking to strengthen ties with Washington even at the risk of alienating the 128 countries that backed a UN resolution condemning its recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

And experts believe more countries in the region could yet follow. Monday's ceremony to inaugurate the US embassy was marred by violent clashes along the Gaza border that left 52

Palestinians dead from Israeli fire and thousands wounded, in the conflict's bloodiest day in years. Guatemala will inaugurate its embassy in Jerusalem today - with its President Jimmy Morales attending - hot on the heels of the US, while the government in Asuncion said Paraguay's embassy would switch to Jerusalem at the end of this month.

Honduras, which voted with the US and Israel on the Dec 21 UN resolution, is yet to decide on relocating from Tel Aviv, despite parliamentary approval for the move. Significantly, Panama's President Juan Carlos Varela, is to attend yesterday's opening of the new Guatemalan embassy as Morales' guest.

Jerusalem's status is perhaps the thorniest issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Israel considers the entire city its capital, while the Palestinians see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state. Marcio Palacios, a political scientist at Guatemala's San Carlos University, described Morales' decision as "servile" and said it was in part governed by his evangelical religious beliefs. The president "does not distinguish between what he represents and what he believes in", Palacios said. — AFP

Sadr eyes govt after upset win

BAGHDAD: Populist Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr yesterday eyed a broad coalition after appearing to deal a blow to both Iranian and American influence with a shock election triumph that has upended Iraqi politics. Counting was still ongoing three days after the first parliamentary poll since the defeat of the Islamic State group, but the fiery Shiite preacher's grouping was in the lead with 16 of 18 provinces tallied.

Victory for the veteran nationalist's Marching Towards Reform alliance with Iraq's communists - pitched an anti-corruption outsider force - would be a slap in the face for Iraq's widely reviled ruling establishment. Sadr - who has ruled himself out of becoming prime minister - looks likely to be the key powerbroker and has already mooted a technocrat government of some dozen parties that bridge sectarian divides.

But with his group set to be far from a majority in parliament, wrangling over any potential coalition should take months - and there



BAGHDAD: Iraqi men celebrate with flags and an image of cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr on Monday. — AFP

remain major obstacles ahead that could thwart Sadr's ambitions. The elections Saturday - hit by record abstentions - saw a clear rejection of the Iraqi elite that has run the country since the ouster of Saddam Hussein in 2003. Tallies put the anti-establishment Conquest Alliance of pro-Iranian former paramilitary fighters who helped battle IS in second, and incumbent Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi's bloc back in third.

Abadi - a consensus figure favored by the US - had been seen as likely frontrunner after declaring victory over the militants five months ago. Sadr rose to promi-

nence in the wake of the US invasion, when his militia fighters fought a bloody insurgency against American troops. After years on the sidelines, he has now reinvented himself as a crusading champion of the poor who has linked up with secularists to battle corruption.

Supporters in his impoverished Baghdad stronghold Sadr City were hopeful that victory could spell improvements. "If we want to change things then the prime minister needs to come from Marching Towards Reform," said Salah Jamal, 24. "We have tried all the others," Jamal insisted. "But we have had no results." — AFP

Dreams or destitution

But Ismail will not be deterred and sees his future in the Spanish capital, following in the footsteps of one of his neighbors. "He lives in Madrid, a really beautiful city," Ismail said passionately, describing his own wish to "become a mechanic, buy a car and a house". Like the dozens of young migrants in Ceuta, realizing his dreams entails clinging onto the underside of a vehicle boarding a ship for the port of Algeciras in southern Spain.

After making the 40-minute sea crossing, they continue their journey on land towards their final destination - be it Madrid, Paris, or elsewhere. But whether originating from Sub-Saharan Africa, Morocco or Algeria, child and adult migrants frequently find themselves destitute. The charity Save the Children recently raised concerns about "the vulnerability of these boy migrants, who find themselves alone on the streets of Ceuta, exposed to all types of danger". — AFP

described himself as "addicted to hashish" as his companions bickered over sharing a joint. A frail looking boy, the youngest of the group, acted as lookout in the ongoing game of hide and seek with Spain's Civil Guard police force.

In order to reach Ceuta or Melilla, another Spanish enclave, migrants must first scale the barbed wire fences which mark the only land borders between Europe and Africa. Those under 18 are hoping to benefit from European legislation which gives them greater protection than adult migrants - and limits the chances of their being deported. The regulations are enforced to varying degrees within the European Union and, after years of migrants travelling across the sea, the rules are becoming increasingly restrictive.

Young migrants put Europe hopes in Spain enclave

CEUTA, Spain: At 14 years old, Ismail said he is "ready for anything" as he tries to board a boat for Europe and leave his Moroccan homeland behind. While waiting to fulfil his dream, Ismail ambles around the port of Ceuta - a Spanish enclave in Morocco - wandering the streets like dozens of other children. "At home, there's no future," said the teenager, slouched on the pavement dressed in a sweat-shirt and beanie hat. Originally from Tangier in northern Morocco, Ismail said he grew up in a poor family and left school aged 12.

With the permission of his mother, who prays for him to reach Europe, he travelled the 100 km to Ceuta and two months ago climbed the border fence at dawn. Recounting his story surrounded by around a dozen youths, he

Mumbai

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Putin drives across bridge linking Moscow-annexed Crimea to Russia

Kiev, EU condemn ‘assault’ on Ukraine’s territorial integrity

KERCH: Russian President Vladimir Putin drove a truck across a new bridge linking mainland Russia to Moscow-annexed Crimea yesterday, triggering a fierce reaction from Kiev. Russian state television showed Putin dressed in jeans and a casual jacket sit behind the wheel of a construction truck with workers to drive 19 km across the bridge, which links the Taman peninsula in southern Russia to Ukraine’s Crimea peninsula annexed by Moscow in 2014.

“I want to sincerely congratulate you with this remarkable, festive and, in the full sense of the word, historic day,” Putin told workers upon arrival on the Crimean side of the bridge. “In different historical eras, even under the tsar, people were dreaming of building this bridge,” Putin told cheering workers. He was referring to Russia’s last tsar, Nicholas II, who first proposed such a bridge, but the outbreak of World War I prevented it going ahead. Another unsuccessful attempt was made in the 1930s under Joseph Stalin. During World War II the occupying Nazis also began building a bridge but abandoned the project.

The Russian leader, who was re-elected for a fourth Kremlin term in March extending his long rule, pledged to build more of “such projects” across Russia. The Crimean Bridge overtakes Lisbon’s Vasco da Gama Bridge as the longest in Europe. Built at a cost of 228 billion rubles (\$3.7 billion), the new structure connects the southern Krasnodar region with the Crimean city of Kerch, spanning a strait between the Black and Azov seas.

Ukraine’s condemnation

Ukraine, which along with most of the international community has not recognized Russia’s annexation of Crimea, condemned the project which was personally championed by Putin. “The Russian occupying powers,

which have temporarily occupied Crimea, are continuing to act outside international law,” Ukrainian Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman told AFP in an interview. Ukraine has also previously complained that the construction has damaged the environment and that larger ships will be unable to get through to its ports on the Azov Sea.

The European Union also criticized what it called a fresh assault on Ukraine’s territorial integrity. “This constitutes another violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity by Russia,” said a statement by a spokesperson for the office of the European Union’s foreign policy service, which said the bloc continues to refuse to recognize Russia’s annexation of Crimea.

Meanwhile, Ukraine’s security service raided the offices of Russian state media in Kiev and detained one local journalist on suspicions of treason, moves the chief editor of Russia’s RT television suggested were linked to the bridge opening. The chief editor of the Kremlin-funded channel, Margarita Simonyan, wrote on Twitter that “Kiev decided to take revenge on us for the Crimean Bridge,” after the raids on the offices of RIA Novosti state news agency, which is part of the same media group as RT.

Olena Gityanska, a spokeswoman for the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), said Russian-controlled media were being “used as tools in a hybrid war against Ukraine”. Earlier RIA Novosti reporter Kyrylo Vyshynsky, a Ukrainian national who received a Russian passport in 2015 according to the presidential decree published on the official Kremlin website, was detained near his house in Kiev. “Currently, the preliminary qualification of the criminal offence (...) is treason,” a representative of the prosecutor’s office, Igor Ponochnovny, told journalists during a joint briefing with the SBU official.



Russian President Vladimir Putin drives a construction truck across the new 19 km road-and-rail Crimean Bridge over the Kerch Strait linking mainland Russia to Moscow-annexed Crimea during its opening ceremony yesterday. — AFP

SBU deputy chief Viktor Kononenko accused Vyshynsky of travelling to Crimea in 2014 to carry out “subversive” reporting and later collaborating with separatist groups in eastern Ukraine. He said Vyshynsky received ample funding to carry out his work. “Today we can say that he received 53,000 a month for such activities,” said Kononenko. “The money is subsequently distributed to the groups and people involved. That was the reason for the searches.”

European Union and US sanctions have targeted those involved in building the bridge, principally Putin’s close ally, businessman Arkady Rotenberg, whose company Stroygazmontazh won the construction contract. The annexation of the peninsula in 2014 was condemned by Kiev and the West as an illegal land grab but applauded in Russia. The peninsula has

been hard to reach from southern Russia with long queues of vehicles often forming to board ferries, which cannot always run in winter storms, so the easiest way across is to fly.

Because of blocks imposed by Kiev, in addition to Western sanctions, a large amount of food is currently shipped to the peninsula from Russia, so the bridge will play an important role in reducing the region’s reliance on sea transport. The four-lane road bridge is opening ahead of schedule as it was due to be completed in December. Once it opens for traffic today, it will be able to carry up to 40,000 cars per day. A railway bridge is not yet finished and has a deadline of the end of 2019. A connecting highway from Kerch to the regional capital of Simferopol is set for completion in 2020. —AFP

No time to waste: Moscow urged to recycle, not burn

MOSCOW: Protests have been growing in recent months over the stench from landfill sites around Moscow, overflowing with millions of tonnes of rubbish. Authorities have now decided on a plan to tackle the problem – generating energy by burning the waste instead. But their course of action has also sparked public fears over pollution. Russia produces almost 70 million tonnes of rubbish per year, according to Greenpeace’s estimates.

The sorting of trash only takes place in around 100 of the country’s 4,000 towns and cities, and most of the waste builds up for decades in tips. “Russia seems to be fulfilling the prediction... that mankind will die from choking on its own rubbish,” said Alexei Kiselyov, of Greenpeace Russia. The amount that Russians throw away has grown 30 percent in the last decade, Greenpeace says. Two percent is incinerated, seven percent is recycled and the rest is dumped in landfills.

Around Moscow, 24 landfill sites have been closed over the last five years because they were outdated and dangerous, the regional authorities said, while the remaining 15 – enormous mountains of malodorous rubbish open to the elements – are still filling up with unsorted waste. “Most of them were created 50 years ago without any technology to treat the gases and polluted water” that



In this file photo taken on Feb 21, 2013 dump trucks unload garbage at a dumping ground near the village of Gorny Vozdukh (Mountain Air) some 14 km outside of the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi. — AFP

emerge from the waste, said the press service of the regional ecology ministry.

Locals up in arms

The problem first came into the public eye in June last year when the residents of Balashikha, a town six kilometres west of Moscow’s city limits, complained of the stink from a local tip directly to President Vladimir Putin on a call-in show on television, asking for it to be shut down. The landfill site was then closed but it soon emerged that other tips were creating similar problems. At the end of March, about 50 children received medical treatment in Volokolamsk, a town

northwest of Moscow, after breathing gases emitted from a landfill site. Thousands of residents then protested, calling for the site’s closure.

Russia turned to the Netherlands to provide technology to neutralize the toxic fumes, due to a lack of effective locally-made equipment. “The worst thing is that no one pays any attention to the problem until there is a gas leak or emission of polluted water or a fire in the landfill,” said Kiselyov. Facing a looming environmental disaster, the Russian government has backed a project to build five waste-to-energy plants that will incinerate rubbish and generate electricity. — AFP



Women pose for a portrait in Wilpii village, Paicho sub-county, Gulu district in northern Uganda March 26, 2018. — Reuters

recover from almost 20 years of war.

The women survived rape, abuse, forced labor and other horrors during an insurgency waged by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), when the army fought rebels notorious for cutting off people’s body parts and abducting children into their ranks. In a war that ripped northern Uganda apart, some 2 million people – almost the entire population of the region – were forced into camps. The LRA was ousted from Uganda in 2005, retreating into South

Sudan and neighboring states.

Today, the 15 women builders live in neighboring villages in Paicho sub-county, some 350 km north of the capital, Kampala. They support one another as a team, running a shared savings and loans scheme, as well as home-building projects. “These days, women can build houses so well on their own,” said Paska Akello, the group’s chair, another single mother who was kidnapped by the LRA when she was pregnant. — Reuters

Soros foundation quits Hungary over policies

BUDAPEST: The foundation run by US-Hungarian billionaire George Soros said yesterday it was closing operations in Hungary and relocating to Germany in response to the “repressive” policies of Prime Minister Viktor Orban’s government. “Faced with an increasingly repressive political and legal environment in Hungary, the Open Society Foundations (OSF) are moving their Budapest-based international operations and staff to the German capital, Berlin,” the network said in a statement.

Orban, re-elected last month for a third consecutive term in office, has long accused the 87-year-old Soros and non-governmental organizations he funds of orchestrating immigration and plotting to undermine the cultural and religious identity of Europe. “We won’t be shedding any crocodile tears,” the government’s press office told AFP in an email Tuesday reacting to the news of the foundation’s departure. OSF said the decision follows the latest steps by Orban to “impose further restrictions” on NGOs.

Earlier this year, citing national security concerns, the government announced a so-called “Stop Soros” package of draft laws aimed at “shedding light” and clamping down on NGOs receiving funding from abroad. The proposals include a special tax on such NGOs, secret service surveillance

of their staff, and a ban on travel to Hungary’s border zones for Hungarians deemed to be involved in “illegal immigration”. Foreign NGO staff under similar suspicion could be barred from entering the country altogether.

The OSF decision is “regrettable,” said the EU’s first vice president Frans Timmermans. “Whenever a civil society organization that helps build vibrant & tolerant democracies is threatened & feels it can no longer do its work, democracy suffers,” he tweeted. Rights groups in Hungary and abroad have denounced the proposals as an effort to silence critics. “The reason why OSF has reached this decision is very telling of how fast our operational context is deteriorating,” Marta Pardavi, co-head of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, a refugee rights NGO that has come under regular attack by the government, told AFP yesterday.

Amnesty International, another NGO in the government’s crosshairs, said it was not closing its Hungary operations “for now”. Orban, who won by a landslide in the April 8 election, on Monday said the “Stop Soros” package would be among the first bills tabled to the new parliament in the coming weeks. The package is “one of the most important questions of the election, Hungarians voted for it,” Orban said Monday on a visit to Warsaw. — AFP

‘We don’t need men’: Widows and rebel wives rebuild Uganda

PAICHO, Uganda: At the entrance to a round mud and elephant-grass hut in rural northern Uganda, Rose Lamwaka, 58, pauses and looks up at the ceiling of her new dwelling as if she cannot quite believe it is really there. After her old home was burned down in a fire, a group of 15 local women built Lamwaka a new house on land lent to her by an uncle – a feat almost unheard of a generation ago before the conflict here, when men were the undisputed household heads.

“This hut was thatched with dry grass by my children, while the rest was done by women members in the group,” Lamwaka, a single mother, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. “What my group has done for me is an act of kindness. They have made me happy.” The female master builders who made Lamwaka’s home – and gave her food, cooking utensils and bed sheets when her old one was destroyed – started working together about a decade ago as they struggled to

New York killer nanny sentenced to life in prison

NEW YORK: A New York nanny convicted of fatally stabbing two young children in her care was sentenced on Monday to life in prison without the possibility of parole for a crime that has been described as every parent’s nightmare. In a case that drew national headlines, Yoselyn Ortega, 56, was found guilty by a jury in April of murdering both Lucia Krim, 6, nicknamed Lulu, and her 2-year-old brother, Leo, and leaving their bloody bodies in a bathtub in their luxury Manhattan apartment in October 2012.

Judge Gregory Carro on Monday called the case “pure evil” before issuing

the sentence, the stiffest available. Before hearing the sentence, Ortega addressed the court and apologized. She spoke in Spanish through a translator. “I’m very sorry for everything that happened ... I ask for a great deal of forgiveness,” she said in a shaky voice. She said she was asking forgiveness from God and the children’s parents, adding she had not been feeling well on the day of the murders.

The two-month trial at state Supreme Court in Manhattan featured testimony by the children’s mother, Marina Krim. She recalled the shock of returning to the family’s Upper West Side apartment to find her children slain and their nanny standing over them stabbing her own neck with a kitchen knife. Krim had come home with the children’s 3-year-old sister, Nessie, after Ortega failed to show up with the children at Lulu’s dance lesson. “I just wanted to wake up from this nightmare that I knew wasn’t a nightmare. It was real,” Krim told jurors. “It’s like a total horror movie.” — Reuters

BJP emerges strongest in Karnataka poll

Result major setback for India’s main opposition party

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ruling party was set yesterday to win the largest number of seats in a big southern state election, giving him momentum for a re-election bid next year and opening a path for more reforms. A government in Karnataka led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will help Modi silence critics who said his popularity had waned after the rocky adoption of a nationwide sales tax and a ban on high-value bank notes late in 2016.

The BJP was leading in 105 seats in Karnataka’s 225-member state assembly, the Election Commission of India said, with the opposition Congress party leading in 75. A party must have 113 seats to form a government and the BJP will probably have to seek the backing of smaller parties. The Congress said it was ready to support a regional party that was coming third to form a government to stop the Hindu nationalist BJP from taking power. But analysts said the state governor would likely ask the BJP to make a bid for power because it would emerge as the biggest party in the new house.

“The result provides some reassurance to the BJP that its popularity remains intact,” said Shilan Shah, a senior India economist at Capital Economics. “That could embolden the government to pursue reforms in

future, including loosening foreign direct investment restrictions and moves towards privatization.”

If it forms a government in Karnataka, the BJP and its allies would govern 22 of India’s 29 states. A strong showing in the state, which has a population roughly equal to that of France, would allow Modi to aggressively push forward his reform agenda without fear of political backlash. It also gives the BJP a southern beachhead, besides its core base in India’s north and west.

Less chance of ‘populist actions’

In the last four years, Modi has moved to boost the economy, but shied away from politically sensitive reforms to revamp the labor sector and land acquisition, which the World Bank called for in March. His government faced sniping in recent weeks over soaring fuel prices, a decision to privatize state carrier Air India and a lack of jobs for millions of young people entering the workforce every year. Higher oil prices have added to inflationary pressure.

But the favorable vote for the BJP would reduce the chances that Modi would need to compensate for unpopular reforms with pre-election handouts. “If this regional election had resulted in Modi losing, that could have potentially raised the risk of more populist actions,” said Aidan Yao, senior emerging Asia econo-



BANGALORE: Supporters of India’s Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) celebrate election results as they hold posters of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in front of the BJP state party office yesterday. — AFP

mist at Axa Investment Managers in Hong Kong.

Modi’s victory in Karnataka, where he led his party’s campaign, showed he remains the top vote-getter in Indian politics, leaving Rahul Gandhi, the young

leader of the main opposition Congress party, struggling. “The win definitely enhances the prospect of Prime Minister Modi for another term,” said political commentator N Ram. — Agencies

Mahathir will stay in office for 1-2 years

KUALA LUMPUR/TOKYO: New Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday he will remain in office for one or two years and that Anwar Ibrahim, the jailed reformist he had vowed would replace him, will be released yesterday. Mahathir, 92, said he thought that “in a short while” the government could have a case against his predecessor, Najib Razak, who has been dogged by a multi-billion-dollar scandal at state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

A four-party alliance driven by Mahathir and Anwar won the general election last week, ousting the ruling Barisan Nasional coalition for the first time in the history of the Southeast Asian nation. Mahathir was sworn in as prime minister on Thursday, making him the world’s oldest democratically elected leader. In “an initial stage, maybe lasting one or two years, I will be the prime minister”, Mahathir said, speaking by live video link from Kuala Lumpur to a Wall Street Journal CEO conference in Tokyo. “I will play a role in the background even when I step down.”

The pardons board in Malaysia’s capital will meet today to discuss Anwar’s release and Mahathir said he would be released the same day. Anwar, 70, is serving a second five-year jail term for sodomy. He and his supporters have said the charges are politically motivated. A royal pardon would reverse Anwar’s conviction and make him eligible to actively participate in politics. He has been in hospital for a few months recovering from a shoulder operation.

During the campaign, Mahathir, who was prime minister for 22 years in a previous stint from 1981, promised to step aside and make Anwar prime minister once he was pardoned. But there have been differences between the two over the cabinet formation, and Mahathir made it clear yesterday that he was in charge. “I expect him to play the same role as the leaders of the other three parties. There will be no special powers given except as are given to ministers or deputy ministers or deputy prime ministers,” Mahathir said. He added that he would make the final decision about cabinet posts. — Reuters

US diplomat involved in fatal traffic accident leaves Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has allowed a US diplomat involved in a fatal traffic accident to leave the country, an official said yesterday, following a weeks-long stand-off and street protests over the incident. The diplomat - described as the defense attache in an earlier report - departed Islamabad late Monday, a senior Pakistani government official told AFP on condition of anonymity. “The US diplomat has been allowed to return to the US in light of the High Court’s decision that he had diplomatic immunity,” the official said.

A US State Department spokesperson also confirmed to AFP that “the American diplomat who was involved in a tragic car accident on April 7 in Islamabad has departed Pakistan”. A sports utility vehicle in which the diplomat was travelling was in collision with a motorcyclist and his passenger at an intersection in Pakistan’s capital last month. Atiq Baig, 22, died of head injuries while his cousin, who was the passenger, was injured. Weeks later, a second accident involving a US diplomat and a motorcyclist also made headlines in the country but resulted only in minor injuries. Tensions are simmering between Islamabad and Washington as the US pushes Pakistan to crack down on safe havens it allegedly provides for militants. — AFP



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What next for Iraq as cleric Sadr heads for election win?

A surprise election victory for fiery Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr seems to have shaken Iraq's political landscape at the expense of both the Iranian and American influence in the country. The populist Shiite preacher, a firebrand who once battled US troops and now opposes Tehran, has cobbled together a broad technocrat coalition tasked with rooting out Iraq's endemic corruption. But can he really sideline powerful foreign players and domestic rivals to take control?

Playing by the rules?

While Sadr's unlikely Marching Towards Reform alliance with Iraq's communists looks on course to be the biggest group in parliament-it faces many obstacles. The movement has pitched itself as a challenge to Iraq's entrenched elite and ridden popular protests over graft to drum up support. Under article 76 of Iraq's constitution, the right to form a government falls to the political bloc with the most seats. Sadr-who has ruled himself out of becoming PM-should be the key powerbroker and is already eyeing a coalition of around a dozen groups to reach a majority.

However, with months of wrangling expected ahead, it remains far from certain that he will get the chance to realize his ambitions. At elections in 2010, the Iraqi National Movement of Ayad Allawi-loathed by Iran-scooped 91 seats to become the biggest group in parliament. But after much maneuvering, Allawi was eventually bested by Nuri Al-Maliki, as Tehran helped engineer a union between two leading Shiite blocs to give him more seats.

Cutting foreign influence?

Strengthened by his apparent victory in Saturday's polls, black-turbaned Sadr could now push his nationalist agenda that has seen him pledge to curb foreign meddling in Iraq. After the 2003 invasion, his militia battled US forces. He is now calling for the latest deployment of American troops to leave following last year's defeat of the Islamic State group.

While his family of religious scholars historically has close ties with the Islamic revolutionaries in Iran and he spent years living there, Sadr has now fallen out with Tehran and wants its overbearing influence slashed. In a sign that he is angling to chart a different course, he visited regional Sunni powerhouse Saudi Arabia last year, as Tehran's rival seeks to play a greater role in Iraq. Sadr faces a difficult act to herd together enough groups from across Iraq's fragmented political spectrum to form a government.

He has extended a hand to a wide spread of parties-including the bloc of current Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi that lies in third place according to latest results. Whether he can convince Abadi-a key member of the establishment Dawa party that has dominated Iraq for years-to turn his back on his former stablemates and team up remains a major question. Abadi-who came to power in 2014 as IS rampaged across Iraq-has balanced off the US and Iran during his time at the helm. Sadr for now appears to be ruling out an alliance with two other powerful forces inside Iraq: the Iran-backed Conquest Alliance of former anti-IS paramilitary fighters and ex-premier Maliki.

Iran maneuvers?

Any attempt to form a government that would threaten the influence Iran has built up in the 15 years since the fall of Saddam Hussein looks certain to face opposition from Tehran. Iraq's larger neighbor to the east has major leverage over many of the top Shiite politicians and it already seems like it may be looking to block Sadr's path to power. Political sources told AFP that two meetings have been held under Iranian guidance to bring together several political blocs.

According to a participant, the aim has been to unite Abadi and Maliki-bitter foes despite coming from the same Dawa party-alongside the Conquest Alliance, which looks set to come second in the election. The initiative could trump Sadr's own coalition-building efforts but it risks angering the cleric's supporters who are yearning for a clampdown on corruption by establishment figures. — AFP



The week that Malaysia's Najib's world fell apart

As results poured in from polling stations around Malaysia on the night of May 9, with one parliamentary seat after another falling to the opposition, a stunned Prime Minister Najib Razak stared defeat in the face. There was no hiding the fact: the Najib-led Barisan Nasional coalition that had run Malaysia for the six decades since its independence from Britain, had lost the election. Voter anger over a goods and services tax, as well as allegations of corruption that had swirled for years around Najib's government, and the apparently lavish lifestyle of his wife, had finally taken its toll. A consultant who was in Najib's office as the reality of the defeat sank in said the prime minister was stunned. "When he knew that the numbers were not on his side, Najib broke down," he said.

Explaining Najib's shock on election night, one political strategist with ties to the now-defeated government said it was not unusual for him to be out of the loop when there were unwelcome developments. "Najib lives in a bubble," he said. His advisers "don't accept others' views," he added. "They don't listen to bad news." Najib's remove, and the disarray in his camp during the campaign and the election, was pieced together from interviews with about a dozen political operatives and members of the ruling coalition and the opposition.

Trump's favorite PM

The electoral defeat was a humiliating turn for Najib, who had ruled for almost a decade and had projected himself as a statesman who enjoyed a warm relationship with Chinese President Xi Jinping, and played golf with US presidents. Donald Trump showered him with praise during a White House visit last year, and according to local media once gave Najib a photograph of them together inscribed with the words: "To my favourite prime minister." Dubbed 'The Survivor' on the cover of a magazine before the election, Najib, 64, had for three years weathered a scandal over the billions of dollars that went missing from the state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB). He consistently denied wrongdoing in connection with 1MDB.

Najib went into the poll confident of victory, according to the interviews with politicians and party officials. But his week went off-script quickly and - despite frantic efforts - he failed to pull it back. Reuters was unable to reach Najib or any close aides for comment. An official who worked on Najib's campaign said his camp had been sure of victory several days before the vote. That confidence sagged as election day loomed with mounting evidence that momentum was with the opposition. The political strategist said that two cabinet ministers were so unnerved that they stopped country-wide campaigning to concentrate on defending their own parliamentary seats.

Despite growing evidence of huge turnouts at opposition rallies, the ruling coalition remained confident of victory, even if with a weaker mandate, banking on its traditional Malay vote base. Ten hours before polling stations opened, Najib went on national television and made voters a trio of promises. If they returned him to power, he said, his government would scrap



income tax for the young, declare two extra public holidays and make toll roads free for a few days during the Islamic festival of Eid. "It was desperation," said the campaign official.

Opinion polls showed that voters were angry over living costs after the introduction of the goods and services tax, but they were also disgusted by the allegations of corruption surrounding Najib. "It was conflated with so many other things - with higher costs of living, with inflation, with the goods and services tax," said Khairy Jamaluddin, the youth and sports minister in Najib's government, explaining the public discontent. "But at the root of it was scandal." A senior official in one of the opposition parties said that Barisan Nasional had been wrong to count on votes from the country's majority ethnic Malays on the basis of the affirmative-action policies that benefit them.

That shortcoming was underlined by the large crowds turning out for rallies for the opposition's Mahathir Mohamad, the 92-year-old former prime minister, in predominantly Malay areas that had long been bastions of support for the ruling coalition. "Sometimes on the ground, we were telling ourselves this is too good to be true," said one leader of Mahathir's Pakatan Harapan, or Alliance of Hope. On election day, opposition party officials said they were sure of victory by early evening thanks to results that their representatives at polling stations had passed on. The mood was jubilate in the opposition camp as it became clear its candidates had beaten leading Barisan Nasional politicians and made significant gains across the country.

By midnight, Mahathir felt confident enough to declare victory. Najib did not concede, however, apparently having recovered his composure as the night went on. Khairy visited Najib at his house that night and said the prime

minister was "calm" and "poised", but that the people around him were "stunned, shocked and somber". When the Election Commission eventually announced the result, hundreds of jubilant Mahathir supporters waved flags and cheered in central Kuala Lumpur. The next day, Mahathir, who was once Najib's mentor and later his bitter adversary, was sworn in as prime minister.

Mahathir's challenges for the multi-ethnic nation are substantial: how to keep together an alliance made up of former foes, and implement populist measures and reforms without disrupting economic growth - even as he has promised to cede power to Anwar Ibrahim, the opposition leader jailed by Najib. Mahathir's immediate attention appeared to focus on Najib. During the election campaign, Mahathir had vowed to hold Najib to account for his alleged role in the disappearance of billions of dollars from a government fund. As he assumed power last week, he said that those who had broken the law would be punished. Meanwhile, Najib's estranged step-daughter, Azrene Ahmad, took to social media to hail "the end of an era of tyranny".

Anger at the airport

With Mahathir in power, speculation swirled about Najib's future. Would Najib try to leave the country? On the Saturday after the election, an angry crowd gathered outside a small airport near Kuala Lumpur. Online, another 30,000 people tuned into a Facebook live event, streaming from the airfield entrance. A report had leaked that Najib and his wife, Rosmah Mansor, were going to try to leave Malaysia aboard a private plane. "Stop them running away!" said one watcher of the Facebook Live event. Amid the commotion at the airport, Najib announced on social media that he would indeed be

leaving, to take a holiday overseas. But he and his wife never showed up at the airport. What Najib hadn't realized then was that, just minutes before his announcement, the Immigration Department had issued a statement that Najib and Rosmah were barred from leaving the country - a final humiliation for the former prime minister.

Later that day, a sombre Najib appeared at a news conference that appeared to signal the end of his political career. Struggling to get a microphone to work, he put on a brave face as he announced that he was resigning as leader of both his political party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), and Barisan Nasional. "Anyone who is the leader and failed, it is the responsibility of that person to accept defeat. With an open heart, I accept it," he said.

'Collective denial'

Looking back at the evening of the election, Khairy, the Barisan Nasional lawmaker, discounted speculation that Najib had been hoping to find some way out of his predicament. Once the results had sunk in, Najib's priority had been figuring out how to achieve an orderly transition, he said. "There were a lot of concerns that he was going to declare martial law, emergency rule, not hand over power," Khairy said. "Those were never ever options that were even discussed, thought or entertained in any way. It was just about accepting it and how we would concede."

Now, without Najib at the helm, the priority for the former ruling coalition was figuring out how to become the opposition for the first time, Khairy said. "We were in a state of collective denial," he said, adding that the coalition had misunderstood the anger of the population. "We were too drunk on our own Kool-Aid, and this is a sobering lesson for us which we'll remember for the rest of our lives." — Reuters

News

US First Lady hospitalized

BETHESDA: President Donald Trump's wife, Melania Trump, underwent a surgical procedure on Monday to treat a benign kidney condition and will remain at Walter Reed medical center for the rest of the week, the first lady's office said. Spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said in a statement that Mrs Trump, 48, underwent an embolization procedure to treat the kidney condition. "The procedure was successful and there were no complications," Grisham said.

"The first lady looks forward to a full recovery so she can continue her work on behalf of children everywhere," President Trump spoke with his wife of 13 years before the procedure and talked to the doctor after it was completed, a White House official said. Trump later traveled by his Marine One helicopter to Walter Reed to visit his wife. "Heading over to Walter Reed Medical Center to see our great First Lady, Melania.

Successful procedure, she is in good spirits. Thank you to all of the well-wishers!" he tweeted. An embolization is a

Kuwait urges world to recognize...

Continued from Page 1

and deepening tension as well as threatening to plunge the region into more violence, chaos and instability, he said. Kuwait supported Palestinian request regarding the activation of some international mechanisms like the quartet through the expansion of its members to include other regional partners to be under the umbrella of the UN for backing the peace process, he said.

Al-Otaibi reiterated Kuwait's support for all legal and peaceful steps taken by Palestine on national and international levels to consolidate its sovereignty over Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the occupied territories. He affirmed that the desired peace should begin with ending the Israeli occupation lasted for 51 years, in line with the resolutions of international legitimacy, the land-for-peace principle, the road map and the Arab peace initiative adopted by all Arab countries at Beirut Summit in 2002.

He went to say that the initiative calls for the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories to the line of June 4, 1967 borders. It also ensures addressing all issues of the final status, leading to help the Palestinian people obtain all their legitimate political rights, including the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, he mentioned. The Kuwaiti representative pointed out that the Palestinian people want the United Nations, especially the Security Council, to maintain international peace and security.

Meanwhile, thousands of Gaza residents turned out yesterday for the funerals of Palestinians killed by Israeli troops a day earlier, while on the Gaza-Israel border, Israeli forces prepared to face the expected final day of a Palestinian protest campaign. Monday's violence on the border, which took place as the United States opened its new embassy in Jerusalem, was the bloodiest for Palestinians since the 2014 Gaza conflict.

The death toll rose to 60 overnight after an eight-month-old baby died from tear gas that her family said she inhaled at a protest camp on Monday. More than 2,200 Palestinians were also injured by gunfire or tear gas, Palestinian medics said. Palestinian leaders have called Monday's events a massacre, and the Israeli tactic of using live fire against the protesters has drawn worldwide concern and condemnation.

The United Nations Security Council was due to meet to discuss the situation. Israel has said it is acting in self-defense to defend its borders and communities. Its main ally the United States has backed that stance, with both saying that

Amir sends greetings

Continued from Page 1

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Al-Sabah family, will hold a reception for Ramadan well-wishers from the army, the police, Kuwait National Guard (KNG), Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) and diplomats on the first two days of the Holy Month at Bayan Palace.

His Highness the Amir expressed apology for not

minimally invasive procedure often used to block the flow of blood to a tumor or an abnormal area of tissue. Dr Keith Kowalczyk, a urologist at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, said that based on available information it appeared that Melania Trump was treated for a benign tumor known as an angiomyolipoma.

"It's the most common benign tumor that's out there. It is a tumor, which means it's a growth. There's no worry for it to spread or metastasize. Once it's treated, it's treated," he said. Kowalczyk said women in their mid to late 40s make up 80 to 90 percent of the cases of angiomyolipomas. "It kind of all fits. But I don't know. Any time you are doing an embolization, it's because something might bleed. She's young and healthy and I can't really think of any other reason you would embolize someone like that."

Kowalczyk said angiomyolipomas are most commonly found by chance. "Usually, with embolization there is over a 90 percent success rate," he said. The Slovenian-born first lady last week rolled out an agenda for her White House work focused on helping children. A CNN/SSRS poll found last week that Melania was viewed favorably by 57 percent of Americans, up from 47 percent in January. Her husband's job approval rating lags behind hers at 50 percent or less.—Reuters

Hamas, the Islamist group that rules the coastal enclave, instigated the violence. Yesterday morning, mourners marched through Gaza, waving Palestinian flags and calling for revenge. "With souls and blood we redeem you martyrs," they shouted.

There were fears of further bloodshed as a six-week protest campaign was due to reach its climax. May 15 is traditionally the day Palestinians mark the "Nakba", or Catastrophe, when hundreds of thousands fled or were driven from their homes in violence culminating in war between the newly created Jewish state and its Arab neighbors in 1948. The protests, dubbed "The Great March of Return," began on March 30 and revived calls for refugees to have the right of return to their former lands, which now lie inside Israel.

Israel rejects any right of return, fearing that it would deprive the state of its Jewish majority. Palestinian medical officials say 105 Gazans have now been killed since the start of the protests and nearly 11,000 people wounded, about 3,500 of them hit by live fire, Israeli officials dispute those numbers. No Israeli casualties have been reported. More than 2 million people are crammed into the narrow Gaza Strip, more than two thirds of them refugees. Citing security concerns, Israel and Egypt maintain tight restrictions on the enclave, deepening economic hardship and raising humanitarian concerns.

Sharpshooters

On the Israeli side of the border, Israeli sharpshooters took up positions to stop any attempted breach of the fence should demonstrations break out again. Tanks were also deployed. A senior Israeli commander said that of the 60 Gazans killed on Monday, 14 were carrying out attacks and 14 others were militants. He also said Palestinians protesters were using hundreds of pipe bombs, grenades and fire-bombs.

Militants had opened fire on Israeli troops and tried to set off bombs by the fence. Many casualties were caused by Palestinians carrying out devices that went off prematurely," he said. "We approve every round fired before it is fired. Every target is spotted in advance. We know where the bullet lands and where it is aimed," said the commander, who spoke on condition that he not be named, in accordance with Israeli regulations.

"However reality on the ground is such that unintended damage is caused," he said. In Geneva, the UN human rights office condemned what it called the "appalling deadly violence" by Israeli forces. UN human rights spokesman Rupert Colville said Israel had a right to defend its borders according to international law, but lethal force must only be used as a last resort, and was not justified by Palestinians approaching the Gaza fence. The UN rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories, Michael Lynk, said Israel's use of force may amount to a war crime. — Agencies

receiving citizen and resident well-wishers. The Amiri Diwan extended wishes of prosperity for the leadership and people of Kuwait, wishing for many happy returns of this joyous occasion. Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah will receive Ramadan well-wishers at the diwan of the late Sheikh Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in Al-She'eb district. The receptions will be after Isha prayers on the third day of Ramadan. The Premiership expresses good wishes to the people of Kuwait, the Arab and Muslim nations on the advent of the holy month. — Agencies

Philippines asks for 'creches' for Filipina...

Continued from Page 1

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte imposed the ban in February in the wake of reports that Filipino workers were abused and even died in Kuwait, including domestic helper Joanna Demafelis, whose body was found in a freezer at her employers' residence. Last month, some videos of Filipinos rescuing housemaids in Kuwait went viral. Kuwait condemned the incident and insisted this was a flagrant violation of its sovereignty. Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Cayetano apologized if the videos offended the sensibilities of Kuwait, which accepted the apology but declared Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Rene Villa persona non grata and asked him to leave the country.

The following day, Duterte asked his nationals to go back to the Philippines, stressing that the deployment ban on workers from the Philippines will now be permanent. But backdoor negotiations continue and on Friday, Kuwait and the Philippines finally signed an agreement for the protection of OFWs. It was signed by the foreign ministers of both countries.

Asked by reporters when they will lift the ban on domestic helpers, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) Deputy Administrator Arnell Arevalo Ignacio said it will be done soon, but will depend on the recommendations of some officials from the Philippine government. Duterte appointed Mama-o as special envoy to Kuwait and Ignacio is currently here to work on some details related to the implementation of the agreement.

"The memorandum of agreement is there and it was signed. But it is just a piece of paper and we have to do more, like for example the implementation, mechanism and some groundwork to meet the need of all stakeholders. The president wants me to work on some details. We didn't sign this agreement just to leave it hanging," he said. "I am here to make sure the agreement signed is really workable and that all suggestions and recommendations are heard one by one. We hear

MPs pass early retirement law...

Continued from Page 1

against the Palestinian people during the past 70 years since the establishment of Israel. In a communique read by speaker Marzouk Al-Ghanem, the Assembly strongly condemned the transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem, reaffirming that the holy city is the eternal capital of the independent Palestinian State. The Assembly strongly deplored the Israeli killing of the unarmed Palestinian demonstrators, say-

Palestinian Embassy marks Nakba...

Continued from Page 1

sovereignty over Jerusalem and everything in it, where they meant jurisdiction over Islamic and Christian holy sites. We say that they did not and will not have jurisdiction over Jerusalem. The crime that took place yesterday calls for us to stand together and unite," Tahboub said. He thanked South Africa, Turkey, France and others for their honorable attitude towards the issue of Palestine.

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said: "Today's speech does not represent my personal point of view but represents that of the entire Kuwaiti National Assembly, which in turn represents all the Kuwaiti people. Today, a clear decision was issued at the Assembly on the Palestinian cause, and it was voted

from all sides - from foreign recruiters to employers to workers; I go around Kuwait to hear everyone's concerns. The MoA was the first phase, and the second will be implementing rules and guidelines," he said.

He said several mechanisms should be implemented in order for the ban on domestic helpers to be lifted. One of his recommendations was for the FRA (Foreign Recruitment Agency) to set up several 'day-off centers' for Filipino housemaids. "Sponsors said one of many reasons why they are not allowing their housemaids to have a day off is because they are afraid they will be befriended by men and will run away. If we have this problem, shall we deprive our housemaids of their social life? Isn't it boring to see your boss every day over and over again for the next two years or so?" Ignacio asked.

"Maybe there are solutions to the problem, so we are laying down some solutions, and setting up day-off centers is one good answer to employers' apprehensions. We'll try to set up the facilities for housemaids to enjoy - like sporting activities and so on - in that particular place. These people are humans and they need to socialize. They can do this in this special center, so that once a week they can have a day off with the rest of the ladies.

They are happy about this suggestion, and we've been pinpointing places where we can set up these centers. I think there will be day-off centers in several areas, like in Salmiya, Hawalli, Farwaniya, Jahra, Fahaheel, etc.," he said. Another recommendation Ignacio suggested was setting up a training center for domestic helpers bound to Kuwait. "We need to address the issue of culture shock when they reach Kuwait. In the Philippines, we will train them and give them enough time to learn and understand Kuwaiti culture. They are heading to an unfamiliar place, so of course, they will be shocked," he said.

"We are also looking at the possibility of setting up companies (maybe the recruitment agencies already here) that can hire domestic helpers and deploy them on an hourly basis. All these suggestions are being considered and we hope to come up with a solution to every difficult problem we encounter. This is a relationship issue, and we are dealing with it by talking. Thank God, if we say something, Kuwaitis listen, and we are very happy about it," he said.

ing Israel wouldn't have dared to commit these terrorist actions without the complete silence of the region and the world.

MP Riyadh Al-Adasani meanwhile, threatened he will file to grill the prime minister if a report of a parliamentary committee was debated in a secret session. The report is the result of an investigation by the committee over a grilling to the prime minister several months ago. Adasani is insisting that the report should be discussed in public.

MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaie strongly lashed out at the Philippines, accusing Manila of military intervention in Kuwait in a reference to the smuggling of several Filipino maids by embassy workers which triggered a diplomatic crisis between the two countries which has now been resolved.

on unanimously without any objection from any member of parliament."

"Some may ask about the benefit of condemnation and denunciation. I say this is what the enemy wants - that the transfer of the embassy and daily massacres in Gaza and the rest of Palestine become normalized and we get accustomed to them and there is no reaction. What we do today is not much, but it is very necessary, and sends a clear and strong message. We do what is available to us for the Palestinian cause," Ghanem said.

"I saw a video of an old Palestinian woman in Jerusalem who did not have a weapon or a tank but used the voice of God through the Quran via loudspeakers during the festivities of the opening of the embassy. This is what we should be proud of and what the enemy should know - that we do not fear. The Kuwaiti people always support Palestine like our Amir taught us, and like at the Security Council when our Kuwaiti ambassador said that we are with the Palestinians in whatever they see and want," he noted. The event was attended by many ambassadors, officials and members of parliament, along with the media and supporters.



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Detroit end 11-game losing streak against Cleveland with 6-3 victory

Athletics hit 3 solo shots as Manaea beat Red Sox again

DETROIT: Niko Goodrum hit two homers and drove in five runs, carrying the host Detroit Tigers to a 6-3 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Monday night. Goodrum, a rookie utility player, hit a two-run shot off Cleveland starter Carlos Carrasco and added a three-run blast. Goodrum doubled his homer total for the season. Jose Iglesias had two hits and a run, and John Hicks scored twice for Detroit, which has won three of its past four. The Tigers had lost their past 11 games to their division rival. Mike Fiers (4-2) held the Indians to one run on three hits with five strikeouts in six innings.

MARINERS 1, TWINS 0

Dee Gordon scored the lone run and Jean Segura rapped two hits as Seattle notched a victory over Minnesota in Minneapolis. An eighth-inning throwing error by Twins first baseman Logan Morrison on Segura's sacrifice bunt allowed Gordon to score the decisive run. Four Seattle pitchers combined on a four-hitter to send Minnesota to its second straight setback.

RAYS 2, ROYALS 1

Matt Duffy provided the offense, and Ryan Yarbrough, with support from the bullpen, delivered on the mound as Tampa Bay opened a three-game series with a win at Kansas City. Duffy had a pair of RBI singles, driving home C.J. Cron in the first inning and bringing home Adeiny Hechavarria for the go-ahead run in the sixth inning. Yarbrough allowed one run on five hits and three walks with four strikeouts in five innings. Chaz Roe, Jonny Venters, Sergio Romo, Jose Alvarado and Alex Colome combined to throw four scoreless innings in relief.

A'S 6, RED SOX 5

Sean Manaea gave up four runs (three earned) while striking out four over six innings to help Oakland snap a two-game skid with a win at Boston. Manaea (5-4) pitched the first no-hitter against the Red Sox in 25 years in his last start against them at home on April 21, striking out 10 batters in a 3-0 victory. Matt Joyce (2-for-4), Matt Olson (2-for-4) and Khris Davis (2-for-4)

each slugged solo homers, and Jonathan Lucroy drove in two runs for Oakland. The Athletics had dropped five of their previous six games. The Red Sox had their two-game winning streak snapped.

BRAVES 6, CUBS 5

Ozzie Albies had three hits, including one of Atlanta's three home runs, to help the Braves earn the victory at Chicago, extending their winning streak to four games. Albies went 3-for-5 to pace a nine-hit Atlanta attack and help the Braves win for the 11th time in their last 12 road games. He led off the game with a solo homer, his 13th, and added a single and a double. Atlanta's other home runs came from Tyler Flowers, a two-run shot in the third, and Jose Bautista, a two-run homer in the fifth.

BREWERS 7, DIONDBACKS 2

Late lineup addition Jonathan Villar contributed a homer, two singles and three runs, Tyler Saladino had an inside-the-park homer, and Christian Yelich hit a tiebreaking single in the seventh inning of Milwaukee's victory over Arizona in Phoenix. Villar, added when Ryan Braun was scratched due to right mid-back tightness, homered in the ninth inning after singling and scoring in the second and seventh innings. He helped the Brewers win for the fourth time in five games and the fifth time in seven. Saladino homered with one out in the ninth inning, a play on which Arizona center fielder A.J. Pollock dived for the ball but could not get it as it rolled to the fence. Pollock, who ranks second in the NL with 33 RBIs, left the game with an apparent wrist injury.

ANGELS 2, ASTROS 1

Andrew Heaney allowed one run in eight innings of four-hit pitching, and Justin Upton singled in the game-winner in the sixth inning as Los Angeles outlasted Houston in Anaheim, Calif. Heaney (2-2) allowed one run, struck out 10 and walked just one while throwing 100 pitches. He posted four three-up, three-down innings. Justin Anderson, who inherited the closer role



DETROIT: Niko Goodrum #28 of the Detroit Tigers celebrates his eighth inning three run home run with first base coach Ramon Santiago while playing the Cleveland Indians at Comerica Park on Monday in Detroit, Michigan. — AFP

for Los Angeles when Keynan Middleton hurt his right elbow, gave up two singles in the ninth inning sandwiched around a double play to earn his first major league save.

ROCKIES 6, PADRES 4

Gerardo Parra broke a 3-3 tie with a three-run homer off submarining Japanese reliever Kazuhisa Makita (0-1) in the sixth inning, leading Colorado to a victory at San Diego. Makita, who returned from Triple-A El Paso two days ago, gave up back-to-back line-drive singles to Ian Desmond and Chris Iannetta with one out, followed by Parra's second homer of the season-a 363-foot drive pulled into the right field stands. The blast made a winner of left-handed starter Tyler Anderson (3-1), who allowed the Padres four runs (three earned) on seven

hits and a walk with three strikeouts in 5 2/3 innings. Wade Davis earned his 15th save.

GIANTS 10, REDS 7

Brandon Belt contributed a single, a double and a home run to a 14-hit attack that sent San Francisco to a victory over Cincinnati, snapping the Reds' six-game winning streak. Belt singled to open a two-run third, smacked a two-RBI double in a three-run sixth and capped the Giants' big offensive night with his seventh home run of the season, a solo shot, in the eighth inning. Giants starter Chris Stratton (4-3), who worked five innings, benefitted from the offensive assault. He allowed four runs and nine hits, including home runs by Tucker Barnhart, his third, and Scott Schebler, his fifth. — Reuters

Fleury finds his ruthless streak to slow down Winnipeg Jets



WINNIPEG: Connor Hellebuyck #37 of the Winnipeg Jets stops a shot from Reilly Smith #19 of the Vegas Golden Knights during the third period in Game Two of the Western Conference Finals during the 2018 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Bell MTS Place on Monday in Winnipeg, Canada. — AFP

WINNIPEG: Marc-Andre Fleury quickly gained revenge on the Winnipeg fans who had mercilessly taunted the Vegas Golden Knights netminder on Saturday when the Jets pumped three goals past him in the opening minutes of the NHL Western Conference finals.

Fleury took the barbs and a 4-2 loss with good humour but replaced the smiles with his game face on Monday as he delivered a stellar 30-save performance to backstop the Golden Knights to a 3-1 victory to send series back to Las Vegas level at 1-1.

"I expected that they (would) come out flying again," said Fleury, refusing to gloat. "Everybody steps up at some point and everybody is contributing to the success of our team. That's why we've been consistent in the season and the playoffs."

A triple Stanley Cup winner with the Pittsburgh Penguins, it was always going to take more than chants of "Fleuryrry,

Fleuryrry" no matter how loud to rattle the ice cool French-Canadian. Fleury's sparkling play during the first two round of the post-season that featured series wins over the Los Angeles Kings and San Jose Sharks put him firmly in the Conn Smythe trophy discussion as the playoffs most valuable player.

Monday's effort in Game Two of the best-of-seven series will have only enhanced his claims. His .951 save percentage coming into the West Finals was the best in NHL history for a goalie with at least 10 playoff starts but he has also surrendered three or more goals in five of his last six contests.

Despite the Game One wobble, Fleury remains key to Vegas' hopes of capping a remarkable debut campaign by becoming the first expansion team in a major North American professional league to claim a championship on their first attempt.

As they did in Game One, the Jets

came out firing on all cylinders but Fleury withstood the barrage while Tomas Tatar and Jonathan Marchessault each counted to give the Golden Knights a 2-0 first period lead.

"They came out pretty hard and Fleury had to make three or four real good save the first seven or eight minutes," Vegas coach Gerard Gallant said. "We rebounded after that and got that 2-0 lead and it was a different game."

Fleury would not surrender a goal until midway through the final period when Kyle Connor, parked at the side of net, rifled a shot that somehow found its way between the netminder's pads, sparking a roar from the Winnipeg crowd.

The buzz, however, lasted just 88 seconds before Marchessault collected his second goal of the game with a nifty backhand over Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck. — Reuters

KIB sponsors Amir Cup final

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored the 56th Kuwait Amir Cup final for the 2018 season. Organized by the Kuwait Football Association at the Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium, the final ended with an impressive victory for the Kuwait Sporting Club against the Al-Arabi Sporting Club with a score of 3-0.

On this occasion, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, congratulated the country's leading football team on winning the championship. Additionally, he lauded the sportsmanship, athleticism and spirit of members of the Al-Arabi Sporting Club demonstrated throughout the football match.

Speaking about this sponsorship, Najia said: "Sports has always been a cornerstone of our social responsibility

program. Our sponsorship of this event comes as part of our ongoing support of sports events and activities that aim at promoting the culture of sports in the local community. As a key supporter of football in Kuwait, KIB continues to offer its full support to tournaments and even organizes some of its own. Our football team currently hosts a hand-picked group of highly-skilled, professional football players, reflecting our relentless commitment to promoting sports."

It is worth noting that KIB always strives to sponsor a number of tournaments, exceptional sports teams, as well as talented individual sports athletes. The Bank strongly believes that sports is an integral component of any developed community, as it promotes physical fitness, mental well-being and a healthy, active lifestyle. Accordingly, an increase in sports participation across the nation improves productivity, enabling everyone to effectively carry out their individual roles towards their country.

Apologies flow after troubled launch of F1 streaming service

LONDON: Formula One has apologised to fans for problems with an already-delayed F1 TV streaming service at its launch in Spain last weekend. Fans were complaining on social media from early in the weekend that the product they had subscribed to suffered from buffering and other issues that rendered it unwatchable.

Formula One acknowledged on its official www.formula1.com website that it had suffered "some live playback issues" at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya and apologised for the inconvenience.

Subscribers were offered a refund from Formula One saying "this weekend was on us." Motorsport director Ross Brawn, in a post-race review issued by Formula One yesterday, acknowledged the launch "did not go very smoothly".

"Apologies to our fans, but we are dragging our sport from a place where none of these initiatives previously existed and we

will get there," added the former Honda, Brawn GP and Mercedes team principal.

"In some ways that's what Formula One is about, a sport where things are developed on the move and on the track with technology that is always cutting edge" he added. Formula One also launched its Twitter Live show and F1 Vision, a handheld device on which fans at the circuit can follow the race, in Barcelona.

F1 TV was announced in February and originally scheduled for launch at the opening Australian Grand Prix in March but had to be delayed due to technical problems. The service, on two levels with a more expensive Pro premium package and a cheaper basic access, is the Liberty Media-owned sport's biggest investment to date in its digital transformation.

Presented as an opportunity for fans to watch races from their favourite driver's perspective and with richer content, the immediate verdict was that the product still left a lot to be desired.

"It still doesn't have the splitscreens, it doesn't offer any data on drivers or tyres, doesn't show press conferences or interviews, the audio configuration of onboards needs to be fixed and the archive completed," said an opinion piece on the motorsport.com website. "The service that was promised back in March looks like it is still very far away unless there's a drastic turnaround." — Reuter

Imam-ul-Haq sees Pakistan to victory over debutants Ireland

Babar Azam made 59 after being dropped on nine

SCOREBOARD	
DUBLIN: Completed scoreboard on the fifth day of a one-off Test between Ireland and Pakistan at Malahide yesterday:	
Pakistan 1st Innings 310-9 dec (Faheem Ashraf 83, Asad Shafiq 62, Shadab Khan 55; T Murtagh 4-45, S Thompson 3-62)	
Ireland 1st Innings 130 (Mohammad Abbas 4-44, Shadab Khan 3-31)	
Ireland 2nd Innings (following-on, overnight: 319-7)	
E. Joyce run out (Faheem Ashraf)	43
W. Porterfield c Sarfraz Ahmed b Mohammad Amir	32
A. Balbirnie lbw b Mohammad Abbas	0
N. O'Brien b Mohammad Amir	18
P. Stirling lbw b Mohammad Abbas	11
K. O'Brien c Haris Sohail b Mohammad Abbas	118
G. Wilson c Haris Sohail b Mohammad Amir	12
S. Thompson b Shadab Khan	53
T. Kane b Mohammad Abbas	14
B. Rankin b Mohammad Abbas	6
T. Murtagh not out	5
Extras (b1, lb20, nb2, w4)	27
Total (all out, 129.3 overs, 579 mins)	339
Fall of wickets: 1-69 (Joyce), 2-69 (Balbirnie), 3-94 (N O'Brien), 4-95 (Porterfield), 5-127 (Stirling), 6-157 (Wilson), 7-271 (Thompson), 8-321 (K O'Brien), 9-332 (Rankin), 10-339 (Kane).	
Bowling: Amir 29.2-9-63-3; Abbas 28.3-10-66-5 (Inb); Rahat 23-3-75-0 (2w); Faheem 18-3-51-0 (Inb, 1w); Shadab 30.4-7-63-1	
Pakistan 2nd Innings (target: 160)	
Azhar Ali c Stirling b Murtagh	2
Imam-ul-Haq not out	74
Haris Sohail c Joyce b Rankin	7
Asad Shafiq b Murtagh	1
Babar Azam run out (Balbirnie/Thompson)	59
Sarfraz Ahmed lbw b Thompson	8
Shadab Khan not out	4
Extras (nb5)	5
Total (5 wks, 45 overs, 199 mins)	160
Did not bat: Faheem Ashraf, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Abbas, Rahat Ali	
Fall of wickets: 1-2 (Azhar), 2-13 (Haris), 3-14 (Shafiq), 4-140 (Babar), 5-152 (Sarfraz).	
Bowling: Murtagh 16-3-55-2; Rankin 12-1-57-1 (3nb); Thompson 11-4-31-1 (2nb); Kane 6-1-17-0.	
Result: Pakistan won by five wickets	

DUBLIN: Pakistan debutant Imam-ul-Haq saw his side to victory as Ireland's first match in men's Test cricket ended in a gallant last-day defeat by five wickets at Malahide yesterday. Pakistan, set a seemingly modest 160 to win, after earlier making Ireland follow-on, collapsed to 14 for three before lunch on the fifth day.

But 22-year-old left-handed opener Imam, the nephew of Pakistan selection chief and former Test batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq, responded to the pressure with 74 not out-his maiden fifty at this level.

Together with Babar Azam, who made 59 after being dropped on nine, he kept Ireland at bay during a fourth-wicket stand of 126. Imam hit the winning runs as grey clouds threatening rain hung over Malahide.

Victory was a good way for Pakistan to prepare for the first of a two-Test series against England at Lord's starting on May 24. Just four balls into their chase, Pakistan saw Azhar Ali edge Tim Murtagh to Paul



Stirling at first slip.

Haris Sohail (seven) fell next, well taken in the gully by Ed Joyce off towering fast bowler Boyd Rankin as Ireland's two former England internationals combined. And 13 for two became 14 for three in 4.3 overs when Middlesex paceman Murtagh produced a superb delivery to bowl Asad Shafiq between bat and pad for one.

Imam, who bats in spectacles, showed a maturity beyond many of his more experienced top-order colleagues. He struck two fine fours off Stuart Thompson, a square cut followed by a square drive. Ireland needed to take every chance that came their way but, with Babar yet to add to his interval score, he was dropped in the slips by Andrew Balbirnie.

Imam, having cover driven a four off Rankin, completed a 61-ball fifty with seven boundaries-the third time he had reached the landmark this tour after half-centuries in warm-up matches against Kent and



DUBLIN: Pakistan's captain Sarfraz Ahmed poses with the trophy after beating Ireland on the final day of Ireland's inaugural Test match against Pakistan at Malahide cricket club, in Dublin yesterday. — AFP

Northamptonshire. Babar, cashed in to make a 61-ball fifty. But with Pakistan 20 runs shy of victory, a mix-up saw Babar run out. There was still time for Ireland to take a couple more wickets but by then the match had escaped their grasp. Earlier, Ireland were dismissed for 339 in their second innings. Kevin O'Brien, who on Monday became the first Ireland batsman to score a Test hundred, fell to his first ball yesterday as Mohammad Abbas had him caught by Haris at slip for 118. The Irish, resuming on 319 for seven, saw Abbas then take three wickets for 12 runs in 22 balls, the pace-man finishing with an innings haul of five for 66 in 28.3 overs.

Only three sides in the 141-year history of Test cricket had won after being made to follow on and only three men's team-Australia in the inaugural Test against England at Melbourne in 1877 — had enjoyed a victory

in their debut match at this level.

SLASHING DRIVE

Ireland were facing an innings defeat when man-of-the-match O'Brien came in at 95 for four but, ably assisted by Stuart Thompson, who made 53, he turned the tide during a seventh-wicket partnership of 114.

But after Tyrone Kane had seen out yesterday's opening over from Mohammad Amir, who took his 100th Test wicket on Monday, Abbas struck. O'Brien going down on one knee to attempt a slashing drive off a wide half-volley from Abbas, nicked to Haris.

A crestfallen O'Brien bowed his head in frustration and dropped his bat as he trudged off the field. But the 34-year-old had every reason to be proud of an innings that spanned five hours, 44 minutes and saw him face 217 balls with 12 fours. — AFP

England recall Buttler for first Pakistan Test

LONDON: England recalled batsman Jos Buttler in a 12-man squad announced yesterday for the first Test against Pakistan at Lord's on May 24. In the first England squad since former Test batsman Ed Smith took over as national selector, Somerset off-spinner Dom Bess was given a first call-up. But, after England's tour series losses in Australia and New Zealand, top-order batsman James Vince was dropped after a run of low scores at Test level despite the Hampshire batsman making an unbeaten 201 against Somerset on Monday.

Buttler, widely regarded as one of the most talented English batsmen of his generation, last played Test cricket when he batted down the order. The 27-year-old has had a frustrating 18-match career in Test cricket, with his last appearance in the format against India at Chennai in December 2016. Having made an impact at international level as a wicket-keeper/batsman, Buttler has been selected for the first of a two-Test series against Pakistan purely as a batsman.

Jonny Bairstow, who succeeded Buttler as England's Test keeper, has retained his place behind the stumps having become a mainstay of skipper Joe Root's side with both bat and gloves.

Buttler is currently playing for the Rajasthan Royals in the Twenty20 Indian Premier League, where his last three scores have been 95, 94 and 81.

'OUTSTANDING TALENT'

But he has not played first-class cricket for Lancashire, his English county, since the end of last season. "Jos Buttler is an outstanding talent, who is already a central part of England's white ball team," said Smith in an England and Wales Cricket Board statement. "The selection panel feels that this is the perfect moment to reintroduce Jos to Test cricket.



KOLKATA: Rajasthan Royals cricketer Jos Buttler plays a shot during the 2018 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals at The Eden Gardens Cricket Stadium in Kolkata yesterday. — AFP

where he has already enjoyed some success, including a stint playing as a specialist batsman at number seven. "Jos is playing with great confidence and flair, and he will bring unique qualities to the Test team."

Bess, 20, has played just 16 first-class matches, having made his debut for Somerset against Pakistan at Taunton in 2016. But he starred for MCC in the Champion County match against Essex in March where he took eight wickets in the match and scored a century in a victory over the county Champions in Barbados.

An injury to Somerset team-mate Jack Leach has paved the way for Bess's inclusion as the lone specialist spinner in a squad after England decided against recalling Moeen Ali. "Dom Bess has made an excellent start

to his first-class career," said Smith.

"With Jack Leach missing out due to injury, the selection panel wanted to invest opportunity in a young spin bowler. "Dom's strong form, character and all-round abilities presented a compelling case for selection." England 12-man squad to play Pakistan in the first Test at Lord's, May 24-28:

Joe Root (Yorkshire, capt), James Anderson (Lancashire), Jonny Bairstow (Yorkshire, wkt), Dom Bess (Somerset), Stuart Broad (Nottinghamshire), Jos Buttler (Lancashire), Alastair Cook (Essex), Dawid Malan (Middlesex), Ben Stokes (Durham), Mark Stoneman (Surrey), Chris Woakes (Warwickshire), Mark Wood (Durham). — AFP

Nigeria names provisional WCup squad

ABUJA: Tianjin Teda midfielder John Obi Mikel was named as Nigeria captain when the country's provisional 30-man squad for the 2018 World Cup was released on Monday. Nigeria are the only one of Africa's five representatives from the last World Cup to return for the 2018 edition, which is being hosted by Russia from June 14 to July 15.

The team representing Africa's most populous nation will be looking to improve on their progression to the last 16 in Brazil but the side have been drawn in

one of the toughest groups in what will be their fifth World Cup appearance.

German coach Gernot Rohr named 31-year-old former Chelsea midfielder Mikel as his captain for the extended squad, which was announced in a statement issued by the Nigeria Football Federation.

Chelsea wingback Victor Moses was Nigeria's top scorer in the qualifying campaign with three goals, while Mikel, Alex Iwobi, Moses Simon and Kelechi Iheanacho weighed in with two goals apiece.

All invited players have been told to report to a hotel in Uyo, capital of the southern state of Akwa Ibom, on May 21 with the final list of 23 players needing to be submitted to FIFA by June 4.

Nigeria have been drawn in Group D in Russia, alongside Argentina, Iceland and Croatia, who they open their tournament against in Kaliningrad on June 16. Africa's best performance at the World Cup finals were quarter-final appearances for Cameroon (1990), Senegal (2002) and Ghana (2010).—Reuters

India's Manohar re-elected as ICC chairman

NEW DELHI: India's Shashank Manohar has been re-elected chairman of the International Cricket Council for another two years, the sport's world governing body said yesterday. Manohar, who became the ICC's first independent chairman in 2016, was elected unopposed for a second term after a tenure marked by broad reforms. He was the sole nominee for the position.

As chairman he spearheaded efforts to restructure the ICC to curb the dominance of cricket's three wealthiest nations, Australia, India and England. The 60-year-old former head of the Indian board successfully revised the ICC's governance and pushed for the appointment of its first independent



Shashank Manohar

female director. "Over the next two years we can look forward to launching a global strategy for the sport in partnership with our members so we can grow the game and ensure more of the world can enjoy cricket," Manohar said in an ICC statement. "The sport is in good health but we are the guardians of the game and we must continue to work hard to maintain that." Manohar resigned from the post last year but was persuaded by the ICC board to retake the helm. —AFP

Sports

Injured Neuer in German World Cup squad as frictions stir

Manuel has not played for eight months with fractured foot

DORTMUND: Injured Manuel Neuer was named in Germany's extended 27-man World Cup squad for Russia 2018, despite not playing since September, as political frictions threw a shadow over yesterday's announcement.

Both midfielders Mesut Ozil and Ilkay Gundogan are included despite triggering friction between Berlin and Ankara after the Premier League stars posed for pictures with Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in London. "From the DFB's perspective, it has been made clear that it was not a good decision, but I didn't think of leaving them out for a second," said Germany head coach Joachim Loew.

"I have a bit of understanding that two hearts beat in the chests of players with an immigration background. "They have have expressed regret and done a lot for integration in Germany." There was more political activity as hosts Russia granted a World Cup visa to German journalist Hajo Seppelt, who had been banned from the finals after he broke the story on the Russian state-sponsored doping scandal.

NO ROOM FOR GOETZE

However, Loew's top concern is whether his captain and goalkeeper Neuer will be fit for the World Cup finals, which kick-off on June 14. The 32-year-old Bayern Munich star has not played for eight months with a fractured foot.

He has been named amongst four goalkeepers, one of whom will be cut for the final 23-man squad which must be named by June 4. Neuer must now prove his fitness at a fortnight-long training camp in northern Italy, which starts yesterday.

"Manuel is getting back into full training this week at Bayern Munich, that assures us that he can tolerate the full load in the training camp," explained Loew.

"Then we want to get a full idea, talk to him frankly

and honestly, asking 'is it possible to play at the World Cup?'" "We have to decide whether Neuer is able to put in his top performances. "I don't think it is possible to go into a World Cup without playing practice."

There is no place in Loew's squad for Mario Goetze, who scored the winning goal in the 2014 World Cup finals, after an erratic season at Borussia Dortmund. "It's definitely not been his season. He has huge qualities, but isn't in form," explained Loew. "Personally, I feel sorry for him and it was a hard decision."

PETERSEN SURPRISE

However, Loew pulled a surprise by handing a first call-up to Freiburg striker Nils Petersen, 29, the top-scoring German in the Bundesliga this season with 15 goals. Yet there is no place for striker Sandro Wagner, Robert Lewandowski's back-up at Bayern Munich, who helped Germany win the Confederations Cup in Russia last year.

Bayern Munich defender Jerome Boateng has been called up even though he is currently sidelined by a groin injury. Dortmund winger Marco Reus has a spot in the extended squad after missing out on the victorious 2014 World Cup squad after tearing ankle ligaments in a warm-up game.

Germany open their Russia 2018 campaign against Mexico in Moscow on June 17, the defending champions also facing South Korea and Sweden in Group F.

GERMANY SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Bernd Leno (Bayer Leverkusen), Manuel Neuer (Bayern Munich), Marc-Andre ter Stegen (Barcelona/ESP), Kevin Trapp (Paris Saint-Germain/FRA) **Defenders:** Jerome Boateng (Bayern Munich), Matthias Ginter (Borussia Moechengladbach), Jonas Hector (Cologne), Mats Hummels (Bayern



MARSEILLE: File photo taken on July 7, 2016, Germany's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer stops the ball by France's forward Dimitri Payet (not pictured) during the Euro 2016 semi-final football match between Germany and France at the Stade Velodrome in Marseille. — AFP

Munich), Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich), Marvin Plattenhardt (Hertha Berlin), Antonio Ruediger (Chelsea/ENG) Niklas Sule (Bayern Munich), Jonathan Tah (Bayer Leverkusen)

Midfielders/Forwards: Julian Brandt (Bayer Leverkusen), Julian Draxler (Paris Saint-Germain), Mario Gomez (VfB Stuttgart), Leon Goretzka (Schalke

04), Ilkay Gundogan (Manchester City/ENG), Sami Khedira (Juventus/ITA), Toni Kroos (Real Madrid/ESP), Thomas Mueller (Bayern Munich), Mesut Ozil (Arsenal/ENG), Nils Petersen (Freiburg), Marco Reus (Borussia Dortmund), Sebastian Rudy (Bayern Munich), Leroy Sane (Manchester City/ENG), Timo Werner (RB Leipzig). — AFP

Wavering S Africa under pressure to back Morocco's World Cup bid

JOHANNESBURG: African football's leadership will attempt today to persuade South Africa to keep backing Morocco's bid to host the 2026 World Cup, officials said yesterday. South Africa, who became the first African country to host the World Cup in 2010, are threatening to break ranks and vote for the rival North American bid in what would be a blow to the African cause.

Confederation of African Football president Ahmad will be hoping to persuade South African Football Association (SAFA) representatives to back Morocco's bid when they meet in Johannesburg.

Last week South Africa's sports minister Tokozile Xasa urged the football association not to vote for Morocco at the FIFA Congress in Moscow on June 13, when each of the member countries of world football's governing body casts a vote to decide where the 2026 finals will be played.

The two countries have had strained relations since Morocco withdrew its ambassador from Pretoria in 2004 when South Africa recognised the independence of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic' also known as the Western Sahara.

"We are very clear that we can't support Morocco. Our parliament was very straightforward in this regard' it is the mandate of the country and it is an obligation for sporting bodies to understand what the country's agenda is"" Xasa said. Morocco annexed Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony, in 1975, and since then the territory has been the subject of a dispute between it and the Polisario Front, an independence movement backed by many African countries, including South Africa.

SAFA president Danny Jordaan, a former parliamentarian with the ruling African National Congress, received a Moroccan bid delegation last month with much fanfare but has since sought to distance himself.

Instead SAFA announced that their executive committee will make a final decision on whether to support Morocco's bid at a meeting later this month. "SAFA wants to reiterate that no decision has been taken at this stage on the matter on who to support," said a statement.

FIFA has strict rules on government interference in the affairs of its member associations. Countries found to have broken those rules can face a number of sanctions, including expulsion from FIFA and playing bans.

Morocco have made a concerted effort in recent years to drum up support among African football associations, signing co-operation agreements with a myriad of countries and spending lavishly to host CAF events since Ahmad became president 14 months ago.

The joint bid from Canada, Mexico and US is fancied to beat Morocco to host the expanded 48-team 2026 World Cup. —Reuters



LONDON: This handout picture taken and released on May 13, 2018 and released on Monday by the Turkish Presidential Press office shows Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan(2nd R) posing for a photo with Turkish football players Ilkay Gundogan (L), Mesut Ozil (L 2nd) and Cenk Tosun (R) in London. — AFP

German soccer stars under fire for posing with Erdogan

BERLIN/DORTMUND: Two top German soccer players made a mistake by posing for a photo with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman and national soccer coach Joachim Loew said yesterday, amid concerns over Turkey's human rights record.

The pictures, taken in London on Sunday and published by Erdogan's ruling AK Party, show Mesut Ozil and Ilkay Gundogan standing next to the president, all beaming, and giving him shirts from their English clubs - Arsenal and Manchester City.

Gundogan's shirt had "With respect for my president" written on it. He later said it was not the intention of the two players, who have Turkish roots, to make a political statement or be drawn into campaigning for Turkey's elections next month.

The photos unleashed a storm of criticism from lawmakers across Germany's political spectrum and the DFB football federation, all of whom argued that Erdogan does not sufficiently respect German values.

"From the side of the federation, it was made clear to them that it was an unfortunate action. When you play for Germany you represent German values," Loew said at a news conference to name his provisional squad for the World Cup in Russia. Both Ozil

and Gundogan are in that squad.

Erdogan is a keen soccer fan and as a young man played the game to a semi-professional level. Ties between the European Union and Turkey have deteriorated over the past two years amid a crackdown by Erdogan's government on suspected supporters of a failed military coup in July 2016. Turkey has shut down media outlets, detained 160,000 people and sacked nearly the same number of public employees. It says the crackdown is needed for security reasons.

"POLITICAL IDIOTS, FOOTBALL GENIUSES"

DFB soccer federation President Reinhard Grindel, who said earlier the players had been used by Erdogan in his campaign for the June 24 presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey, said he believed the two knew they had made a mistake.

Merkel's spokesman also weighed into the debate, welcoming Gundogan's statement which also made clear that the players stood by German values. "The players, who as national players have to set an example, were in a situation that invited misunderstanding," said the spokesman, Steffen Seibert.

A commentary in top-selling Bild, which ran the photos on its front page, said: "The main question is whether the two German national players still fit into our German team. I say yes. They are political idiots, but football geniuses."

Loew said he understood that players with roots in other countries sometimes "have two hearts beating". "I have known both players a long time, they have done a lot for integration. It is a lesson for them we can discuss again in training," he said.

TFF Turkish Football Federation Vice President Servet Yardimci denied the players had become part of the election campaign. "We have to be fair, there is no intention whatsoever to get them involved," he told a briefing in London on Monday. — Reuters

Former Aston Villa defender Samuel killed in car crash

LONDON: Former Aston Villa and Bolton defender Jllloyd Samuel died in a car crash yesterday at the age of 37, Cheshire Police confirmed.

Samuel, who also won two international caps for Trinidad and Tobago, was involved in a collision with a truck in High Legh, north-west England, after reportedly dropping off his children off at school. "At around 7.55am (0655GMT) police were called following reports of a collision involving a van and a Range Rover," said a statement from Cheshire Police.

"Sadly the driver of the car, Jllloyd Samuel, 37, from Lymm, died at the scene." Samuel was born in the city of San Fernando in the south-west of Trinidad but moved to England as a youngster.

He was capped by England from Under-18 to Under-21 level and was an unused substitute for the senior international against Sweden in 2004 before switching allegiances to the country of his birth.

"We've received some terrible news that former national defender and ex-Aston Villa and Bolton Wanderers player Jllloyd Samuel died in a car crash this morning in England," the Trinidad and Tobago FA said on its official Facebook page.

"According to reports, Jllloyd was returning home after dropping his kids off to school and collided with an oncoming vehicle. "The Trinidad and Tobago Football Association and his former national team-mates at this time extend deepest condolences to his family members both in the UK and here in Trinidad and Tobago."

Samuel spent nearly a decade at Villa Park before joining Bolton in 2007. He also had loan spells at Gillingham and Cardiff before ending his playing career in Iran. Villa said their players will wear black armbands for Tuesday's Championship play-off second leg against Middlesbrough. "We are deeply saddened to hear of the death of our former player Jllloyd Samuel at the age of just 37 in a car accident," said a post on Villa's official Twitter account. "Our players will wear black armbands as a mark of respect tonight and our thoughts are with his friends and family at this very difficult time." —AFP



Jllloyd Samuel

Evergrande exit Asian Champions League as Tianjin march on

Lopes volley helps Jeonbuk into Asian quarter-finals

HONG KONG: Twice champions Guangzhou Evergrande crashed out of the Asian Champions League yesterday as Fabio Cannavaro's team lost on away goals to Tianjin Quanjian after their last 16 second leg match finished 2-2.

Alexandre Pato and Wang Jie scored the crucial goals for Paulo Sousa's tournament debutants Tianjin, who reached the quarter-finals having drawn last week's first leg against their fellow Chinese Super League side 0-0.

"Thanks to the support of our fans we have eliminated the strongest team in Asia," said Sousa, whose team entered the competition in the playoff rounds. "We have been improving all the time. We have done well in the group stage, in both points and the goals we scored, and I hope we can carry this success into the Chinese Super League and win the next game."

Guangzhou's Brazilian striker Ricardo Goulart put the home side in front in the 17th minute when he bundled the ball over the line from close range, but Pato levelled just two minutes later with a downward header.

Goulart put Evergrande in front again three minutes after the restart only for Wang to hit a second equaliser for Tianjin. They will be joined in next week's draw in Kuala Lumpur by twice champions Jeonbuk Motors after the South Koreans came back from a first-leg deficit to eliminate Thailand's Buriram United 4-3 on aggregate.

Buriram led 3-2 going into the second leg but Ricardo Lopes levelled the aggregate score for a dominant

Jeonbuk with an 18th minute volley and Lee Jae-sung put the result beyond doubt with a dipping free kick four minutes from fulltime.

Iran's Persepolis, who reached the semi-finals last year, also secured their place in the next phase of the competition on away goals as Branko Ivankovic's Tehran-based team defeated Al Jazeera from the United Arab Emirates in dramatic fashion.

Al Jazeera held a 3-2 advantage from the first leg but Ahmad Nourollahi put Persepolis in the driving seat when he struck in the 63rd minute.

Romarinho equalised for Al Jazeera 20 minutes from full-time and the club from Abu Dhabi looked set to advance until veteran Iran international

defender Seyed Jalal Hosseini scored with just a minute remaining to spark scenes of celebration inside the Azadi Stadium.

Persepolis will be joined in the quarter-finals by Al Sadd from Qatar, who knocked Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli out of the competition with a 4-3 aggregate win.

The Doha-based side held a 2-1 lead from the first leg and Baghdad Bounedjah increased his side's advantage with just two minutes on the clock.

A header from Claudemir and a scrambled effort from Mohanad Asiri restored parity on aggregate for Al Ahli, only for Bounedjah to score his second of the night and his ninth of the competition so far in the 70th minute to put Al Sadd into the quarter-finals. — Reuters



GUANGZHOU: Tianjin Quanjian's Anthony Modeste (C) fights for the ball with Guangzhou Evergrande's Feng Xiaoting (L) and Zheng Zhi (R) during the AFC Champions League round of 16 football match between China's Guangzhou Evergrande and Tianjin Quanjian in Guangzhou in China's southern Guangdong. — AFP

Ill Tapie relishing another Olympique de Marseille final

PARIS: Former Olympique de Marseille president Bernard Tapie, who led the club to the Champions League title in 1993, is relishing their presence in the Europa League final-and he has a piece of advice for Rudi Garcia's team.

The 75-year-old, who has been battling stomach cancer, will probably not be able to attend today's final against Atletico Madrid in Lyon, but seeing OM gunning for another European title is a great source of comfort.

"What I go through with OM now is helping me to an incredible extent," Tapie told L'Equipe earlier this month. A charismatic president of Marseille from 1986 to 1994, he was at the helm when OM beat AC Milan 1-0 in the final of the Champions League before being sent to prison for corruption in a match-fixing scandal in the French first division.

The former businessman and Minister of City Affairs has been keeping a sharp eye on his former club

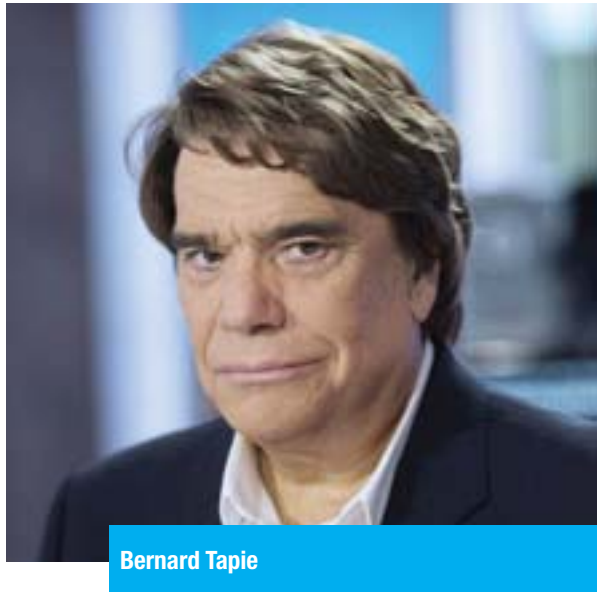
despite his illness. "Om are not among the top 10 teams in Europe yet they are in the final of the Europa League, something Arsenal, Lazio and Lyon could not do," he said.

Tapie believes the collective force of the team has been key to their success in the competition. "You cannot single out a player. You have to look at the general profile of this team. They are proud, brave and hard-working," he said.

EMBRACE THE MOMENT

Since their 1993 triumph, France's only title in Europe's premium club competition, Marseille have played in two UEFA Cup finals but were comprehensively beaten, 3-0 by Parma in 1999 and 2-0 by Valencia in 2004.

This time, according to Tapie, Marseille should embrace the moment and the pressure that goes with it. "Before Bari (where OM lost the 1991 European Cup final to Red Star Belgrade on penalties), we had so much desire that it became counter-productive," he said. "We were tense and we lost focus, while what you must look for is relaxation and concentration, something we achieved in 1993. "OM will have nothing to lose (against Atletico). It must be felt in the way they prepare the game and in the way they are going to play it." Tapie will probably be in bed when the match kicks off at Lyon's Groupama stadium, although after OM



Bernard Tapie

beat Salzburg in the semi-finals following extra time he said that should his condition slightly improve, he might make the trip.

"If there is any improvement, I can change my mind on the morning of the game. But that will not be easy," he said. — Reuters

Mancini vows to restore Azzurri pride

FLORENCE: New Italy coach Roberto Mancini yesterday said he wanted to restore pride in the national side six months after their shock failure to qualify for the World Cup. "Not going to the World Cup is difficult for those who, like us, have always been cheering for the national team," Mancini told a press conference at the national training centre at Coverciano, near Florence. "I feel the need to do something for the national team and think it's the right time for me. I want to build something for the years to come and bring Italy back to the top."

Italy have been without a permanent coach since Gian Piero Ventura was sacked after the four-time world champions failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time since 1958. Former Manchester City and Inter Milan coach Mancini signed a two-year deal on Monday after severing his lucrative contract with Russians Zenit Saint Petersburg.

The contract, reportedly worth two million euros (\$2.3 million) a year, will see Mancini lead Italy's bid to qualify for Euro 2020. If successful, it will be automatically extended until June 2022, ahead of the World Cup in Qatar. The Italian federation had been looking for a prestigious coach to rebuild an Azzurri side decimated after their play-off defeat to Sweden in the San Siro last November.

Mancini will give up a reported 13 million euros in wages over the two remaining years on his Zenit contract to do national service. "Mancini gave up significant financial opportunities to do so. This is testimony to his complete determination and desire to take on this job," said Italian FA commissioner Roberto Fabbricini. His first match in charge will be a friendly on May 28 against Saudi Arabia in Switzerland.

BALOTELLI RETURN

Mancini said there would be "room for everyone" in his squad and that he planned to recall in-form Nice striker Mario Balotelli, whom he coached at Inter and Manchester City. Balotelli has not played for his country since the 2014 World Cup. "Even in difficult times, Italy can boast of having players of great quality. I will certainly also speak with Balotelli," said Mancini. "He's a player that we want



COVERCIANO: Italy's national football team newly appointed head coach, Roberto Mancini holds Italy's jersey during a press conference yesterday. — AFP

to see at the level he had during the Euro (2012 when Italy reached the final)." He also said he would talk to recently retired Italy great Andrea Pirlo about joining his coaching setup.

In Mancini, Italy have a coach with a solid track record as a title-winner, with 13 trophies in club football. He led Manchester City to their first English league title in 44 years in 2012, and won three Serie A crowns with Inter. He also won the Italian Cup with Inter, Fiorentina and Lazio.

Since leaving England in 2013, Mancini coached Galatasaray, whom he lead to a Turkish Cup success, and returned to Inter before joining Zenit last June. But this will be his first international coaching

job. "I don't know if this will be my most difficult challenge, if you coach a club and you don't win everyone is angry with you, here there are 50 million people.

"That's beautiful too, though, because if you win something important there's huge satisfaction. It's not an easy challenge, but nothing is easy." Mancini, a former Lazio and Sampdoria forward, never became a regular during a love-hate relationship with Italy over a 10-year international career that gleaned just four goals in 36 caps. He reached the semi-finals of Euro 1988, and was in the squad that finished third in the 1990 World Cup on home soil. — AFP

FA Cup final ball to feature names of 137 goalscorers

LONDON: The names of 137 goalscorers from this season's FA Cup campaign will feature on the ball that will be used for Saturday's final between Manchester United and Chelsea, the English Football Association (FA) said yesterday.

United playmaker Alexis Sanchez and Chelsea winger Willian are among the names to be included as part of the FA's 'Ball for All' initiative to celebrate players from different divisions across the country that took part this season - the 137th edition of the competition.

"Over 3,000 goals have been scored in this season's competition, from all levels of the football pyramid," FA's director of professional game relations Andy Ambler has said.

"The 137 goalscorers from across the country are representative of all who have contributed to this season's competition." Other names on the ball will include Wigan Athletic's Will Grigg, who scored the winner as the third-tier League One side shocked Premier League champions Manchester City in the fifth round. Liam Pullen, a player for Chipping Sodbury Town, scored the National League Step 6 side's first ever FA Cup goal this season and has also been named on the ball, which he will present ahead of kickoff at Wembley on Saturday. —Reuters

Loew agrees contract extension

DORTMUND: Germany coach Joachim Loew has agreed to extend his contract with the world champions to 2022, he said yesterday before the unveiling of his preliminary World Cup squad.

Loew, whose current deal runs out in 2020, has been in charge for 12 years and in 2014 led Germany to their fourth World Cup title.

"This is a big responsibility to continue developing players," the 58-year-old told reporters after German Football Association President Reinhard Grindel said they had agreed to extend their current deal by two more years.

"To work with the best players in Germany, then develop them and to make them better, to form a team that sets the highest goals, this is what drives and still gives me joy." Loew has been in charge for 160 matches, winning 106, more than any other Germany coach.

He started out as assistant to Jurgen Klinsmann after only limited coaching experience in club football. Loew took over after the 2006 World Cup in Germany and has led his country to at least the semi-finals in all of the five major tournaments for which he has been at the helm.

"We did not need long to get a conclusion," Grindel said. "We will extend the contract of Joachim Loew and the entire training team until 2022." Germany will face Mexico, Sweden and South Korea in Group F at next month's World Cup in Russia. — Reuters

Live	Matches on TV (Local Timings)
UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE	
Olympique Marseille v Atletico de Madrid beIN SPORTS HD 1	21:45

12 Detroit end 11-game losing streak against Cleveland with 6-3 victory



13 Imam-ul-Haq sees Pakistan to victory over debutants Ireland



15 Evergrande exit Asian Champions League as Tianjin march on



HOUSTON: Trevor Ariza #1 of the Houston Rockets shoots the ball against the Golden State Warriors during Game One of the Western Conference Finals of the 2018 NBA Playoffs on Monday at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas. — AFP

Durant scores 37 to lead Warriors

Houston to host Game 2 tonight at Toyota Center

HOUSTON: Kevin Durant poured in a team-high 37 points and Klay Thompson chipped in 28 as the Golden State Warriors claimed the opener of the Western Conference finals and snatched home-court advantage with a frenetic 119-106 win over the Houston Rockets on Monday at Toyota Center.

While Durant served as a midrange gunner, recording three rebounds and one assist, Thompson scorched Houston from the perimeter, hitting 6 of 15 3-point attempts. That tandem worked in concert whenever the Rockets mustered a rally, offsetting relatively quiet efforts from Stephen Curry (18 points, eight assists) and Draymond Green (five points, nine rebounds, nine assists). "He's one of the best scorers ever," Houston coach Mike D'Antoni said of Durant. "I thought he was extremely good. But we can withstand that. We can't withstand turning the ball over and giving up so many wide open threes."

Said Warriors coach Steve Kerr, "We want to keep the ball moving. But obviously Kevin is the ultimate luxury because a play can break down and you just throw

him the ball. He can get you a bucket as well as anybody on Earth. This is why anybody would want him on their team.

"You think about a couple years ago, and we're in the Finals and we couldn't quite get over the hump. Kevin is the guy that puts you over the hump. I don't know what you do to guard him. He can get any shot he wants." Green added two blocks and two steals to anchor the Golden State defense. Durant and Thompson combined for 11 points while Golden State stretched a three-point lead to 76-70 midway through the third quarter. Durant then scored the final six points of the third before Thompson tallied the first seven of the fourth to provide the Warriors a working margin.

James Harden paced the Rockets with 41 points and seven assists while Chris Paul chipped in 23 points and 11 rebounds. However, excluding Eric Gordon, who scored 15 points off the bench, the Rockets received precious little from their role players. And with Golden State featuring its usual brand of ferocious half-court defense, the

Rockets didn't have nearly enough firepower.

The Warriors shot 52.5 percent overall and outpaced the Rockets 18-3 in transition. Houston will host Game 2 on Wednesday night at Toyota Center before the series shifts to Oakland, Calif. "They did a really good job," Harden said of the Warriors. "If you miss the shots or if you turn the basketball over, they're out. They're getting dunks, they're getting threes. I'm not sure how many transition points they had, but it was too many. That's what they thrive on. So we've got to do a better job of not turning the basketball over, taking better shots and getting back and matching up.

"There were a couple times where we didn't guard anybody, and they got a dunk or an open three. That can't happen."

Harden and Durant were incendiary from the start, combining for 25 points on 10-for-16 shooting in the first quarter. Golden State needed to survive the early emotional salvo from the Rockets, with Houston dashing to a 12-4 lead behind eight points from Harden.

"We're in the Western Conference finals. They are

going to come out with a lot of energy," Durant said. "We're going to take that first punch and keep punching." The Rockets stretched the lead to 21-15 on a Clint Capela dunk after the Warriors were caught scrambling defensively. "You're not going to come in and just knock them out," D'Antoni said. "There were too many times where we had mental lapses. We didn't switch properly, turned the ball over and missed too many layups. We need to do a better job of staying up mentally." Golden State began to work its way back behind Durant, whose 3-pointer late in the first quarter cut the deficit to 25-22. Durant converted consecutive baskets midway through the second quarter to push Golden State to a lead. The Rockets responded with a 7-0 spurt, but the Warriors closed the half with a Nick Young 3-pointer for a 56-56 deadlock.

The Rockets struggled to maintain any offensive rhythm, finishing with 16 turnovers to undermine their best efforts. Golden State gave the ball away nine times. Houston shot 45.9 percent from the floor. Each team hit 13 3-pointers. — Reuters

UEFA prepares to fight Infantino's Club WCup plan

LAUSANNE: A united response to FIFA's plans to enlarge the Club World Cup to 24 teams will be the subject of debate today at a meeting of football power brokers organised by UEFA. Ahead of the Europa League final in Lyon, the governing body of European football is holding a meeting of its "Council of UEFA" and FIFA president Gianni Infantino's plans are the main topic on the agenda. Many of those participating have already expressed hostility to the plan.

The council, chaired by UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin, brings together the European Club Association (ECA), the recently renamed European Leagues (EPFL) and the players' union (FifPro).

Infantino is pushing to revamp the Club World Cup, boosting it from seven clubs to 24 in a four-year format. At the moment it is played every year. At the same time, he hopes to launch a biennial league tournament for nations, the Global Nations League. Infantino says he has an offer of \$25 billion over 12 years for the two competitions from a group of investors, which the Financial Times has identified as SoftBank from Japan and the governments of China and Saudi Arabia.

That is allowing FIFA to dangle enormous amounts of cash in front of the biggest clubs. For the club competition

alone the consortium "guarantees minimum revenues of \$12 billion for the four editions from 2021 to 2033", according to a document, which AFP has read, that FIFA presented to seven big European clubs including European Champions Real Madrid, Spanish champions Barcelona and German champions Bayern Munich.

According to the document, 12 of the 24 teams in the competition would be European, four or five from South America, two each from the rest of the Americas, Asia and Africa, leaving the Oceania to battle for the last place with a South American team.

The winners of the four previous Champions Leagues would be guaranteed places. The European participants could make between \$50 million and \$80 million each. Already some clubs have voiced their support. Barcelona's board of directors said

the tournament would be "exciting, dynamic, inclusive and prestigious." They added that it would "create a global platform for clubs to contribute to the growth of their brands." Emilio Butragueno, Real Madrid's head of public relations, told his club's TV station: "We think that for fans it could be a very interesting competition."

60-DAY DEADLINE

Infantino says he needs agreement soon because the consortium gave FIFA a 60-day deadline and after that the money will vanish and hopes to get approval at the FIFA conference in Moscow in June ahead of the World Cup. Ceferin is not happy.

"FIFA should not be meeting with only seven federations or clubs and discussing with them things that concern all of European football," he said in a recent

interview. "I know that at least three of the seven clubs don't agree with the path that FIFA wants to take."

"They have invited only the clubs," the Slovene said on Friday. "So they think only they count." Infantino insists that the new format will reduce the number of games the "great players" would play in each four-year cycle, but the leagues are sceptical and object to cramming new competitions into the football calendars. "FIFA itself has highlighted the international match calendar's congestion and lack of rest periods for players most in demand," Premier League chief executive Richard Scudamore told

"To be presented with FIFA's 'solution' as a fait accompli and claim this to be consultation defies all definitions of best practice and good governance," Scudamore told The Times in London. — AFP

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018

18 Global growth outlook positive despite softer data in US, Europe**20** Spike in US gasoline prices curbs retail sales in April**21** Infiniti AI-Babtain brings popular Infiniti QX70 Limited to Kuwait

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel gestures as she delivers her speech at the congress of German Trade Union Federation (DGB) in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

US ‘looking for a deal’ with China on trade

China must give timetable on opening up markets: Branstad

WASHINGTON/TOKYO: The United States is seeking to make a trade deal with China, White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said yesterday as bilateral talks between the world's two economic powerhouses resume in Washington this week. Kudlow, speaking in a live interview with Politico news outlet, said he backed US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin's efforts to reach an agreement with Beijing and that both countries must take action. "He is looking for a deal, I support him on that, wholeheartedly, assuming it's a good deal. He has my support," Kudlow said, adding that no agreement had been reached yet.

"Both sides should try to lower tariffs as much as possible ... and to take down non-tariff barriers wherever they are," he told Politico. "Free and open trade, I think that's the solution. I think that's where we are as a group." His comments come as US President Donald Trump's top trade and economic officials prepare to meet with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He to discuss trade concerns ranging from intellectual property protections to farm goods to steel capacity.

Trump has long-promised to crack down on China and raised concerns about an all-out trade war after

threatening \$150 billion in tariffs and prompting China to retaliate. But he offered an olive branch in calling on US officials to revisit penalties for Chinese company ZTE Corp for flouting US sanctions on trade with Iran and North Korea. "Trade negotiations are continuing with China. They have been making hundreds of billions of dollars a year from the US, for many years. Stay tuned!" Trump tweeted yesterday.

Kudlow told Politico that the United States was not looking for a trade war with China and that it was not clear what action the United States would take toward ZTE. This week's meetings follow US-China trade talks in Beijing earlier this month where the two countries failed to reach an agreement on the long list of US demands. US Ambassador to China Terry Branstad, who was at the Beijing talks, said earlier yesterday the United States wants a timetable on how China will open up its markets to US exports as the two countries are still not close to resolving trade frictions.

'Very far apart'

Washington and Beijing have proposed tens of billions of dollars in tariffs in recent weeks, fanning worries of a



Beijing slams EU at WTO hearing

full-blown trade war that could hurt global supply chains and dent business investment plans. Branstad, speaking at a conference in Tokyo, said the Chinese appeared "taken back" by the significance of the list.

"The Chinese have said 'we want to see the specifics.' We gave them all the specifics in terms of trade issues. So they can't say they don't know what we're asking for," he said. Branstad said China has not met pledges to open up its insurance and financial services area, as well as reduce

auto tariffs, and that Trump would like to see a "dramatic increase" in food exports to China.

"We're still very far apart," he said. Branstad said the United States could rescind the "Section 301" tariffs if China opened its agriculture and auto markets. Increasing US exports of liquefied natural gas could also be an area where the two countries could agree, he said. "The United States and China are the two biggest economies in the world. The more we can work things out, the better it's going to be not just for US and China, but for the entire world economy," he said.

China accused the European Union yesterday of risking a return to the "law of the jungle", telling a dispute hearing at the World Trade Organization that it was astonished by what it called the EU's disregard for the WTO's rulebook. China's statement came during a major trade dispute in which Beijing is trying to force the United States and the EU to treat China like any other "market economy", rather than claiming it unfairly subsidizes its exports on a large scale. The EU's argument that China distorted its markets could equally be applied to the 28-nation bloc's Common Agricultural Policy or US corn prices, the Chinese statement said. — Reuters

KAMCO announces Q1 financial results for 2018

KUWAIT: KAMCO Investment Company, a leading investment company with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced its financial results yesterday for the first quarter ended March 31, 2018. The Company reported revenues of KD 2,088,108 in comparison to KD 2,291,618 for the same period in 2017. However, fee income

reached KD 1,628,614, an increase of 9.3 percent from KD 1,490,009 achieved during the same period in 2017. Net profit attributable to the equity holders of the Company for the period stood at KD 101,260 in comparison to KD 285,992 in 2017 during the same period. Earning-per-share (EPS) for the period is 0.43 fils, compared to 1.20 fils in 2017.

Commenting on the results, Faisal Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer of KAMCO, said, "The increase in fee

income is due to the addition of quality Assets Under Management and our active role in the debt capital market by concluding successful issuances. We are currently working on several key transactions that will further cement and solidify KAMCO's role in the market while building upon our strong track record. The Firm will continue to provide access to various diverse financial instruments that will help strengthen the local and regional debt capital markets."

Sarkhou continued to say that the funds and portfolios under management are performing well in the market and KAMCO will continue to enhance them to outperform their benchmarks. The Company also plans to expand its operations while searching for the best investment opportunities that will greatly benefit clients and shareholders. It is also worth mentioning that KAMCO has recently received a 'BBB' rating by Capital Intelligence.

Sarkhou also said, "GCC markets reported mixed performance during the first quarter which was in line with global markets. The US and China trade concerns, rising interest rates and dividend announcements had their effect, while investors remained concerned with geopolitical issues that resulted in a decline in trading activity during the quarter."

KAMCO Investment Company K.S.C (Public) is a premier investment company based in Kuwait. The Company is one of the leading investment firms in the Gulf region in terms of assets under management (AUM), and is regulated by the Capital Markets Authority.

Established in 1998 and listed on the Boursa Kuwait in 2003, KAMCO is a subsidiary of United Gulf Bank (UGB).



Faisal Sarkhou

Thomson Reuters to move forex trading to Dublin due to Brexit

LONDON: Thomson Reuters Corp said yesterday it would transfer its \$300 billion-a-day foreign exchange derivatives trading business to Dublin from London ahead of Britain's departure from the European Union next year. Major electronic bond and forex trading platforms have announced plans over the past year to shift their trading businesses out of London ahead of Brexit in March 2019, with most of Thomson Reuters' rivals opting for Amsterdam. Thomson Reuters has applied to the Irish central bank to move its foreign exchange Multilateral Trading Facility (MTF) to Dublin so that it can continue to sell into the EU's single market, the company said in a statement. It intends to transfer all "existing client relationships of the Thomson Reuters MTF and Dealing, as well as Fixed Income Callouts and Auctions, from RTSL to our new Irish legal entity ahead of the Brexit date."

Neill Penney, the company's co-head of trading, said there were no plans to move staff from London but that some new personnel would be hired in Dublin. He said Thomson Reuters had opted for Dublin over Amsterdam

because it was the most cost-effective, would "minimize disruption for clients" and because Dublin's growing role as a center for financial technology and research would "open a number of doors" should the company want to expand. "It doesn't matter for our customers which European city we are in ... From a technology front, the technology is remaining where it is, which is in London and New York," he said. All spot forex trading, where its volumes top \$100 billion a day, would remain in London, as would its post-trade services. Thomson Reuters runs one of the world's largest trading platforms in the \$5 trillion-a-day global foreign exchange market.

Even if only the legal entity, the departure of any part of a currencies trading business will be a blow to London. Foreign exchange trading remains the crown jewel of the city's financial services industry with volumes traded in the city far surpassing its nearest rival.

Big banks and trading platforms compete on speed when trading forex and invest heavily in cutting edge technology in London. While trading platforms - or even some of the dealers themselves - head elsewhere after Brexit most of the hardware is likely to remain in London because of the high-speed sub-Atlantic cables linking it to New York. Bloomberg, MarketAxess and Nex Group have chosen Amsterdam as their EU hub for their trading units, media have reported. Bonds platform Tradeweb, in which Thomson Reuters has a stake, also announced plans to move to Amsterdam, a city that hosts many of the fast-moving algorithmic trading businesses active in FX and fixed income markets. —Reuters

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT -INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Global growth outlook positive despite softer data in US, Europe

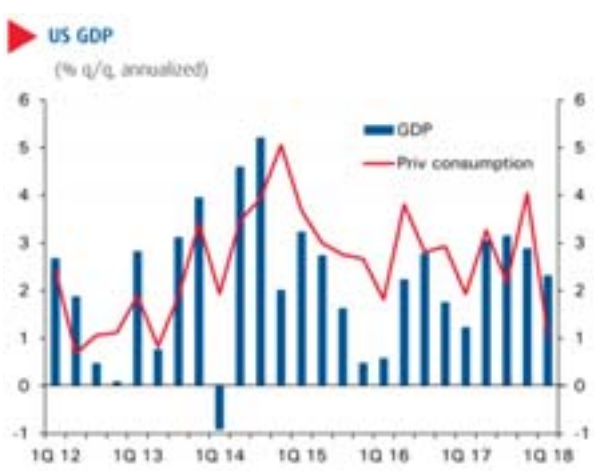
Oil prices hit \$75 on buoyant global demand, supply cuts

KUWAIT: The global economy remains in decent shape, but recent data suggests that growth in both the US and Europe has moderated from earlier highs. An easing in US-China trade tensions helped major equity markets stabilize and recover in April after sharp falls in February and March, though the stances of both sides appear to have hardened since. Recent turmoil in Argentina has raised concerns about vulnerabilities in emerging markets amid tighter monetary policy and a strong US dollar, though many seem better placed to weather shocks than in previous decades.

In the US, the flow of recent economic data has remained positive, but generally points to an easing in activity from the very robust levels of late last year. GDP growth in 1Q18 slipped to an annualized pace of 2.3 percent in 1Q18 from 2.9 percent in 4Q17 – largely due weaker growth of 1.1 percent in the consumer sector versus Q4’s breakneck 4.0 percent. But the dip may have been affected by seasonal factors, and expectations remain that growth will recover in 2Q18 against a backdrop of a tight labor market and as the impact of recent tax cuts begins to be felt more fully.

Survey evidence meanwhile suggests that business activity may have peaked, with the ISM manufacturing and non-manufacturing headline indices pulling back to a still-solid 57 in April from around 60 in February. The surveys reveal increasing pressure on capacity and that businesses are becoming more concerned about the impact of recent tariffs on activity and costs.

There are also indications that amid strong growth and capacity concerns, inflationary pressures are gradually building. Core personal consumption expenditures (“PCE”) price inflation – the most closely watched inflation measure – jumped to 1.9 percent y/y in March from 1.6 percent in February and just short of the Federal Reserve’s 2 percent target. For now, wage growth remains subdued. But with job growth still strong (non-farm payrolls rose 200,000 per month on average in



January-April) and unemployment falling to a 17-year low of 3.9 percent in April, expectations are that it will pick up this year.

The combination of still-strong growth and rising inflationary pressures should encourage the Fed to continue the normalization of monetary policy, though it left interest rates on hold at 1.50-1.75 percent at its May meeting. While analysts are divided over whether there will be two or three or further rate hikes this year (the next probably in June), the Fed’s latest statement downplayed the recent slowdown in activity, supporting the more hawkish interest rate outlook. The bullish climate helped push the yield on US 10-year treasuries – a key global benchmark bond – briefly above 3 percent in late April for the first time since 2014.

There is mounting evidence that growth in the Eurozone – while still decent – is losing momentum after outperforming last year. GDP rose by a disappointing 0.4 percent q/q in 1Q18 versus 0.7 percent in 4Q17, with the annual rate dipping to 2.5 percent from 2.8 percent. Some of the slowdown may be



linked to temporary factors including strikes and poor weather, but soft April PMIs suggest that weakness continued into Q2. The strong euro (still up 9 percent y/y versus the US dollar in early May) and global trade tensions may be exerting a drag on the region’s key export sector.

Continued weakness in eurozone inflation is also a concern, with the headline measure declining to just 1.2 percent y/y in April from 1.3 percent in March and well below the European Central Bank’s target of “close to” 2 percent. The ECB confirmed in late April that it would continue its €30 billion per month stimulus program until at least September, but may provide updated forward guidance in June.

BoJ alters inflation goal

In a surprise move, the Japanese central bank abandoned its 2 percent inflation target date of 2020 in a sign that it expects the battle to boost prices to be a long one. The central bank had already pushed back its 2 percent target date six times since 2013, and the

repeated shifts were impacting its credibility and market expectations for additional stimulus. Inflation slowed to just 1.1 percent y/y in March. Although the economic recovery remains broadly on track, GDP growth may have stumbled to near-zero in 1Q18, dragged down by weaker exports and temporary factors. Growth is expected to pick up in 2Q18 and reach around 1 percent in 2018.

Oil prices hit \$75

April saw Brent crude oil prices post a second successive month of gains, rising 7 percent to a near three-and-a-half year high of \$75/bbl. Prices continue to benefit from tighter market fundamentals, linked to a combination of buoyant global oil demand and supply cuts from OPEC and its Russian-led partners. But geopolitics have also played a role, including the news that President Trump will withdraw the US from the Iran nuclear agreement in May and ‘snap back’ energy sanctions, which could lead to the loss of up to 500 kb/d of Iranian exports. Meanwhile, US production continues to surge to new highs (10.6 mb/d in April) and poses the most serious challenge to OPEC’s production cut efforts.

The rise in oil prices has underpinned improving economic prospects in the Gulf. In its latest report on the MENA region, the IMF revised up its forecast for GCC non-oil growth in 2018 to 2.7 percent from 2.4 percent last October, citing the easing pace of fiscal consolidation as the main reason for the upgrade. However, recent data suggest the pace of improvement is uneven across the region.

The April PMI index in the UAE, for example, rose to a solid 55.1 from 54.8 in March helped by gains in the travel & tourism and export sectors. But in Saudi Arabia the index hit an historic low of 51.4 – close to the 50 ‘no change’ level – on still subdued domestic and foreign demand.

Turkish property firms to slash prices to revive market

ISTANBUL: A group of Turkish real estate firms said yesterday that home buyers would get a 20 percent discount on house prices and that down payments for mortgages would be reduced to 5 percent as part of a month-long drive to revive sagging property market. Forty-one companies, including housing companies and construction firms, will participate in the initiative, which comes as the Turkish government tries to address a recent sharp decline in house sales in the run-up to elections on June 24.

Last week two state-owned lenders lowered their mortgage rates after President Tayyip Erdogan urged local banks to help boost the real estate sector, one of the pillars of Turkey’s economy. The government also announced a 10 percent cut in value added tax for certain buyers.

The one-month initiative is expected to generate around 3 billion liras (\$678 million) worth of sales, Nazmi Durbakayim, chairman of the Istanbul Construction Companies Association (INDER) said in a news conference with the Real Estate Investment Companies Association (GYODER) and the Housing Developers Association (KONUTDER). Their joint measures will be in effect until June 15, the three organizations said. Turkey has around 2 million unsold houses, according to sector officials, a backlog worth three times average annual new housing sales. In March home sales fell 14 percent and mortgage sales declined 35 percent compared to a year earlier, official data showed. “The measures ... have started to bring a breath of fresh air to real estate,” Konutder head Ziya Altan Elmas said in a statement speaking in the name of all three associations. “We expect the housing sales to revive in the coming days and we will finish 2018 with record sales.”

Turkey’s lira slid to a record low and bond yields briefly touched their highest in at least eight years yesterday, after Erdogan said he plans to take greater control of the economy after elections next month. — Reuters

Australia - a global leader in production of Halal beef, lamb

KUWAIT: The halal marketplace is emerging as one of the fastest growing segments in the world food business today. The global halal food market is now worth an estimated \$667 million, representing close to 20 percent of the entire global food industry. It is anticipated to reach USD 2.55 trillion by 2024.

According to economists, the halal food industry will become a major market force in the near future based on four prevalent trends. Firstly, Islam is now the fastest growing religion in the world thus fueling a global demand for halal products. The annual growth in consumption of halal food is estimated at 16 percent. Muslims represent an estimated 23 percent of the global population or about 1.8 billion consumers with an average growth rate of 3 percent per annum. If this growth trend continues, Muslims are expected to make up about 26 percent of the world’s total projected population of 2.2 billion in 2030. Secondly, the increasing trend of consuming halal food products for ethical and safety reasons by non-Muslim consumers. Halal products are gaining wider recognition not only due to meeting sharia requirements, but also hygiene, sanitation and safety aspects. Third is the rising halal consumer power as a market force in tandem with the growth of the Muslim population and their rising disposable income. Finally, there is greater awareness among Muslims on the need and necessity to consume only halal food.

Middle East and GCC halal market

The Middle East imports about 90 percent of the beef and lamb it consumes. The total imports of these red meat and red meat products were estimated at \$5.1 billion. In tandem with the expected rise in the region’s population by 40 percent by 2030, the consumption of food in the Middle East may well reach 51 million tons by 2020 to record an

annual average growth of 4.6 percent. The GCC’s halal sector is now worth \$50 billion. The region’s annual food imports are expected to double from \$25.8 billion in 2010 to \$53 billion in 2020 with total imports of halal meat exceeding 1 million metric tons on an annual basis. The UAE alone has a Dh69 billion halal food industry.

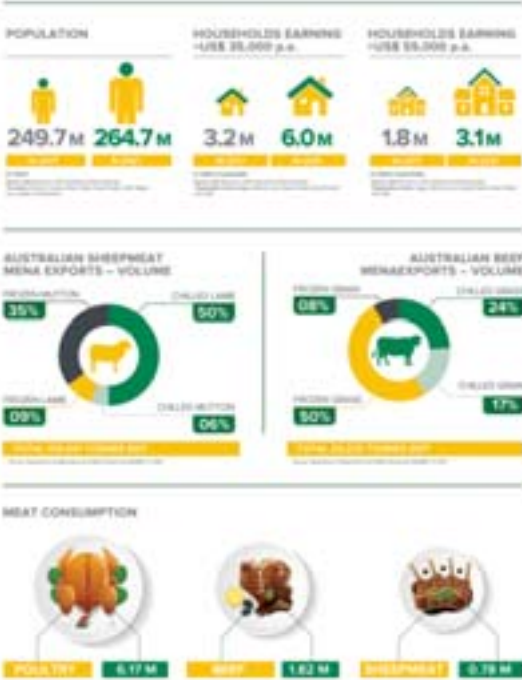
Halal integrity from farm to table

Australia, with a local Muslim population of about half a million, has become a world leader in the processing and production of halal meat and meat products. The continent is a long trusted supplier of Halal Beef and Lamb to over 100 countries in the world, including the Middle East.

Australia has one of the strictest Halal Programs in the world. The Australian Government Authorized Halal Program (AGAHIP) is undertaken in collaboration with the Australian government’s department of Agriculture & Water Resources, and Australian Islamic Organizations. Together they enforce the best practices of production standards, which have contributed to the worldwide recognition that Australia’s Halal program is amongst the most rigorously enforced Halal system in the world.

The country has invested millions of dollars in research and development in meat science and understands that healthy, well fed and stress free livestock produce the best quality meat for all consumers to enjoy. One of the important Halal requirements is that animals are treated properly their entire life and that they have easy access to food and water and are free to roam. Australia, with its natural environment and world’s highest animal welfare standards, easily meets these requirements. Additionally, all processing facilities in Australia employ only registered and trained Muslim slaughtermen. All slaughtermen are practicing Islam and comply with their religious slaughter training. They also comply with personal hygiene, operational sanitation and animal welfare requirements. Slaughter is carried out by sharp knives in accordance with sharia principles. The Halal systems and production facilities are regularly audited by approved Islamic organizations, internal quality assurance systems, Australian government departments and importing country representatives. The Australian Halal mark is a stamp of integrity and assurance underpinned by the Australian gov-

SNAPSHOT OF MEAT CONSUMPTION MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA



ernment. The Halal mark also assures consumers that the product has been certified as Halal by a recognized Islamic organization. This is why the integrity of the Australian Halal system is recognized and appreciated worldwide including all of the GCC countries. Such integrity of the Australian meat processing systems ensures a cycle of trust, from farm to plate, which has allowed Australia to remain a consistent and reliable supplier of lamb and beef to the Middle East.

Master Chef Tarek Ibrahim, the first master chef from the Middle East, in summing up his opinion about Australian halal meat, states, “You can confidently enjoy your food knowing that that when you buy Australian Halal Beef and Lamb, you are getting clean, safe and 100 percent guaranteed halal meat!”

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 Franc	305.900
Bahrain Dinar	803.635
UAE Dirhams	82.680
Qatari Riyals	83.910
Saudi Riyals	81.480
Tunisian Dinar	427.500
Jordanian Dinar	17.133
Egyptian Pound	1.918
Sri Lankan Rupees	4.496
Indian Rupees	2.611
Pakistani Rupees	3.619
Bangladesh Taka	5.817
Philippines Peso	17.985
Cyprus pound	

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.403834	0.411334
Czech Korune	0.006103	0.015403
Danish Krone	0.044279	0.049279
Euro	0.354657	0.362157
Georgian Lari	0.122993	0.122993
Hungarian	0.001049	0.001239
Romanian Krone	0.033535	0.038735
Norwegian Lcu	0.060891	0.077741
Russian ruble	0.004871	0.004871
Slovakia	0.009007	0.019007
Swedish Krona	0.030879	0.035879
Swiss Franc	0.295338	0.306338
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.218667	0.230667
New Zealand Dollar	0.202113	0.211613
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.230446	0.239446
US Dollars	0.298300	0.302700
US Dollars Mint	0.298800	0.302700

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003006	0.003787
Chinese Yuan	0.046162	0.049662
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036433	0.039183
Indian Rupee	0.003858	0.004585
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002666	0.002846
Korean Won	0.000271	0.000286
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072866	0.078866
Nepalese Rupee	0.002727	0.003067
Pakistan Rupee	0.001953	0.002723
Philippine Peso	0.005838	0.005938
Singapore Dollar	0.220646	0.230646
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001617	0.002197
Taiwan	0.010000	0.010180
Thai Baht	0.009141	0.009691
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.795341	0.803841
Egyptian Pound	0.014563	0.020281
Iranian Rial	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000203	0.000263
Jordanian Dinar	0.421906	0.430906
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000149	0.000249
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021154	0.045154
Omani Riyal	0.779136	0.784816
Qatar Riyal	0.078772	0.083712
Saudi Riyal	0.079553	0.080853
Syrian Pound	0.001281	0.001501
Tunisian Dinar	0.117156	0.125146
Turkish Lira	0.065022	0.075322
UAE Dirhams	0.080907	0.082607
Yemeni Riyal	0.000983	0.001083

As Venezuelans suffer, Maduro buys foreign oil to subsidize Cuba

Oil shipments underscore Venezuela’s increasing global isolation

HOUSTON: Venezuela’s state-run oil firm PDVSA has bought nearly \$440 million worth of foreign crude and shipped it directly to Cuba on friendly credit terms – and often at a loss, according to internal company documents reviewed by Reuters.

The shipments are the first documented instances of the OPEC nation buying crude to supply regional allies instead of selling them oil from its own vast reserves. Venezuela made the discounted deliveries, which have not been previously reported, despite its dire need for foreign currency to bolster its collapsing economy and to import food and medicine amid widespread shortages.

The open-market oil purchases to subsidize one of Venezuela’s few remaining allies underscores its increasing global isolation and the disintegration of its energy sector under socialist President Nicolas Maduro. The purchases came as Venezuela’s crude production hit a 33-year low in the first quarter – down 28 percent in 12 months. Its refineries are operating at a third of capacity, and its workers are resigning by the thousands.

PDVSA bought the crude for up to \$12 per barrel more than it priced the same oil when it shipped to Cuba, according to prices on internal documents reviewed by Reuters. But Cuba may never pay cash for the cargoes because Venezuela has long accepted goods and services from Cuba in return for oil under a pact signed in 2000 by late presidents Hugo Chavez and Fidel Castro.

PDVSA, the Venezuela government and the Cuba government did not respond to requests for comment. Venezuela’s government has previously said it only imports oil to blend with its own tar-like crude to improve quality and create an exportable product, or to feed its refinery in Curacao. But hundreds of PDSVA documents examined by Reuters detailing imports and exports, dated from January 2017 to May of this year, show the company is now buying crude at market prices to deliver to allies – in shipments that never pass through Venezuela.

The subsidized deliveries are aimed at maintaining political support from Cuba, one of a dwindling group of Venezuela allies, according to diplomats, politicians



Falling output leaves country dependent on fuel imports

and PDVSA executives.

“Maduro is giving away everything he can because these countries’ backing, especially from Cuba, is all the political support he has left,” said a former top Venezuelan government official who declined to be identified.

Caracas has come under increasing international pressure as the United States, the European Union and Canada have sanctioned Venezuela for what they see as Maduro’s attempts to cement a dictatorship. As Venezuela spends on oil imports, it has imported less of everything else its citizens desperately need. Venezuela’s spending on non-oil imports plunged from nearly \$46 billion in 2011 to \$6 billion in 2017, according to Venezuela Central Bank data and Ecoanalitica, a Caracas-based economic research organization.

The oil PDVSA procured for Cuba was Russian Urals crude, the documents show, a variety well-suited for Cuban refineries constructed from Soviet-era equipment.

PDVSA bought the crude from Chinese, Russian and Swiss firms – not for cash, but a pledge that PDVSA would deliver other oil shipments later, the documents show.

That adds to Venezuela’s already towering debts of oil to state-owned firms in Russia and China, which together have extended Venezuela’s government more than \$60 billion in oil-for-loan deals that have propped up its budget amid declining exports and lower oil prices.

“It’s nonsense to import oil to keep subsidized exports flowing,” said Ecoanalitica President Asdrubal Oliveros.

Petro-Diplomacy

Venezuela’s socialist government has long used oil for domestic and international political ends, subsidizing goods and services at home and currying favor across the region with oil deliveries on generous terms. Venezuela’s oil supply arrangements have helped soften international political censure of Maduro’s government. The Organization of American States (OAS), which includes most Western Hemisphere nations, last year took up a motion seeking to pressure Venezuela to hold free elections, liberate political prisoners and declare a



CARACAS: General view of the Carapita slum in Caracas. From the poor to the rich, all social classes have been hit by the economic crisis in Venezuela. — AFP

humanitarian crisis.

The effort was defeated when 12 countries that have received regular oil shipments from Venezuela in recent years – about a third of the OAS membership – opposed it or refused to vote. Eventually, the OAS passed a watered-down motion urging free and fair elections.

Venezuela has avoided formal OAS condemnation “thanks to the support of the bloc of Caribbean nations that have benefited from its subsidized oil and development programs for years,” said Michael Fitzpatrick, deputy assistant secretary in the US State Department’s Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, said on April 30 during a talk at the Atlantic Council, a foreign policy think tank in Washington.

Most of those countries are members of Venezuela’s Petrocaribe trade pact, launched in 2005, which has granted up to 16 Caribbean and Central American

states with oil supplies on favorable terms.

OAS President Luis Almagro declined to comment through press office representative Monica Reyes.

El Salvador’s Economy Minister, Luz Estrella Rodriguez, said Petrocaribe and other pacts promoted by Venezuela had played an important role in her country’s development. “Our country is very grateful,” she said. “The government of El Salvador, of course, is a friend and an ally of the Venezuelan government.”

El Salvador refused to vote last year on the OAS motion to condemn Venezuela.

Venezuela also supplied fuel last year to Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Dominica, the documents show. In total, members of oil trade pacts with Venezuela last year received at least 103,000 bpd of crude and refined products from PDVSA, the documents show, or about 6 percent of Venezuela’s exports. — Reuters

NREC announces KD 4 million net profit for Q1 2018

KUWAIT: National Real Estate Company (NREC), a leading regional asset manager and developer headquartered in Kuwait with \$2 billion in projects under development in the UAE, Egypt and other markets, yesterday announced its financial results for the first quarter of 2018. The Company recorded an operating revenue of KD 5.9 million, an EBITDA of KD 5.5 million and a net profit of KD4 million, up 6.7 percent from Q1 2017.

Q1 2018 Financial Highlights:

Operating Revenue: KD5.9 million, +15.2 percent from Q1 2017

Gross Profit: KD2.7 million, -2.5 percent from Q1 2017

EBITDA: KD5.5 million, +26.3 percent from Q1 2017

Net Profit: KD4.0 million, +6.7 percent from Q1 2017

Basic EPS (fils): 4.31 fils

NREC Vice Chairman & CEO, Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa said, “We continue to report healthy results from our core operations mainly from our rental business in Kuwait and Jordan, along with solid sales in Egypt which contributed to the favorable performance to date. In Libya we are seeing occupancy rates increase month on month mainly due to the improved security conditions. We have continued to achieve major milestones in our two largest projects, Grand Heights in Egypt and Reem Mall in UAE. Both projects are progressing well and in line with expectations. In the first period of 2018 we have executed the first part of our strategy by reducing debt from KD 149.5 million to KD 131.3 million which will be reflected during the next period. Looking forward for the remaining period of 2018, NREC will continue to focus on asset repositioning and debt reduction aiming towards our stated objective of reducing leverage to below KD 100 million.

Q1 2018 Business Highlights:

The development of Reem Mall in UAE is progressing well and in line with management expectations.

At the Grand Heights residential community in Egypt, NREC has sold 1,011 units and plots, of which 502 were delivered as of March 31 2018,



Faisal Jamil Sultan Al-Essa

with a total cumulative sales value (delivered and to be delivered) of EGP 3.49 billion.

NREC’s JV in Libya, Palm City Residences closed another positive quarter, reporting operating profits of 1.9 million Euro and Net Profit of 1.5 million Euro, with occupancy rate rising from 24 percent to 30 percent during the quarter. The project continues to be the best choice for multinational companies and government agencies participating in the recovery of Libya.

Q1 2018 balance-sheet highlights:

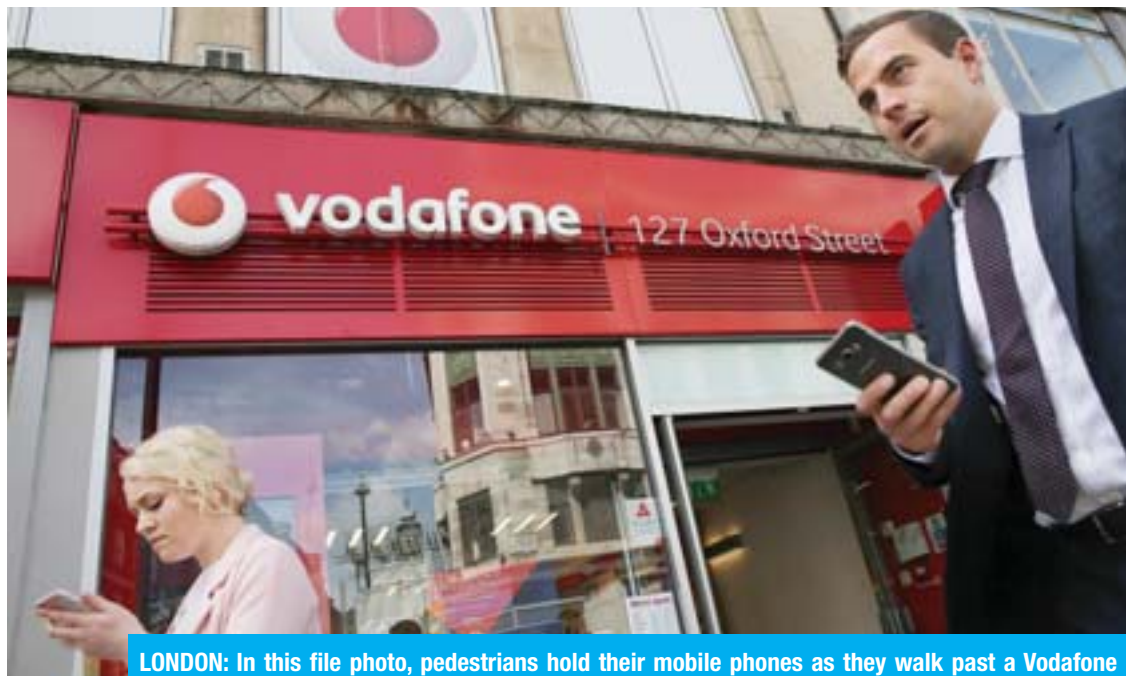
As of March 31, 2018, total assets stood at KD 501.6 million, and shareholder’s equity at KD 218.7 million. NREC’s capital and shareholder base is expected to further strengthen during the year upon conversion of KD 31 million Convertible Loan from Agility Logistics Company. The conversion process is currently in progress. Bank dues as of March 31, 2018 stood at KD 149.5 million.

Vodafone returns to profit, announces CEO departure

LONDON: British telecoms giant Vodafone yesterday announced a return to annual profit, as it revealed that long-serving chief executive Vittorio Colao will step down later this year.

Group Chief Financial Officer Nick Read will succeed Colao from October, with the announcement coming less than a week after Vodafone unveiled a deal to turn it into Europe’s largest cable and broadband operator by buying assets from US peer Liberty Global. “While the succession news may have caught the markets off-guard, it appears to be an orderly change within the group,” Accendo Markets analyst Artjom Hatsaturjants said as Vodafone’s share price dropped 2.6 percent in London morning deals. Vodafone yesterday posted net profit of 2.4 billion euros (\$2.9 billion) in the 12 months to the end of March, compared with a loss after tax of 6.3 billion euros in 2016/17, the group said in a statement.

A slight drop in revenue to 46.57 billion euros was offset by lower costs compared with one year earlier. The turnaround pointed to a “year of significant operational and strategic achievement and strong financial performance”, said Colao. “Our sustained investment in network quality supported



LONDON: In this file photo, pedestrians hold their mobile phones as they walk past a Vodafone store in central London. — AFP

robust commercial momentum,” he said.

Vodafone—the world’s second biggest mobile phone operator by subscribers after China Mobile—last week announced a deal worth 18.4 billion euros for some of Liberty’s European assets.

The deal will see Vodafone become the second biggest player in eurozone powerhouse Germany, while it will acquire Liberty operations also in the

Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania.

Vodafone said it was close to gaining regulatory approval for the planned merger of its Indian operations with Idea Cellular. By creating India’s largest telecoms operator, Vodafone is seeking to reverse its troubled fortunes in the country, where the company’s revenue slumped 18.7 percent during its last financial year. — AFP

Europe not using good economic growth to reform: IMF

BRUSSELS: European economic growth is strong, mainly thanks to domestic demand, but governments are not taking sufficient advantage of the good times to reduce their debt and implement reforms, the International Monetary Fund said in a forecast yesterday.

The IMF forecast that growth in advanced European economies, mainly the euro zone, would slow to 2.3 percent this year from 2.4 percent in 2017 and then decelerate to 2.0 percent in 2019. The European Commission forecasts the same growth slow-down. “Amid the good times, however, fiscal adjustment and structural reform efforts are flagging,” the IMF said.

“With economic prospects continuing to improve in the short term but medium-term prospects less bright, policymakers should seize the moment to rebuild room for fiscal manoeuvre and push forward with reforms to boost growth potential,” the IMF said. Despite the strong growth, some of the biggest eurozone economies like France, Italy or Spain have been slow to further reduce their budget deficits towards a balanced position while others, like Belgium, are increasing the shortfall.

“In many economies, policymakers should strive to bring fiscal deficits within range of balance over the next few years,” the IMF said. “This way, automatic stabilizers and fiscal stimulus can be deployed again, should downside risks materialize. Also, stabilizing and bringing down public debt would help economies better cope with the pressures from growing expenditures on pensions and health care,” it said.

The IMF also noted that the strong economic growth provided an opportunity for faster deepening of euro zone economic integration, primarily through the completion of the banking union, which already features a single supervisor for eurozone banks and a single resolution authority but still lacks a joint deposit guarantee scheme. With Britain, a major financial center, due to leave the European Union in March 2019, the EU should speed up the construction of a capital markets union to widen financing choices of small and medium-size firms, harmonize insolvency laws and protect cross-border investor rights, the IMF said.

The IMF also threw its weight behind the idea of creating a pool of money for the 19 countries that share the euro to help their economies against crises not of their own making.

The IMF called it the “central fiscal capacity (CFC)” and said it should work on the basis of loans, not permanent transfers. “The CFC could employ something known as a ‘usage premium’, through which a country pays a premium in good times based on transfers it got in bad times,” the IMF said. “Second, the CFC could place a cap on the amount countries must contribute to prevent some countries from becoming large net contributors. Finally, it could limit how much a country can receive, so that transfers do not substitute for necessary policy adjustment,” it said. — Reuters

Business

Infiniti Al-Babtain brings popular Infiniti QX70 Limited to Kuwait

Iconic crossover features unique design elements

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC), the authorized dealer of Infiniti vehicles in the State of Kuwait, is proud to announce that the all-new Infiniti QX70 Limited has arrived in its showroom in Kuwait. The specially equipped version of the iconic QX70 performance crossover, features unique design elements that are expected to be available at a later stage in other Infiniti models.

According to INFINITI, the Middle East is the only market globally where the new QX70 model is available due to its popularity with regional customers. The QX70 Limited model's exterior enhancements begin with a unique front fascia, LED daytime running lights replacing the standard QX70 fog lights. The design enhancements include body-color side air vents and the dark-finish outside mirror housings. Capping off the exterior are a rear hatch-mounted "Limited" badge and unique 21x9.5-inch multi-spoke premium paint-fin-

ished aluminum-alloy wheels mounted with 265/45R21 V-rated all-season tires.

Inside, the QX70 Limited features a special high-contrast graphite and stone-colored interior treatment. Among the transformative interior elements are a special open pore wood trim with aluminum flake trim on the console, deep pillow quilting on the center console and aluminum-trimmed pedals.

The seats themselves include high-contrast leather appointments with graphite outside sections and stone inserts. The seats include deep pillow quilting and stone color stitching and piping. The steering wheel and shifter boot also feature stone color stitching. Climate-controlled (heating and cooling) front seats are standard with the QX70 Limited.

Like all INFINITI QX70s, the new QX70 Limited will be powered by a 329-horsepower 3.7-liter V6 with VVEL (Variable Valve Event & Lift). The engine is matched with a 7-speed

automatic transmission featuring Adaptive Shift Control (ASC). Customers can now visit the showroom in Al-Rai to explore the distinct features of the Infiniti QX70 Limited.

Al-Babtain Group was founded in 1948, to present a model of honesty, integrity and total dedication, gaining a solid reputation in Kuwait and the Middle East area. Today, Al-Babtain Group has licensing rights for some of the world's leading brands stretching the globe from the USA to the Far East.

For more than 70 years, Al-Babtain Group has experienced continued success and a large measure of this success came from the Group's advanced flexible management style and long-term vision. These astounding results were achieved due to a versatile strategic formula focusing on growth amongst its sphere of activities; including automotive, technology, investment, information technology, industrial and Finance.



ABK working hours during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced yesterday its official working hours to serve its customers during the holy month of Ramadan, which will be from 10 am to 1.30 pm in all its branches across Kuwait. On the first day following Eid Al-Fitr holiday, the Bank will resume its regular working hours. ABK's customers will have full access to the Bank's online services at www.eahli.com and the Call Center will be available 24 hours a day and can be reached by calling a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli'.



On this occasion, ABK would like to extend its warmest wishes during this Holy Month to the Amir of the State of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah,

HH the Crown Prince of Kuwait, Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and to the Kuwaiti government and its people as well as all residents.

Alfa Romeo awaits Al Mulla Exchange online customers

KUWAIT: Al Mulla Exchange continues to wow customers with their amazing and different marketing promotion. Starting from the 13th of May 2018, customers using the online and App portals of Al Mulla Exchange stand a chance to win Alfa Romeo, a name synonymous for luxury and style.

Speaking about the promotion, R Shankar, General Manager of Al Mulla Exchange, "Al Mulla Exchange believes in providing the best for our customers. So when we thought about running a marketing promotion for our newly revamped online as well as the newly launched Remittance Application, we wanted to have something that will not only solicit pride but also a very positive vibe. The Alfa Romeo seemed to be the perfect fit for this. And of course we are getting a very enthusiastic response to the promotion. As the adage goes, more the number of transactions more the chances to win"

As one of the pioneers in remittance industry, Al Mulla Exchange set a new landmark in the remittance landmark by being the first in Kuwait to launch a Remittance Application last month.



R Shankar, General Manager of Al Mulla Exchange

Within a short span of time, the App has soared to be one of the most downloaded App on the Android and iOS platforms. The application which is very simple to use has been interlaced with a very interactive user interface as well as easy maneuverability. The online platform, www.almulaexchange.com, which was launched a couple of years back also went through a major revamp and is in sync with the App as well. The online platforms therefore boasts a very elegant look and feel with robust security

features. With this, customers will be able to transact even when they are travelling and anywhere across the globe.

Shankar added "Not only do we have a great online platform and App with the best features available globally, the exchange rates that are given here are unmatched. The customers are thus being provided an experience par excellence. The Alfa Romeo promotion will run from the 13th of May 2018 up until the 13th of August 2018.

Al Mulla Motors launches after sales campaign

KUWAIT: Al Mulla Motors, the official dealer of Mitsubishi and Fuso vehicles in Kuwait, has announced the launch of new after sales campaign "Free AC and Cooling system Inspection" to give their existing customers further peace of mind ahead of the summer heat.

Al Mulla Service centers across Kuwait are ready to receive their valuable customers for the free inspection. The latest promotion is applicable for 2016 model year and older vehicles, where the customers get the opportunity to purchase genuine spare parts, and installed by the certified technicians with a special discount of up to 20 percent discount on labor and 25 percent discount on parts. This is to ensure that customers of older models are able to continue buying genuine parts for better functionality and safety of their vehicles, in addition to helping avoid any AC breakdowns or engine over heating concerns during the hot summer months.

Salim S Kareem, Assistant General Manager of Al Mulla Service said: "The host of new campaign is our way of showing loyal Customers our support. We also understand the risk and



dangers of using fake parts on your vehicle and we are continually trying to warn our customers of these dangers, and incentivize them to go for original parts. "As we approach the hot summer months, we also ensure that our customers are ready and fully equipped for the heat, as it is essential to check all elements of the car to give them peace of mind and safety."

To avail this free inspection, customer can visit any Al Mulla service center located in Al Rai (MMC and FUSO), Jahara, Ahmadi and Fahaheel and the offer valid from 15th April to 30th May. Open from 7:30 am till 5:00 pm from Saturday till Thursday.

AUB branch timings during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) has announced its working hours during the holy month of Ramadan. All AUB branches will work in one shift from Sunday through to Thursday from 10 am to 1.30 pm throughout the holy month. The bank confirmed in a press release its readiness to welcome its valued clients during the holy month of Ramadan at its 38 branches across Kuwait and provide them with all the banking services they need. In addition, banking services are available through the Bank's ATM network, mobile and internet banking. Furthermore, for any enquiries, customers can contact the Bank by calling Hayakom or by accessing the Bank's website www.ahliunited.com.kw



On the occasion of the arrival of the Holy month of Ramadan, AUB wishes His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al Sabah, and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sincere wishes. The Bank further extends its Ramadan greetings to the government, citizens and residents of Kuwait.

Air France-KLM names interim leaders after CEO's quick exit

PARIS: The board of Air France-KLM named chief financial officer Frederic Gagey as interim CEO yesterday after Jean-Marc Janaillac quit in a bitter dispute over salaries in the group's French wing.

Former French minister Anne-Marie Couderc was named non-executive chairman at the French-Dutch group, which has been hit by months of strikes as unions seek a 5.1 percent pay rise at Air France this year.

Gagey, 61, will sit on a new management committee alongside Franck Ternier and Pieter Elbers, CEOs of the French and Dutch operations respectively, who will act as his deputies. But the board indicated that the temporary CEO will not have a mandate to find a way out of a pay dispute which management says has cost at least 300 million euros (\$356 million) due to strikes since February.

"Regarding the ongoing labor dispute at Air France... the Air France CEO does not have a new mandate to take decisions that would jeopardize the growth strategy approved by the Air France-KLM board of directors," a statement said. Janaillac had put his job on the line by calling a company-wide vote at Air France on whether to accept a proposed seven percent pay rise over four years. He announced his resignation on May 4 after staff rejected the pay deal, sending the group's shares nosediving. The board hailed Janaillac's



PARIS: Outgoing Air France-KLM's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jean-Marc Janaillac (left) and CFO Frederic Gagey attend the group's general meeting yesterday. — AFP

track record, saying he had produced strong results since 2016 which had enabled a "successful turnaround and growth", and expressed "deep regret" over the strikes. "These strikes will also have a negative impact on the group's financial results," the board said. French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire warned this month that "the survival of Air France is in the balance" as the strikes since February have repeatedly forced the airline to cancel around a quarter of flights a day. Air France-KLM reported a net loss of 269 million euros (\$322 million) for the first quarter, weighed down by the strikes. Unions have said the pay rises offered are too little after six years of salary freezes, but management warns that improving company finances are vulnerable to competition from the Gulf and low-cost European carriers.

The board said the interim management

structure would be in place "for the shortest-possible period" needed to appoint Janaillac's successor, without imposing a specific time limit. Couderc, a lawyer by training and an Air France board member since 2016, is a onetime protege of former French president Jacques Chirac who has spent her career between business and politics. The 58-year-old served as employment minister and then labour minister in the 1990s before going back to the private sector as assistant general manager at publishing house Hachette.

She then took charge of French media distribution firm Presstalis, where her experience of lengthy labor disputes may come in handy for the new job at Air France. Couderc launched a restructuring plan at Presstalis in 2012 which slashed the workforce in half, prompting repeated strikes which blocked the distribution of newspapers. — AFP

Introducing the new BEC App with money transfer

KUWAIT: Bahrain Exchange Company (BEC) is pleased to announce the launch of its new and improved BEC App available for download to BEC customers in Kuwait. The new app now includes the BEC online money transfer service (BEC Online) providing customers with easy access to fast and secure online money transfer to over 150 countries anytime, anywhere.

The BEC App also provides added convenience to BEC customers with all its additional features including a currency convertor, up to date exchange rates and fees, a favorite currencies management tool as well and much more. Commenting on the launch of this new app, Mathews Varughese, General Manager of BEC

said, "We are excited to launch our new app which will now offer online money transfer on smart phones. This is a big step in our journey of commitment to our customers to provide continuous innovation and improve their experience. BEC was the first Exchange company in Kuwait to launch an online web portal back in 2006" You can now download the new BEC app for free on the App Store for iOS or on Google Play for Android.

Bahrain Exchange Company (BEC) has been serving people for over 25 years, providing unparalleled money transfer and currency exchange services. It is a subsidiary of the BEC Group Holdings WLL, Bahrain, which is celebrating its centenary year in 2017. The company currently has over 40 branches across Kuwait and specializes in sending money around the globe safely and quickly, to over 40,000 locations in 30 countries, through its own money transfer product - EzRemit. Its global reach is extended to over 200 countries through its partnership with MoneyGram, an international remittance company.



Technology

New Dell Technologies Customer Solution Center launches in UAE

The new hub aims to foster innovation to new heights

DUBAI: Dell Technologies today launched its first Customer Solution Center demonstrating its unparalleled strength in enabling and shaping organizations across Middle East, Turkey and Africa (META) to lead the front-lines of innovation. Established in Dubai, the Customer Solution Center showcases the industry's most comprehensive portfolio of technologies, from the edge to the core to the cloud, and aims to help regional organizations collaborate, innovate and validate their efforts towards digitization.

“Hub that bolsters the position of the Middle East”



(L-R) Marius Haas, Aongus Hegarty and Mohammed Amin of Dell EMC

Designed as a state-of-the-art technology hub to drive business innovation, the Customer Solution Center was officially opened by Marius Haas, President and Chief Commercial Officer at Dell EMC, Aongus Hegarty, President, Europe, Middle East and Africa at Dell EMC and Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, Middle East, Turkey and Africa (META) at Dell EMC.

The Customer Solution Center is designed to serve as a state-of-the-art technology hub for the META region. It provides a trusted environment wherein world-class IT experts collaborate with customers to explore, test and prove end-to-end solutions and share best practices, that can help drive business outcomes and create a competitive advantage. In addition, the Customer Solution Center global network enables remote connectivity, which offers the ability to engage customers from any location. Similarly, the Customer Solution Center provides customers with easy access to the whole portfolio of Dell Technologies' solutions and ensures customers receive appropriate expertise and resources at every level to achieve their business objectives.

Connected cities

Following the opening ceremony, experts engaged partners and customers with technical briefings, architectural design sessions and Proof of Concepts. These sessions aimed to offer partners and customers a clear path of integration with Dell Technologies' solutions and mission-critical application projects which span across connected cities use cases, Internet of Things (IoT), machine learning, Pivotal Cloud Foundry, multi cloud and software-defined data centers, advanced threat detection and automated response security solutions.

With key partners and customers in attendance, the Dell EMC leadership also hosted a round table to highlight an array of solutions in three key areas crucial to

organizations' digital transformation strategies: IT Transformation, Workforce Transformation, and Security Transformation.

According to recent research by Dell EMC designed to provide insight into the state of IT Transformation, 81% of respondents agree that if they do not embrace IT Transformation, their organization will no longer be competitive in their markets. In addition, 88% of respondents say that their organization is under pressure to deliver new products and services at an increasing rate. Outlining the business benefits and positive impact of digital transformation, the survey stated that transformed organizations are 2.5x more likely to believe they are in a strong position to compete and succeed in their markets over the next few years.

In line with this, the Customer Solution Center is developed to play a critical role in supporting the UAE's strategy of developing a knowledge-based economy in

line with Vision 2021. In addition, it helps the META region to make a quantum leap in using technology solutions to resolve pressing business issues.

Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, Middle East, Turkey and Africa at Dell EMC said "It is absolutely critical that companies leverage the latest technologies to navigate the fourth industrial revolution. With this in mind, the Dell Technologies Customer Solution Centre is designed to serve as a thriving technology hub that bolsters the position of the Middle East, Turkey and Africa region at the forefront of transformation. Through the Customer Solution Center, our central goal is to share our vision of technology and provide organizations in the META region with holistic, dynamic and collaborative tools and resources necessary to power their digital future and ultimately, play a defining role in building an innovation-led economy that drives business success and human progress."

China tech giants bet on untangling Indonesia e-commerce

JAKARTA: In a warehouse on the outskirts of Indonesia's capital, supervisors at e-commerce company Lazada use bikes or electric scooters to zip around a floor the size of four soccer fields, where up to 3,000 staff pack and dispatch goods around the clock. The warehouse is one of five that Lazada has opened across Indonesia to cut costs and expand its reach in an archipelago whose 17,000 islands are sprinkled across an area bigger than the European Union.

Chinese tech firms, including Lazada's top investor, Alibaba Group Holding, have poured at least \$6 billion into nearly every aspect of Indonesian e-commerce. Lazada uses Alibaba's inventory management systems and has tied up with ride-hailing companies, often using their motorbikes to deliver goods in a country with creaking infrastructure and traffic-clogged cities.



BEIJING: This file picture taken on May 3, 2018 shows a customer looking at a Xiaomi smartphone in a shop. — AFP

The payoff could be huge. It is a market forecast to grow from about \$7 billion last year to \$63 billion by 2027, according to Morgan Stanley. "Indonesia, both in terms of the customers and behaviour, is a very unique challenge and we need to adapt," Florian Holm, co-chief executive at Lazada Indonesia, told Reuters.

Lazada and Tokopedia, in which Alibaba is also an investor, dominate Indonesia in customer traffic, with more than 117 million monthly website visits each, according to data from e-commerce aggregator iPrice. Alibaba doubled its investment in loss-making Lazada to \$4 billion in April, underscoring its global ambition to secure a bigger share of the e-commerce market.

Between the investment and the rewards, however, lie enormous complexities. The World Bank has said logistical costs swallow up around a quarter of Indonesia's gross domestic product, citing bottlenecks in supply chains, long dwelling times in ports and lengthy trade clearances. Lazada has opened warehouses in places like Balikpapan, on the coast of Borneo, to avoid hauling everything from Jakarta. Holm said that had in some cases reduced shipping costs by 90 percent. Competitive pressure is growing. Another Chinese heavyweight, JD.com, arrived in Indonesia in 2016. And the US giant Amazon, which opened a warehouse in

Singapore last year, may be prepared to dip a toe into the Indonesian market soon.

Chinese influence

Indonesia's e-commerce sales are set to rise from 3 percent of retail activity now to 19 percent by 2027, Morgan Stanley estimates. The same report said there were 159 million smartphones in Indonesia at the end of 2016, a number that could rise to 275 million by 2021. Indonesia's young population and room for improvement in transportation and communications add to the prospects for growth, the bank said.

That has attracted other Chinese companies. Tencent Holdings, which owns regional e-commerce player SEA, has entered the fray. Tencent and JD.com have stakes in Indonesia's ride-hailing firm Go-Jek, while JD.com has invested in online travel company Traveloka. But Usman Akhtar, a partner at Bain & Co in Jakarta, said Indonesian companies such as Blibli, backed by a unit of the Djarum group, remain a force.

"I would not characterize Indonesia as turning into a replica of China's e-commerce market, at least not yet," said Akhtar, referring to how JD.com and Alibaba dominate in China. Kusumo Martanto, who heads Blibli, told Reuters the company had seven warehouses in Indonesia with seven more planned, and said it was important for local e-commerce companies to compete against Chinese players.

Alibaba founder Jack Ma is on an Indonesian government steering committee for e-commerce, advising on areas such as tax, cyber security and human resources. Indonesia's communications minister, Rudiantara, said there was no conflict of interest in Ma's role, describing him as a "guru" who could help sell the country's potential. But some policies seem to be turning toward Ma's home turf.

Indonesia, which is trying to tackle a shortage of talent in the digital sector, dropped sponsorships for 20 students to study in places like Australia and the United States. Instead, 10 students will go to India and 10 to China to study this year "because the future of the digital economy is in China and India," said the minister, who uses one name.

Eying Amazon

Caterine, a 30-year-old housewife who lives west of Jakarta, used to shop in conventional stores once a week, but after her baby was born six months ago, she has been shopping online two to three times a week for convenience. "I prefer online shopping because it is quick. I can just click and click and the goods will arrive," she said, adding she mostly used Shopee and Tokopedia for goods such as diapers and clothing.

Morgan Stanley said delivery times of all types across Indonesia are down to about 3 days from 10 days, while deliveries in big cities can take 24 hours or less. While in urban areas delivery times have greatly improved, other parts of Indonesia's e-commerce supply chain are still inefficient, said Willson Cuaca, co-founder of East Ventures, a tech investment fund.

"To send goods from point A to B, the logistics company needs at least two modes of transport," he said, referring to the complications of operating across so many islands. Amazon, by contrast, prefers to control its own supply chains from start to finish. But entering a market like Indonesia could require it to revisit that strategy. Amazon Singapore did not respond to a request for comment on whether it had plans for Indonesia.

Much of the US giant's international focus has been on developing its business in India, even though some view its entry into Singapore last year as a stepping stone for expansion in the region. "At this moment, I believe it is trying to test the market, by selling products through third-party sellers," said Daniel Tumiwa of the Indonesian e-commerce Association. Zhang Li, who heads JD.com's Indonesian joint venture with Provident Capital JD.ID, was not overly concerned about competition from the likes of Amazon. "E-commerce is a global and borderless business, so we have to prepare and do continuous improvement to make our customers happy," Zhang said. — Reuters



MOUNTAIN VIEW: An attendee works on a laptop before the start of the Google I/O 2018 Conference at Shoreline Amphitheater. — AFP

Australia probes claim Google harvests data while consumers pay

SYDNEY: Google is under investigation in Australia following claims that it collects data from millions of Android smartphones users, who unwittingly pay their telecom service providers for gigabytes consumed during the harvesting, regulators said yesterday. Responding to the latest privacy concerns surrounding Google, a spokesman for the US based search engine operator said the company has users' permission to collect data.

The Australian investigations stem from allegations made by Oracle Corp in a report provided as part of an Australian review into the impact that Google, owned by Alphabet Inc, and Facebook have on the advertising market. Both the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and the country's Privacy Commissioner said they were reviewing the report's findings.

"The ACCC met with Oracle and is considering information it has provided about Google services," said Geesche Jacobsen, a spokeswoman for the competition regulator. "We are exploring how much consumers know about the use of location data and are working closely with the Privacy Commissioner."

Oracle, according to The Australian newspaper, said Alphabet receives detailed information about people's internet searches and user locations if they have a phone that carries Android - the mobile operating system developed by Google. Transferring that information to Google means using up gigabytes of data that consumers have paid for under data packages purchased from local telecom service providers, according to the Oracle report.

Reuters was unable to immediately verify the content of the Oracle report. Data privacy advocates said many consumers are unlikely to understand what they agreed to when signing up to use a smartphone. Industry analysts estimate there are more than 10 million Android users in Australia. "Some mobile plans may only include a few gigabytes of data so if Google is harvesting a gigabyte of data, it is a very real cost to consumers," said David Vaile, chairman of the industry group, the Australian Privacy Foundation.

Australian telecommunications companies said they were seeking confirmation from Google on the allegations. "We are aware of the reports in the media and we have asked Google to advise whether they are accurate," a spokesman for Australia's biggest telecom company Telstra said. The investigations will raise more questions about the way big technology companies collect and use people's data online. Earlier this year, social media giant Facebook Inc apologized after web marketing firm Cambridge Analytica was accused of obtaining users' data without permission for the 2016 election campaign of United States President Donald Trump. Oracle has its own long-running dispute with Google. — Reuters

Musk: Reorganization is underway at Tesla

WASHINGTON: Tesla Inc chief Elon Musk told employees on Monday the company was undergoing a "thorough reorganization" as it contends with production problems, senior staff departures and recent crashes involving its electric cars. In his email to staff, Musk said Tesla was "flattening the management structure to improve communication," combining functions and trimming activities "not vital to the success of our mission" in the reorganization.

The company confirmed the contents of the email, which was first reported on by the Wall Street Journal. Tesla is at a critical juncture as it tries to fix an inauspicious launch of the Model 3 sedan, a mid-market car crucial to its success and future profitability that has been plagued by early production problems. Tesla shares fell 3 percent to close at \$291.97 on Monday. Amid the manufacturing problems, senior Tesla executives have departed or cut back work. Waymo, Alphabet Inc's self-driving unit, said on Sunday that Matthew Schwall had joined from Tesla, where he was its main technical contact with US safety investigators.

Blistering barnacles

Last week, Tesla said Doug Field, senior vice president of engineering, was taking time off to recharge. The company is developing multiple new vehicles, including a semi truck, and has registered a new car firm in Shanghai in a likely step toward production in China. On a May 2 earnings call, Musk said Tesla would conduct "a reorganization restructuring" this month, without providing more details. He added that he would reduce the number of third-party contracting companies engaged by Tesla, equating them with "barnacles" needing to be scrubbed off.

Tesla will still rapidly hire people to fill critical positions "to support the Model 3 production ramp and future product development," Musk said in Monday's email. Tesla faces a slew of other issues, from increased skepticism over its finances to safety probes by regulators. Investors gave a rare rebuke to Musk after he cut off financial analysts on the earnings call, sending shares down 5 percent despite promises that Model 3 production was on track. The company changed the terms of its borrowing agreement with banks to allow it to pledge its Fremont, California, auto plant as collateral.

A US traffic safety regulator on May 2 contradicted Tesla's claim that the agency had found that its Autopilot technology significantly reduced crashes. Autopilot, a form of advanced cruise control, handles some driving tasks and warns those behind the wheel they are always responsible for the vehicle's safe operation, Tesla has said. In a Twitter post on Monday, Musk denied a Wall Street Journal report that Tesla had rejected a system that would have tracked driver eye movement when using Autopilot for cost reasons.

Storm ahead?

"This is false," Musk wrote. "Eyetracking rejected for being ineffective, not for cost. WSJ fails to mention that Tesla is safest car on road, which would make article ridiculous. Approx 4X better than avg," Musk said. He said Tesla's record of a fatality every 320 million miles compared with last year's national average of 86 million miles, per safety regulators. Tesla's record of miles driven could not be confirmed by Reuters. In another Twitter message on Monday, Musk said the "probability of fatality is much lower in a Tesla," saying Tesla would begin reporting safety numbers beginning in the second quarter. —Reuters

Ghana fights malarial chemical resistance with a new spray

216 million cases of malaria in 91 countries across the world

OBUASI: Bismark Owusu moves food and bowls from a bedroom and covers clothes and furniture with a large sheet before mixing a mosquito-killing chemical with water in his spray pack. He then puts on head-to-toe safety gear, straps the pack to his back and methodically sprays the walls, windows and corners of the room.

Owusu's visit to Domeabra, a small community in the Obuasi area of the Ashanti region in central Ghana, is his latest stop in the country's fight against malaria. The death of two of his friends from the disease spurs him on. "Why wouldn't I help if others are dying? I am here today helping to eradicate this deadly malaria," he said. Malaria, which is spread to people through the bites of infected female mosquitoes, is one of the world's deadliest diseases.

According to the World Health Organization, there were 216 million cases of malaria in 91 countries across the world in 2016 and 445,000 deaths. Most of those cases and deaths — about 90 percent—were in sub-Saharan Africa. In Ghana, which is home to some 28 million people, there were 4.8 million cases and 599 deaths last year, a marked drop from the 2,200 who died in 2011. But with global concern that the fight against malaria has reached a plateau, African governments and development agencies are looking at new ways to step up the fight.

That includes preventative measures such as distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito

nets and developing a vaccine against the disease but also indoor spraying. Ghana is the first on the continent to introduce the large-scale use of a new "third generation insecticide" against mosquitoes, which have developed a resistance to other chemicals.

'Intelligent insects'

As Ghana's rainy season approaches, when malaria cases increase, Owusu and his colleagues at the non-profit organisation AGALMal are working flat out. The organisation grew out of a social initiative by global mining firm AngloGold Ashanti and has a laboratory in the grounds of an old mining site in Obuasi. There, tiny mosquito pupae dart around in water in a white plastic container in a lab.

Soon they will transform into mosquitoes and be studied by scientists. Technologist Paul Osei-Bonsu said chemical resistance was a major issue for the spraying program. If a population of mosquitoes is sprayed and just one survives and reproduces, the resistance will be passed on, he explained. "If you use the same spray over time you will have 90 percent of the population not dying," he added.

Program director Samuel Asiedu says mosquitoes are "intelligent insects", so the new chemical-SumiShield 50WG—should be more effective when rotated with others. In 2006, after the first two years of the indoor spraying, the hospital in Obuasi saw a 75-percent decrease in malaria cases. That led to the pro-

gram being expanded with additional support from global health initiative Unitaaid and the Global Fund partnership. Currently, the indoor spraying program targets the homes of 1.2 million people. "We are anticipating other chemicals to come on board by the end of the year so we can be rotating the use of chemicals to prevent resistance development," said Asiedu. Unitaaid project director David McGuire said he hoped the scheme "will convince donors and national governments to increase their investment in this life-saving intervention".

'Peace of mind'

Koziah Malm, who manages the national malaria control programme at the Ghana Health Service, says the new WHO-approved spray is considered safe and has been tested internationally and locally. It will be used in Obuasi and Ghana's far north—all of the Upper West region and three districts in the Upper East—which are high-risk zones for malaria.

Local communities still need to be convinced about the benefits of having their homes sprayed. But Asiedu says only a handful of people refuse. Sprayers themselves also speak to households about the work and the risks to health from the disease, which can lead to severe illness and death if not treated within 24 hours. "If I go to the whole house and someone does not want it I have to sit the person and let them know the importance of the spraying because malaria kills," said Owusu. "It's very important



OBUASI: In this file photo taken on May 1, 2018 a worker monitors mosquito larvae breeding at the laboratory breeding room at the Entomologist Research Centre. — AFP

we all understand that malaria is a killer. We have to eradicate it and kick it out of Obuasi and the nation as a whole." During the course of his work, he's found everyone has a story about the disease. "I sprayed a full house and the owner was telling me her son died some years ago from malaria. He would be 18 years today. She was crying bitterly," he added. Children under five and pregnant women are considered most vulnerable to malaria. Seamstress Victoria Awuah lives in an eight-room house some 30 minutes from the lab. She is seven months pregnant and doesn't need much persuasion to have her room sprayed. "The spraying really helps. It helps us so that we don't get sick, give us peace of mind and rid this area of all these insects," she added. — AFP

Merger creates pot giant ahead of legalization

MONTREAL: With the legalization of recreational marijuana looming in Canada, therapeutic producer Aurora said Monday it was acquiring rival MedReleaf Corp. in a huge deal set to create a giant company. Aurora said it

would pay Can\$3.2 billion (\$2.51 billion) as part of an all-stock deal that will leave Aurora shareholders with control of 61 percent of the resulting company.

The new company will have a production capacity of 570 tonnes of cannabis a year, with nine greenhouse operations in Canada and two in Denmark, Aurora and MedReleaf said in a joint statement. The merger comes amid surging interest in the country's nascent pot industry with legalization expected this summer. Already in January, Aurora had spent more than Can\$1 billion to purchase rival CanniMed.

The Canadian government originally scheduled

legalization for July 1, coinciding with the Canada Day weekend, but complications with new distribution and monitoring systems forced delays.

But last week Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told AFP that legalization would come this summer. While provincial governments work to set up distribution channels—and prepare to share resulting tax windfalls with the federal government—companies linked to the cannabis business have seen a speculative bubble develop.

The capitalization of the three biggest Canadian producers on the Toronto Stock Exchange has exploded in

recent months. Aurora shares have more than tripled in value in the past year, to more than Can\$4.6 billion. Whether or when that bubble might burst is unclear. But it illustrates the growing interest in this soft drug, seen increasingly as a fiscal boon to governments in Canada, as it has been in US states like California that have legalized pot use. In another deal, one of Aurora's chief rivals, Canopy Growth, announced Monday its purchase of the 33 percent of the Tweed Joint Venture group that it did not already own for Can\$374 million, and said it planned to list its shares on the New York Stock Exchange. — AFP

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What's On



Precious Ramadan moments at Symphony Style Hotel tent

It is the intangible things in life that make us grateful, and Ramadan is that time of the year when we celebrate what connects us with our family, friends, and colleagues. There is something about the Holy Month that never ceases to make us thankful, happy and content. Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait, the jewel of Kuwait City, invites you to create unforgettable moments during the Holy Month. The hotel welcomes all guests to

the Symphony Ramadan tent. With capacity to accommodate up to 150 people, it is the ideal venue to enjoy Iftar or Ghabka with family, friends or colleagues. The unique tent captivates with its distinctive design and outstanding colors inspired by Ramadan's authentic & rich spirit inviting you and your guests to immerse yourselves a culinary feast featuring international and Arabic favorites, live cooking stations, traditional

desserts and Ramadan beverages, in addition to exclusive flavors of Shisha. Last but not least, the hotel offers daily live entertainment programs. Located on the second floor of the hotel, next to the swimming pool with spectacular views of the Arabian Gulf, the Symphony Ramadan tent will be open for Iftar until 8:30 pm and from 9:00 pm until 2 am for Ghabka. In celebration of this spiritual occasion, Symphony

Style Hotel Kuwait offers daily rich Iftar buffet including beverages for KD 13 per person including Ramadan Drinks and water and the hotel's special for this year is the Ghabka offer: 2 persons for KD 13 including mezzah, snacks served on the tables, stations of indulgent bites, Ramadan traditional drinks and a rich dessert buffet with all the traditional and international delicacies.

VOX Cinemas opens its doors at The Avenues

Majid Al Futtaim, the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia opens its first VOX Cinemas location at The Avenues in Kuwait. Located in the newly launched expansion (Grand Plaza) of The Avenues, the multiplex is primed to deliver an unmatched cinema experience taking entertainment levels to new heights for movie buffs across the country. With a seventeen-screen cineplex, VOX Cinemas is bringing its THEATRE by Rhodes, KIDS and MAX signature concepts to Kuwaiti audiences for the first time. Driving its innovative spirit forward, VOX Cinemas will also launch an entirely new concept, HUB at The Avenues- Kuwait. A first, not only for Kuwait but for the entire Middle East region, the HUB experience is designed around a teen-focused movie-watching and gaming environment. Cameron Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer at Majid Al Futtaim Cinemas, VOX Cinemas, said: "Opening the doors to our first cinema in Kuwait is an incredible milestone in VOX Cinemas' history. We are extremely proud to invite guests in and watch them create great moments with us."

Equipped with four THEATRE by Rhodes screens,

opening in the coming weeks, customers in Kuwait will now have the option of enjoying their favorite blockbusters while dining on an exclusive menu created by Michelin-starred chef Gary Rhodes. The first of its kind in the market, THEATRE by Rhodes brings unrivalled indulgence to the new VOX Cinemas multiplex by delivering a combination of fine food and the latest films. THEATRE by Rhodes sets a new standard for "dinner and a movie". The concept allows luxury lovers to enjoy lavish lounge areas, dedicated in-theatre waiter service, comfortable leather chairs with blankets, pillows and made-to-order gourmet food.

VOX Cinemas' youngest guests will also be able to enjoy their own version of the cinema-going experience with the KIDS concept, another first in Kuwait. Completely dedicated to little movie fans, the two KIDS screens will show a range of films and animated content that guests can enjoy from their colorful seats. Complete with adjoining a party room, guests will be able to book KIDS screens for private birthday parties and events.

The cineplex will include VOX Cinemas' top-quality F&B offering, available across the region, as well as some exciting new additions. The Candy Bar will offer a wide variety of popular cinema snacks and hot food. New concepts include the Nutella Bar which serves the much-loved chocolate spread in a variety of delicious forms, including crepes, pancakes and waffles. VOX Cinemas is also introducing a brand-new concept - Pizza Al Taglio - where cinema-goers can choose from a delicious selection of gourmet pizzas served by the slice.



Chocolate Cuisine opens new branch in The Avenues Mall

After the success of their unique concept in Kuwait, the new meaning of Chocolate, Chocolate Cuisine is opening the third branch in the heart of the biggest mall in Kuwait, The Avenues. Chocolate Cuisine is a combination between Kuwaiti youth and enthusiasm and the true search for the best tasting chocolate to introduce an unforgettable experience to customers.

All fans of chocolate in Kuwait will be able to enjoy the tasty menu and the variety of dishes from Chocolate Sushi to Pizzas and much more of the signature dishes that would defiantly add on to the whole experience. Partners, Hussein Al-Sayed, Sulaiman Behbehani and Abdul-Aziz Behbehani stated that this opening will be the first to many more and with this branch, the hope is to serve customers in vibrant and full of live locations which will add to the company a lot of trustworthiness and eventually customer-love.

"The success lies in a combination of understanding the taste of Kuwaiti society in food and professionalism in catering this taste in a way the food is served to the customers, and this is what we do at Chocolate Cuisine. What makes us really proud is that we have achieved this success and made this name a competitive brand for global

brands in the local market and, God willing, a competitor in the global market in the future. All of this was made proudly by Kuwaitis to the Kuwaiti society." Stated Sulaiman Behbehani

The team of Chocolate Cuisine was carefully chosen with very warm welcoming smiles and an expertise in the dine-in field and the full knowledge of the menu and the details of each of the dishes offered. Chocolate Cuisine started serving on Saturday, May 5, 2018, and from now on will keep on serving customers breakfast, lunch, dinner and surely... Chocolate.



ICSK Junior branch celebrates 59th Foundation Day

The Indian Community School was founded on 5th May 1959 with only 22 students. The ICSK was the first Indian school in Kuwait. To commemorate this significant event and to reflect its growth and achievements in the field of education, an assembly was organized in the month of May 2018.

An informative speech was delivered to commemorate the 59th Foundation Day. Melodious group songs were rendered by the students to wish ICSK on its Foundation Day. Various skits depicting, ICSK as an institution of excellence where children can achieve holistic development. A poem reflecting their love and respect towards the school was recited followed by a dazzling and colorful power packed dance.

Sherly Dennis, Principal ICSK Junior in her address elicited loyalty to the esteemed institution and praised its glorious past. The students inspired by her address unanimously showed their love for the institution by the slogan, 'I love you ICSK'. Vice Principal, C Sheeja in her address wished all the students, teachers and staff a very happy 59th Foundation Day.



Greetings



Happy birthday to our dear Sithuli Dhammika, we wish you many happy returns for the day and pray for continued health and happiness. Best wishes from Mother, Father and Grandparents.

Burgan Bank welcomes Ramadan with 'Graish'

In the spirit of Ramadan, Burgan Bank, one of the most dynamic banks in Kuwait, recently gathered to celebrate 'Graish' with its employees at the Salwa Al-Sabah hall. Set in a friendly atmosphere, the event showcased Burgan Bank's appreciation for its employees celebrating an age old tradition of family values which also reflected in the solidarity and closeness among the team. In addition, 'Graish' is an annual celebration to revive the Kuwaiti heritage.

Driven by its strong-held belief that people always come first, Burgan Bank continues to lead the way by honoring this principle within the Burgan family. The progres-

sive bank nurtures an internal culture that respects and cherishes its most esteemed assets with rewarding and memorable experiences.

The pre-Ramadan tradition that was successfully led by the internal communications team under the Human Resources and Development group and the Marketing departments was filled with entertainment, gifts and exciting prizes. The employees enjoyed participating in various games, fun trivia and received many surprises. To honor its Kuwaiti heritage, the staff also enjoyed a special Graish meal to welcome the fasting season.

Joining in the spirit of Ramadan and addressing the importance of valuable team initiatives, Burgan Bank's Chairman, Majed Eisa Al-Ajeel, wished every employee and their families a blessed holy month. Burgan Bank carries out social and cultural initiatives to enrich local communities, starting with its employees first, constantly striving to build closer relations with all stakeholders and deliver positive and lasting change.



TV



00:15 Tremors 5: Bloodlines
02:05 A Kind Of Magic
03:55 My Stepdaughter
05:40 Live Free Or Die Hard
07:50 Kingslake: Final Fantasy XV
09:55 Point Break
11:55 Roadside
13:25 Live Free Or Die Hard
15:40 Rumble
17:20 The Mask Of Zorro
19:40 Rogue One: A Star Wars Story
22:00 The Viral Factor



00:45 Rugged Justice
01:40 Bad Dog
02:35 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
03:00 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
03:25 Cute As Fluff
04:15 Animal Cribbs
05:02 Wildest Indochina
05:49 Lone Star Law
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
07:50 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
08:15 Rugged Justice
09:10 Bad Dog
10:05 Wildest Indochina
11:00 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
11:28 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
11:55 Cute As Fluff
12:50 Animal Cribbs
13:45 Bad Dog
14:40 Wildest Indochina
15:35 Lone Star Law
16:30 Rugged Justice
17:25 Tanked
18:20 Treehouse Masters
20:10 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
20:38 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner
21:05 Tanked
22:00 Treehouse Masters
23:50 Lone Star Law



00:20 The Durrells
01:10 New Tricks
02:05 The Level
02:55 Prime Suspect: Tension
03:45 Holly City
04:40 Doctors
05:10 Father Brown
06:00 Holly City
06:55 Doctors
07:25 Doctors
07:55 The Coroner
08:45 Holly City
09:45 Holly City
10:40 New Tricks
11:35 The Coroner
12:25 Hold The Sunset
12:55 Hold The Sunset
13:25 Holly City
14:20 Holly City
15:15 New Tricks
16:10 The Coroner
17:00 Hold The Sunset
17:30 Hold The Sunset
18:00 Doctors
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 New Tricks
20:00 The Durrells
20:50 The Good Karma Hospital
21:40 New Tricks
22:30 Doctors
23:05 EastEnders
23:35 The Durrells



00:00 The Killing Season
01:00 The Killing Season
01:55 When Life Means Life
02:50 American Ripper In London
03:45 The Killing Season
04:30 The Killing Season
05:15 The First 48
06:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
07:00 It Takes A Killer
07:20 Cold Case Files
08:05 Homicide Hunter
08:50 The First 48
09:35 Crimes That Shook Australia
10:30 Evil Up Close
11:25 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
12:20 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:15 Cold Case Files
14:10 Homicide Hunter
15:05 The First 48
16:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
17:00 Diabolical Women
18:00 Diabolical Women
19:00 Diabolical Women
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Evil Up Close
22:00 Motive For Murder
23:00 I Killed My BFF



00:05 Important Things With Demitri Martin
00:30 Friends
00:55 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
01:20 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
01:45 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvagef
02:10 Disaster Date
02:35 Important Things With Demitri Martin
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
04:15 Catch A Contractor
05:05 I Used To Be Fat
05:55 Disaster Date
06:20 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvagef
06:50 House Of Food
07:40 Catch A Contractor
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvagef
09:20 Impractical Jokers
09:45 Impractical Jokers
10:10 House Of Food
11:00 Catch A Contractor
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:15 Hillbillies For Hire
12:40 Friendszone
13:05 House Of Food
13:55 Impractical Jokers
14:20 Impractical Jokers
14:45 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
15:35 Ridiculousness Arabia
16:00 Frankenfood
16:30 Frankenfood
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
18:10 Martha And Snoop Potluck Dinner Party
18:35 Friends
19:00 Hillbillies For Hire
19:25 I Used To Be Fat
20:12 Friends

20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 The Opposition With Jordan Klepper
22:00 Friends
22:25 Hillbillies For Hire
22:50 Comedy Central Presents Comedy Salvagef
23:15 Friends
23:40 Friends



00:05 Fail Army
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds
01:20 How It's Made
01:45 How It's Made
02:10 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
03:00 Tanked
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 Clitastic
05:05 Clitastic
05:30 Fail Army
05:55 Fail Army
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds
07:25 Destroyed In Seconds
07:50 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Tanked
10:20 Ultimate Survival
11:10 Destroyed In Seconds
11:35 Destroyed In Seconds
12:00 How It's Made
12:25 How It's Made
12:50 How To Build... Everything
13:15 How To Build... Everything
13:40 Superhuman Showdown
14:30 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
15:20 How It's Made
15:45 How It's Made
16:10 Ultimate Survival
16:40 Reign Of The Dinosaurs
17:50 Tanked
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How To Build... Everything
19:55 How To Build... Everything
20:20 Superhuman Showdown
21:10 How It's Made
21:35 How It's Made
22:00 Ultimate Survival
22:50 How To Build... Everything
23:15 How To Build... Everything
23:40 Superhuman Showdown



00:45 Village Of The Damned
01:40 James Patterson's Murder Is Forever
02:35 An American Murder Mystery: The Staircase
03:30 Murder Chose Me
04:25 Nightmare Next Door
05:20 I Almost Got Away With It
06:10 Disappeared
07:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
07:25 Murder Chose Me
08:15 Nightmare Next Door
09:10 Disappeared
10:05 Grave Secrets
11:00 American Monster
11:55 Murder Chose Me
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
13:45 Disappeared
14:40 Grave Secrets
15:35 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
16:30 Murder Chose Me
17:25 Nightmare Next Door
18:20 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 Disappeared
20:10 Evil Online
21:05 Deadly Affairs
22:00 Betrayed
22:55 Blood Relatives
23:50 Deadly Sins



00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
05:50 Rolling With The Ronks
06:00 Kitty Is Not A Cat
06:25 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 Tangled: The Series
07:20 Stuck In The Middle
07:45 K.C. Undercover
08:10 Bunk'd
08:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
09:25 Lolirock
09:50 Lolirock
10:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
10:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
11:05 Hank Zipzer
11:55 Alex & Co.
12:20 Lolirock
12:45 Lolirock
13:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
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14:15 Bunk'd
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:10 Kitty Is Not A Cat
15:35 Elena Of Avalor
16:00 Tangled: The Series
16:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:50 Bizaardvark
17:15 Stuck In The Middle
17:40 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
18:05 K.C. Undercover
18:30 Bunk'd
18:55 Descendants Wicked World
19:00 Raven's Home
19:25 Liv And Maddie
19:50 Jessie
20:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
20:20 Tangled: The Series
20:45 Bizaardvark
21:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
21:35 Stuck In The Middle
22:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir

22:50 Lolirock
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 PJ Masks
00:55 Trulli Tales
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 The Hive
02:40 Loopdido
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdido
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Henry Hugglemonster
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdido
06:00 Henry Hugglemonster
06:15 Calimero
06:30 PJ Masks
07:00 Trulli Tales
07:30 Jungle Junction
07:50 Handy Manny
08:10 PJ Masks
08:30 Vampirina
09:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
09:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers



00:00 Trulli Tales
00:30 Puppy Dog Pals
10:00 Doc McStuffins
11:30 The Lion Guard
12:00 Sofia The First
12:30 Sofia The First
13:00 PJ Masks
13:30 PJ Masks
14:00 Vampirina
14:15 Vampirina
14:30 Vampirina
14:45 Vampirina
15:00 Vampirina
15:15 Vampirina
15:30 Sofia The First
16:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
16:30 Trulli Tales
17:00 Vampirina
17:30 PJ Masks
18:00 Sofia The First
18:30 Puppy Dog Pals
19:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Vampirina
20:30 PJ Masks
21:00 Trulli Tales
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 P-King Duckling
22:30 Puppy Dog Pals
23:00 Miles From Tomorrow
23:30 PJ Masks



00:15 Deadliest Catch
01:05 Fast N' Loud
01:50 Gear Dogs
02:35 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
03:20 Kindig Customs
04:05 Alaskan Bush People
04:50 Kindig Customs
05:35 Storage Hunters
06:00 The Liquidator
06:23 Property Wars
06:45 Storage Hunters
07:10 Storage Wars Canada
07:35 Alaskan Bush People
08:20 The Liquidator
08:45 Property Wars
09:10 Kindig Customs
09:55 Fast N' Loud
10:45 Gear Dogs
11:30 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
12:20 The Liquidator
12:43 Property Wars
13:05 Storage Hunters
13:30 Storage Wars Canada
13:55 Kindig Customs
14:40 Deadliest Catch
15:30 Fast N' Loud
16:15 Gear Dogs
17:05 Shifting Gears With Aaron Kaufman
17:50 Alaskan Bush People
18:40 Kindig Customs
19:25 Deadliest Catch
20:15 Gear Dogs
21:00 Blue Collar Backers
21:50 Pacific Warriors
22:40 Outback Truckers
23:30 Alaskan Bush People



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



00:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
00:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

01:50 E! News
02:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
03:40 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
04:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Rob & Chyna
06:55 E! News Middle East
07:10 Rob & Chyna
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
10:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
11:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
12:00 E! News Middle East
12:15 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
13:10 Citizen Rose
15:00 E! News Middle East
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 E! News
20:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
21:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
22:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
23:00 E! News Middle East
23:15 Botched



00:10 Broadchurch
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 Murdoch Mysteries
04:20 Murdoch Mysteries
05:15 Broadchurch
06:15 Guess This House
07:10 The Chase
08:05 Murdoch Mysteries
09:00 Murdoch Mysteries
09:55 Broadchurch
11:00 Guess This House
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Guess This House
15:10 The Chase
16:00 Midsomer Murders
17:50 Broadchurch
18:50 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 Midsomer Murders
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Cowboys & Outlaws
01:00 America's Book Of Secrets
02:00 UFO Hunters
02:50 Ancient Aliens
03:40 In Search Of Aliens
04:30 WWI: Lost Films
05:20 Your Bleeped Up Brain
06:10 America's Book Of Secrets
07:00 Cowboys & Outlaws
08:00 America's Book Of Secrets
09:00 UFO Hunters
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 In Search Of Aliens
12:00 WWI: Lost Films
13:00 Cowboys & Outlaws
14:00 America's Book Of Secrets
15:00 UFO Hunters
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 In Search Of Aliens
18:00 Cowboys & Outlaws
19:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
20:00 UFO Hunters
21:00 Ancient Aliens
22:00 Engineering Disasters
23:00 WWI: Lost Films



00:20 Storage Wars
00:45 Pawn Stars
01:10 American Pickers
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 101 People Who Made The 20th Century
03:40 Battle 360
04:30 Storage Wars
04:55 Pawn Stars
05:20 American Pickers
06:00 Swamp People
06:50 Storage Wars
07:15 Pawn Stars
07:40 Mountain Men
08:30 Battle 360
09:20 Swamp People
10:10 Time Team
11:00 Storage Wars
11:25 Pawn Stars
11:50 Mountain Men
12:40 Battle 360
13:30 Swamp People
14:20 Storage Wars
14:45 Pawn Stars
15:10 Time Team
16:00 American Pickers
16:50 Battle 360
17:40 Battle 360
18:30 Swamp People
19:20 Storage Wars
19:45 Pawn Stars
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Counting Cars
21:25 Car Hunters
21:50 Project Impossible
22:40 Storage Wars
23:05 Pawn Stars
23:30 Swamp People



00:15 David Rocco's Dolce India
00:45 Glamour Puds
01:10 Poh & Co.
01:40 Fish Of The Day
02:35 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
03:00 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
03:30 Croatia's Finest
03:55 Croatia's Finest
04:25 John Torode's Korean Food Tour
05:20 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
05:45 Carnival Eats
06:15 A Is For Apple
06:40 A Is For Apple
07:10 Fish Of The Day
07:35 Fish Of The Day
08:05 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
08:30 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
09:00 Croatia's Finest
09:25 Croatia's Finest
09:55 John Torode's Korean Food Tour
10:50 Straight To The Source: Korean Food

11:15 Carnival Eats
11:45 A Is For Apple
12:10 A Is For Apple
12:40 David Rocco's Dolce India
13:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
13:35 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
14:00 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
14:30 Street Food Around The World
14:55 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
15:25 John Torode's Korean Food Tour
16:20 Celebrity Chef: East vs West
16:50 My Restaurant In India
17:15 A Is For Apple
17:40 A Is For Apple
18:10 Eat Street
18:35 David Rocco's Dolce India
19:05 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
19:30 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:00 Street Food Around The World
20:30 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
21:00 John Torode's Korean Food Tour
22:00 Celebrity Chef: East vs West
22:30 My Restaurant In India
22:55 A Is For Apple
23:20 A Is For Apple
23:50 Eat Street



00:10 Yukon Gold
01:00 Wicked Tuna
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Genius
04:00 Yukon Gold
05:00 Megastructures
06:00 Mega Breakdown
07:00 Cesar To The Rescue
08:00 Mega Food
09:00 Megastructures
10:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
10:30 Do Or Die
11:00 Diana: In Her Own Words
13:00 Mine Kings
14:00 Mega Food
15:00 Cesar To The Rescue
16:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
16:30 Do Or Die
17:00 TuT's Treasures: Hidden Secrets
18:00 Time Scanners
19:00 Years Of Living Dangerously
20:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
20:25 Do Or Die
20:50 TuT's Treasures: Hidden Secrets
21:40 Time Scanners
22:30 Years Of Living Dangerously
23:20 Mega Food



00:20 Bizarre Dinos
01:10 Monster Fish
02:00 Crococalypse
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Snakes In The City
04:40 Deadly Game
05:35 Crococalypse
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Snakes In The City
08:20 Deadly Game
09:15 Animal Fight Club
10:10 Animal Fight Club
11:05 Moody Beasts
12:00 Amazon's Electric Fish
12:55 Bite, Sting, Kill
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Snakes In The City
15:40 Deadly Game
16:35 Animal Fight Club
17:30 Animal Fight Club
18:25 Moody Beasts
19:20 Snakes In The City
20:10 Deadly Game
21:00 Animal Fight Club
21:50 Animal Fight Club
22:40 Moody Beasts
23:30 Amazon's Electric Fish

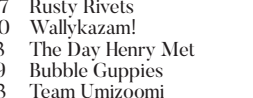


00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 Rabbids Invasion
04:12 Rabbids Invasion
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 The Loud House
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
06:36 Harvey Beaks
07:00 Breadwinners
07:24 Breadwinners
07:48 Bunsen Is A Beast
08:12 Rabbids Invasion
08:36 The Loud House
09:00 Regal Academy
09:24 Winx Club
09:48 Hunter Street
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 School Of Rock
11:00 Henry Danger
11:24 The Thundermans
11:48 Rank The Prank
12:12 Rank The Prank
12:36 Massive Monster Mayhem
13:00 Hunter Street
13:24 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn
13:48 Bunsen Is A Beast
14:36 Blurt!
15:24 Bunsen Is A Beast
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Toon Marty
17:12 Toon Marty
17:24 Massive Monster Mayhem
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky And Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:00 Harvey Beaks
21:24 Breadwinners
21:48 Breadwinners
22:12 Sanjay And Craig
22:36 Rabbids Invasion
23:00 The Loud House
23:24 Regal Academy
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:06 Max & Ruby
00:29 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
00:39 Kiva Can Do!
00:50 The Day Henry Met
00:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
01:42 Paw Patrol
01:54 Kid-E-Cats
01:58 Kid-E-Cats

02:04 Shimmer And Shine
02:25 Nella The Princess Knight
02:37 Paw Patrol
03:01 Max & Ruby
03:23 Dora The Explorer
03:46 Sunny Day
04:08 Nella And The Princess Knight
04:20 Nella And The Princess Knight
04:31 Shimmer And Shine
04:54 Wallykazam!
05:17 Zack & Quack
05:28 The Day Henry Met
05:33 The Day Henry Met
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
06:00 Rusty Rivets
06:13 Paw Patrol
06:37 Dora The Explorer
07:00 Nella The Princess Knight
07:22 Kiva Can Do!
07:33 Kiva Can Do!
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
08:06 Paw Patrol
08:29 Shimmer And Shine
08:51 Nella And The Princess Knight
09:02 Nella And The Princess Knight
09:13 Paw Patrol
09:37 Rusty Rivets
09:40 Wallykazam!
10:23 The Day Henry Met
10:29 Bubble Guppies
10:53 Team Umizoomi
11:15 Kid-E-Cats
11:21 Shimmer And Shine
11:44 Sunny Day
12:06 Max & Ruby
12:29 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
12:40 Kiva Can Do!
12:51 The Day Henry Met
12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
13:42 Paw Patrol
13:54 Kid-E-Cats
13:59 Kid-E-Cats
14:04 Shimmer And Shine
14:25 Nella The Princess Knight
14:37 Paw Patrol
15:01 Max & Ruby
15:23 Dora The Explorer
15:47 Sunny Day
16:09 Nella And The Princess Knight
16:20 Nella And The Princess Knight
16:31 Shimmer And Shine
16:54 Wallykazam!
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17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
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19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
20:06 Paw Patrol
20:29 Shimmer And Shine
20:52 Nella And The Princess Knight
21:02 Nella And The Princess Knight
21:14 Paw Patrol
21:38 Rusty Rivets
22:01 Wallykazam!
22:24 The Day Henry Met
22:29 Bubble Guppies
22:53 Team Umizoomi
23:15 Kid-E-Cats
23:20 Shimmer And Shine
23:43 Sunny Day



00:15 How I Met Your Mother
00:40 How I Met Your Mother
01:05 Seinfeld
01:30 Seinfeld
01:55 Ti Death
02:20 Superstore
02:45 Superstore
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 Us And Them
06:05 Ti Death
06:30 The Mick
06:55 The Mindy Project
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 Alex, Inc.
10:15 Great News
10:40 Us And Them
11:05 Ti Death
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 The Mick
12:45 The Mindy Project
13:10 How I Met Your Mother
13:35 How I Met Your Mother
14:00 Seinfeld
14:25 Seinfeld
14:50 Us And Them
15:15 Alex, Inc.
15:40 Great News
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 The Mick
17:30 The Mindy Project
18:00 How I Met Your Mother
18:30 How I Met Your Mother
19:00 Seinfeld
19:30 Seinfeld
20:00 Modern Family
20:30 Trial & Error
21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
22:00 Life In Pieces
22:30 Life In Pieces
23:00 Alone Together
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:15 How I Met Your Mother
00:40 How I Met Your Mother
01:05 Seinfeld
01:30 Seinfeld
01:55 Ti Death
02:20 Superstore
02:45 Superstore
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
04:50 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
05:40 Us And Them
06:05 Ti Death
06:30 The Mick
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13:35 How I Met Your Mother
14:00 Seinfeld
14:25 Seinfeld
14:50 Us And Them
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15:40 Great News
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 The Mick
17:30 The Mindy Project
18:00 How I Met Your Mother
18:30 How I Met Your Mother
19:00 Seinfeld
19:30 Seinfeld
20:00 Modern Family
20:30 Trial & Error
21:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
22:00 Life In Pieces
22:30 Life In Pieces
23:00 Alone Together
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:00 The Little Mermaid
02:00 The Lone Ranger
04:45 The Muppets
06:45 The Lone Ranger
09:30 The Little Mermaid
11:30 The Muppets
13:30 The Little Mermaid 2: Return To The Sea
17:15 Inspector Gadget
19:00 The Game Plan
21:00 Mulan
23:00 The Little Mermaid 2: Return To The Sea



00:00 Riverdale
01:00 Famous In Love
01:50 The Good Doctor
02:40 The Voice
04:20 Riverdale
05:20 Star
06:10 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
07:00 Good Morning America
09:00 The View
10:00 Riverdale
11:00 The Good Doctor
12:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
13:00 Scandal

14:00 Riverdale
15:00 The View
16:00 Live Good Morning America
18:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
19:00 Suits
20:00 Scandal
21:00 The Voice
22:00 The Flash
23:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
23:55 Seven Types Of Ambiguity



01:15 Big Momma's House 2
03:00 Without A Paddle
04:45 All She Wishes
06:30 Big Trouble
08:15 SuperBob
10:00 All She Wishes
11:45 Big Trouble
13:30 Little Loopers
15:15 SuperBob
17:00 Life Or Something Like It
18:45 Daddy's Home
20:30 Without A Paddle: Nature's Calling
22:15 Tank Girl



01:35 It Boy
03:15 All Things Must Pass
04:55 The Dressmaker
06:55 The Ticket
08:40 It Boy
10:20 All Things Must Pass
1

CROSSWORD 1910



ACROSS

- 1.An operating system that is on a disk.
- 4. (anatomy) Of or relating to a chiasm.
- 12. The compass point that is one point east (clockwise) of due north.
- 15. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
- 16. Any of various moth caterpillars that destroy cotton bolls.
- 17. The products of human creativity.
- 18. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- 20. (old-fashioned) At or from or to a great distance.
- 22. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- 25. A unit of pressure equal to one newton per square meter.
- 26. A state of extreme confusion and disorder.
- 28. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
- 30. A tax on employees and employers that is used to fund the Social Security system.
- 33. Having three dimensions.
- 37. Someone who operates an aircraft.
- 40. A person who lacks confidence, is irresolute and wishy-washy.
- 42. Provide commentary for a film, for example.
- 43. Long green edible beaked pods of the okra plant.
- 44. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
- 45. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
- 46. Botfly larva.
- 47. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- 51.Type genus of the Danaidae.
- 53. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- 54. A garment of cloth or leather or plastic that is tied about the waist and worn to protect your clothing.
- 55. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
- 56. Being one hundred more than three hundred.
- 57. (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann.
- 59. A tax on various goods brought into a town.
- 67. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
- 68. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
- 71. The eighth month of the civil year.
- 72. Taking place over public roads.
- 73. (zoology) Relating to frogs and loads.
- 74. A recurring sleep state during which rapid eye movements do not occur and dreaming does not occur.
- 75. A crude uncouth ill-bred person lacking culture or refinement.
- 76. Mint plants.
- 77. An unfledged or nestling hawk.

DOWN

- 1. An informal term for a father.
- 2. A notice of someone's death.
- 3. Disposed of as useless.
- 4. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
- 5. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- 6. Tropical American tree grown in southern United States having a whitish pink-tinged fruit.
- 7. Important European leguminous forage plant with trifoliate leaves and blue-violet flowers grown widely as a pasture and hay crop.
- 8. (informal) Valuable goods.
- 9. Of or relating to or characteristic of Morocco or its people.
- 10. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- 11. A unit of luminous flux equal to the amount of light given out through a solid angle of 1 steradian by a point source of 1 candela intensity radiating uniformly in all directions.
- 12. Sole genus of the family Naiadaceae.
- 13. (informal) Exceptionally good.
- 14. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
- 19. Brazilian tree with handsomely marked wood.
- 21. An ancient musical horn made from the horn of a ram.
- 23. Being nine more than ninety.
- 24. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- 27. Capital and largest city of Cuba.
- 29. A member of a Hindu people descended from Brahmins and Rajputs who live in Nepal.
- 31. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- 32. A native or inhabitant of Crete.
- 34. English romantic poet notorious for his rebellious and unconventional lifestyle (1788-1824).
- 35. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- 36. Two items of the same kind.
- 38. A republic consisting of 26 of 32 counties comprising the island of Ireland.
- 39. A small drum with one head of soft calfskin.
- 41. Slanting diagonally across the grain of a fabric.
- 48. A lymph node that is inflamed and swollen because of plague or gonorrhea or tuberculosis.
- 49. A town in western Kentucky on the Ohio River.
- 50. Having a play of lustrous rainbow-like colors.
- 52. Wear away.
- 58. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- 60. Supply or feed to surfeit.
- 61. Hard strong durable yellowish-brown wood of teak trees.
- 62. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
- 63. A member of the British order of honor.
- 64. The lofty nest of a bird of prey (such as a hawk or eagle).
- 65. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
- 66. Weapons considered collectively.
- 69. Used of a single unit or thing.
- 70. A score in baseball made by a runner touching all four bases safely.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You enjoy the challenge of winning someone over: it could be that you love the thrill of the chase. Finding romance could be done very easily but you truly enjoy a challenge: it's the one playing hard to get that holds your attention. A private matter requires your input and you could just save the day for a friend in need. Discovering what lies at the root of the problem helps to create major change: listen well to your intuition. Confidence levels are high and you take advantage of this as you approach a situation you'd avoided before. You find yourself having thoughts of someone you shouldn't. Optimism is the hallmark of the new cycle you have entered: this pertains to anything you attempt. Tonight, you find yourself in desirable company.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Romance comes to you easily at this time as you seem outgoing, positive and attractive to just about everyone. You feel equipped and ready to interact with people and win them over. A window for taking risks and winning has opened up; avoid becoming overconfident so that you don't recklessly jump into anything. Home and family are where your heart is as well as the source of your security and well-being. You wonder if what you desire is reaching a goal or perhaps only chasing it. You're well known for your abilities; you could be approached about taking over a touch project no one else wants or is capable of handling. Be aware of the pitfalls of accepting this. You make no mistake choosing a new direction to take domestically.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You have no problems attracting attention from the opposite sex! You enjoy a challenge to win people over as you know you can do this with ease. You wonder if reaching a goal is what you desire or if the thrill of the chase is what you truly like the most. Those around you feel your influence and strong encouragement. A new idea is foremost in your mind and you're actually a bit anxious to give it a try now: a meaningful discussion with someone results in productive progress. You find yourself in an audience learning about important ways to improve life in general: new plans and methods of operation can now be developed. Being positive and very determined brings success as one foot goes in front of the other climbing over obstacles.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You have got a knack for learning as you teach; we can learn important lessons from very surprising people and places. You're able to actually observe something unusual you're most interested in. An invigorating mental challenge brings new meaning to something when you figure out how to deal with it. You're able to avoid an argument by using your natural charm: make a note to stay away from a certain person when possible. You become aware of a need someone you love has kept to themselves; you help with this anonymously. Only you can communicate with someone on a private matter; you're admired for your ability to do this. A nice surprise causes smiles and laughter. You could find that you're overcome with joy.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your in-born pioneering spirit is at the fore as you take on a new project that needs a different approach. Knowledge you have gained in the past provides answers you need now. Someone you don't know very well not only points out that it's far easier to work smarter, not harder, but shows you how! A family issue that's been simmering could boil over; you're prepared for this and are able to cool things down a bit for now. Looking past things that offend you gives you power. You approach the personal matter of a friend gently and successfully. You're a true-blue friend! A shopping trip turns up something special you buy for a person who's some type of collector. Being loved is very important and tonight you know you are.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your pioneering spirit takes over as you're determined to find a new way to take care of an old situation that just won't improve. You feel free to simply be who you are: this is a breath of fresh air. You could be called on to teach others about a topic you're well educated on. A certain person's resentful when they can't be the center of attention: this is an extremely narcissistic person who always insists that they're worse off than everyone else! Dealing with an elder who's constantly difficult is growing old; you could inform others that they're going to have to chip in with the care taking of this person. Hang in there, help's on the way. A younger person brightens your day with an unexpected visit. You're at your best spending time with a loved one!

Wordsearch Puzzle

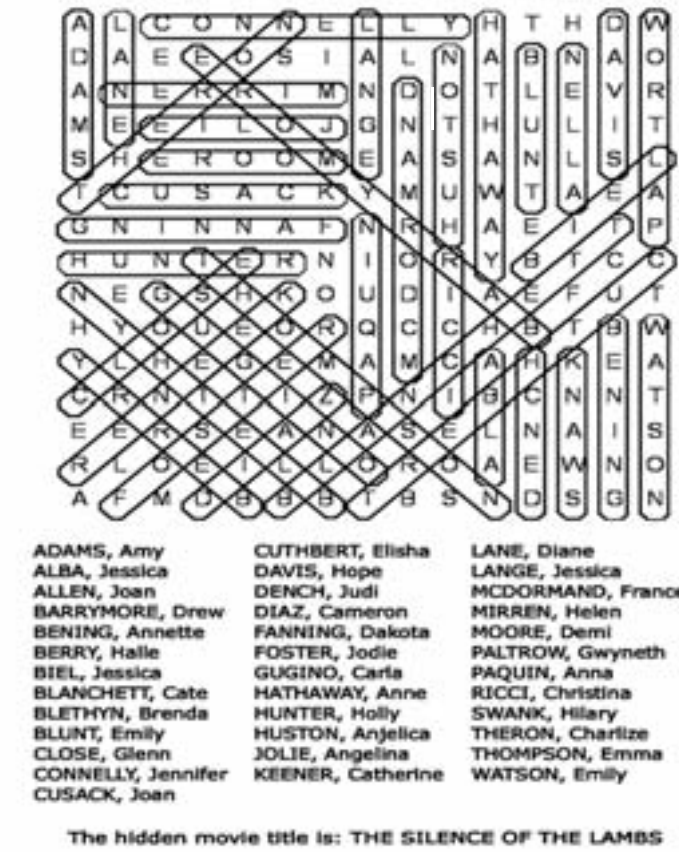
Movie Actresses 2

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 Louise Fletcher won an Oscar.

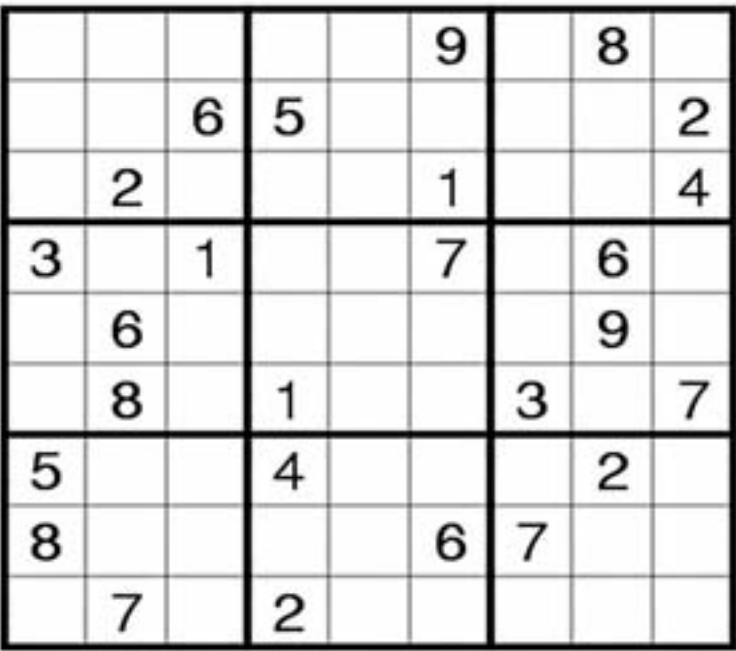


Yesterday's Solution

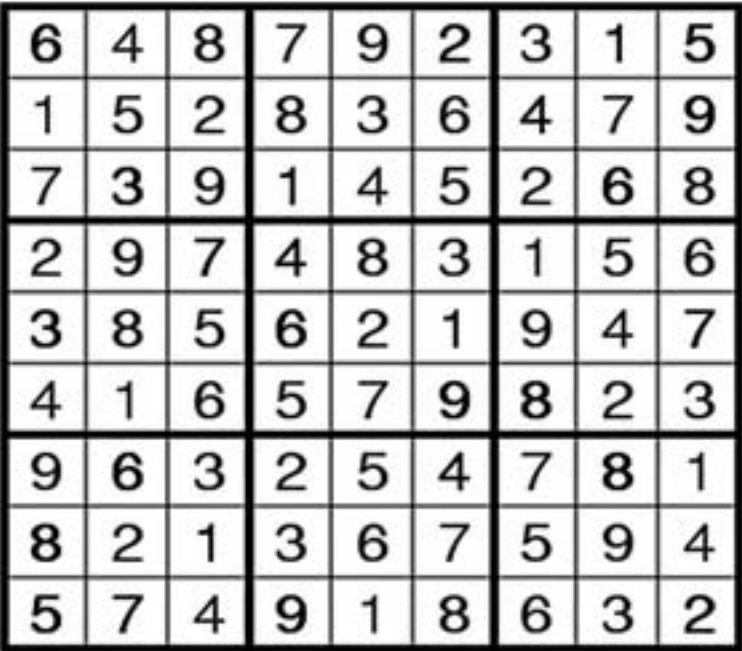
Movie Actresses 1



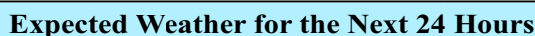
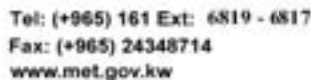
Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Wednesday, May 16, 2018



BY DAY: Relatively hot with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h .

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

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	05/16	Hot causing rising dust over open areas	37 °C	23 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Thursday	05/17	Hot	38 °C	24 °C	NW	12 - 32 km/h
Friday	05/18	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear later on	39 °C	24 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 28 km/h
Saturday	05/19	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear	41 °C	26 °C	VRB-S	06 - 26 km/h

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	36 °C
MIN. Temp.	25 °C
MAX. RH	45 %
MIN. RH	18 %
MAX. Wind	E 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

I, Kunal Rajeev Singh, holder of
Passport No. Z 2403195
issued at Kuwait on 28/11/2012
hereby announce that
I have changed my name
from **Kunal Rajeev Singh**
to **KUNAL SINGH**
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card is
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DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 16/5/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 16/5/2018											
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	FEG	341	Sohag	13:50	ICV	675	Hong Kong	00:05	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:10	KAC	672	Dubai	13:55	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	KIS	6033	Mashhad	13:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:10	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	618	Doha	14:10	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30	WAN	975	Baku	13:20
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	MSR	2615	Cairo	00:30	WAN	873	Istanbul	13:50
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
JZR	267	Beirut	01:25	KAC	364	Colombo	14:20	MSC	406	Sohag	01:05	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	KAC	512	Mashhad	14:25	WAN	541	KTM	01:15	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:25	THY	773	Istanbul	01:45	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	JZR	751	Madinah	14:30	KAC	417	Manila	01:45	FEG	442	Asyut	14:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50	JZR	528	Asyut	01:45	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:05	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05	KAC	363	Colombo	01:50	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:50	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:10	JZR	502	Luxor	01:55	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	KAC	677	Dubai	02:00	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	562	Amman	15:20	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	WAN	341	Sohag	02:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	SVA	504	Madinah	15:55	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:45	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR	534	Cairo	16:10	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	KAC	118	New York	16:20	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20	JZR	142	Doha	03:20	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	KNE	535	Jeddah	16:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00	RBG	216	Sohag	03:45	SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	145	Doha	17:35	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40	JAI	571	Mumbai	05:05	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	JZR	555	Alexandria	18:05	QTR	1077	Doha	05:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:30	JZR	555	Alexandria	18:05	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15	KNE	536	Jeddah	17:45
JZR	561	Sohag	05:40	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	103	London	05:35	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
BAW	157	London	05:55	WAN	976	Baku	18:50	KAC	702	Taif	05:45	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:10	RJA	640	Amman	19:00	KAC	786	Riyadh	06:05	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	JZR	771	Istanbul	06:05	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:25	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10	JZR	1770	Jeddah	06:35	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	143	Doha	06:45	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:35	RJA	649	Amman	07:00	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30
JZR	503	Luxor	07:00	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35	JZR	356	Mashhad	07:15	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	384	Delhi	07:00	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40	KAC	167	Paris	07:20	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	358	Kochi	07:50	KAC	057	Dubai	19:50	PAL	669	Manila	07:40	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	529	Asyut	08:05	FDB	104	London	20:00	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:05	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:00	JZR	778	Jeddah	08:00	WAN	135	Doha	19:50
WAN	342	Sohag	08:10	KAC	624	Frankfurt	20:05	BAW	156	London	08:20	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
SAW	703	Damascus	08:25	DLH	624	Muscat	20:05	KAC	165	Rome	08:25	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
IRC	6552	ABD	08:25	OMA	647	Taif	20:10	KAC	511	Mashhad	08:45	JZR	552	Alexandria	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:30	KNE	381	Muscat	20:15	KAC	117	Mashhad	08:45	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	08:50	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC	787	New York	09:05	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
IRA	665	Shiraz	08:55	KAC	620	Doha	20:15	KAC	117	Jeddah	09:05	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:00	KAC	166	Rome	20:25	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
FDB	055	Dubai	09:05	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	KAC	521	Al Najaf	09:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:25	KAC	172	Frankfurt	20:45	SAW	704	Damascus	09:30	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	09:30	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	IRC	6553	ABD	09:40	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
JZR	787	Riyadh	09:40	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	09:55	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	KAC	561	Amman	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
MEA	404	Beirut	10:00	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:45	KAC	543	Cairo	21:20
JZR	703	Taif	10:30	KAC	307	Paris	21:20	JZR	535	Cairo	09:45	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
QTR	1074	Doha	10:40	KAC	168	Bahrain	21:50	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
KIS	6032	Mashhad	10:55	GFA	219	Amman	21:50	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:00	WAN	874	Istanbul	22:00	KAC	101	London	10:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
JZR	1771	Jeddah	11:00	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
WAN	134	Doha	12:00	ETD	309	Doha	22:15	KAC	617	Madinah	10:10	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:05	KAC	786	Abu Dhabi	22:15	JZR	750	Shiraz	10:15	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
UAE	871	Dubai	12:20	AIC	975	Jeddah	22:25	IRA	664	Istanbul	10:25	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:30	SVA	502	Chennai/Goa	22:25	KAC	155	Doha	10:25	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
WAN	542	KTM	12:45	JAI	574	Jeddah	22:45	QTR	1071	Istanbul	10:40	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	522	Al Najaf	12:45	MSC	501	Mumbai	23:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40	JZR	604	Ahmedabad	22:40
MSR	610	Mashhad	12:50	THY	764	Alexandria	23:10	IRM	1189	Mashhad	11:10	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
JZR	357	Riyadh	13:00	MSR	2614	Istanbul	23:15	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:20	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:05	FDB	071	Cairo	23:30	JZR	554	Alexandria	11:20	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
			13:30	JZR	241	Dubai	23:35	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				WAN	136	Amman	23:40	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55	WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
						Doha	23:40	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05	SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45
												JZR	560	Sohag	23:45



Charli XCX announces Pop 2 London and Paris gigs

Charli XCX has announced two intimate gigs with special guests, including collaborator A.G. Cook. The 'Boom Clap' singer will bring songs from the pair's latest mixtape, 'Pop 2', which includes features from Tove Lo, ALMA, Carly Rae Jepsen, Kim Petras and MO, to London's Village Underground on June 19 and Paris' La Maroquinerie on June 20. Announcing the two European shows on Twitter, Charli wrote: "POP 2 LONDON & POP 2 PARIS. 19TH & 20TH JUNE. WITH SPECIAL GUESTS. TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY (sic)" The 25-year-old pop star is currently supporting Taylor Swift with Camila Cabello on the 'Shake It Off' hitmaker's 'Reputation Stadium Tour', and she is hoping to jump into the studio with them both. Charli said previously: "I'm really excited to be around all this female energy. I think it will be so powerful. Both Camila and Taylor are such excellent songwriters so in a dream world, we would get some studio time too. That would be awesome." Charli would love to recreate 90s bop 'All the Things She Said' by t.A.T.u with Taylor. She said: "I'd actually love to do something super emo with her, like t.A.T.u's 'All the Things She Said' - oh my God, that would be amazing." The 'Girls' singer has already been in the studio with 'Havana' hitmaker Camila. The British singer penned the track 'Scar Tissue' with the 'Never Be The Same' star, and of all the people she's worked with over the years - including Rita Ora, Iggy Azalea and Britney Spears - Charli said Camila surprised her the most as she wasn't expecting her to be so "prolific" coming from a manufactured girl group. She said: "Honestly I'm not just saying this because you mentioned her earlier, but Camila really blew me away. "I guess I just fell into that predictable, stupid mindset that people who have been placed into fabricated bands might not be the most prolific in the studio because they often, and unfairly, have very little say in their artistic process. "I was totally proven wrong. "Camila is so prolific and incredibly versatile and talented in the studio. "And she's really only recently found her creative freedom, so I feel like this is just the beginning of her creative journey. "She's going to go on to do so much incredible writing, for herself and probably other artists, too. She's amazing." Tickets for Charli's 'Pop 2' shows go on sale on Friday.



TOMLINSON PLANNING TO TOUR THIS YEAR

Louis Tomlinson is planning to go on tour this year. The 'Just Hold On' hitmaker has revealed that while he's hard at work on his debut solo album, he's hoping to make time to hit the road sometime in 2018. He tweeted: "Defo hoping to get out on tour this year just FYI! ... Still working out when but believe me I can't wait to get back on the road ! (sic)" So far this year, Louis has only completed one live performance at SIR Rehearsal Studios in Los Angeles last month, his last gig prior to that was on 'The X Factor' in the UK in December 2017. The 26-year-old hunk is said to be heading in a new direction music wise, after parting ways his management. The One Direction star reportedly called time on his two-year partnership with James Grant Management - who look after the likes of Take That, Blink-182 and James Arthur - to start a fresh with a new team, in a bid to find "international success". A source recently: "Louis has decided to try a new team and is looking for someone who can help him have international success. "His first two singles have had 800,000 streams online already but he has some new ideas about what to do next. "There are no hard feelings from the team at James Grant, they've wished him all the best." According to The Sun newspaper, Louis is said to have been contacted by several major management companies who are desperate to sign him up. Louis has so far released 'Just Hold On' with Steve Aoki, 'Back to You' with Bebe Rexha and Digital Farm Animals, 'Miss You' and 'Just Like You'. Last month, Louis - who found fame in One Direction alongside Liam Payne, Harry Styles, Niall Horan and former member Zayn Malik - said he's "close" to releasing his solo album.

Prince's The Revolution announce European shows



Prince's legendary band The Revolution have announced their first European shows in 33 years. The late 'Raspberry Beret' hitmaker's group - who featured on all his albums from '1999' to 'Sign O' The Times' - are set to perform select dates, including a stop at London's O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire on February 13, next year. Keyboard player Doctor Fink - who has performed in the band since 1979 - has revealed that he and drummer Bobby Z held talks with the music legend, who sadly passed away from an overdose in April 2016, to get the band back together, though sadly nothing came of it. On how special these shows will be, he said: "Back in 2014, Bobby and I met with Prince. "and he opened the meeting with his desire to reunite with The Revolution for some future shows. "Sadly for us, this did not come to fruition, which makes our reunion all the more poignant." Lisa Coleman - who played the keys from 1980 onwards - added: "We're the ones

that he held on to. "We walked on the moon together - he would say, 'You guys are the only ones who know what I know about this.'" The band - completed by Brown Mark and Wendy Melvoin - started performing again following the 'Kiss' singer's death two years ago, starting with three concerts in Prince's hometown of Minneapolis at the First Avenue Club in tribute to the icon. They've gone on to perform shows around the world and will touch down in Europe when they play Copenhagen's Vega on February 8. It follows the news that a new Prince album is set to be streamed on Jay-Z's streaming service TIDAL next year. The rapper 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 'HiTnRUN Phase One' and 'HiTnRUN Phase Two', and we will continue to respect and honour Prince's enduring legacy and wishes with this new collection."

Turner's Leonard Cohen inspiration



Alex Turner took inspiration from Leonard Cohen for the new Arctic Monkeys album. The British rockers' frontman changed his approach to songwriting when working on 'Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino' - the group's sixth studio album - after hearing the late, legendary singer/songwriter, who passed away in November 2016 aged 82, discussing how parts of his tunes don't necessarily make sense on their own. He said: "I think saw Leonard Cohen talking about writing and that idea if you pull out one thing from one his songs, you're gonna be like, 'What is he on about?' "But in the context of everything, I feel like you know exactly where he's coming from, especially with a writer like him - you're right there with him as you listen to a song of his in its entirety or a record." Hearing him talk about that idea of pulling one thing out and it not making much sense is definitely something that spurred me on to approaching this record in that way and not be so concerned with making the thing be about whatever it's about." The 32-year-old singer became "less concerned" with writing tracks with their own individual ideas for the album, as he did with several tunes for the group's 2013 record 'AM', and The Last Shadow Puppets' 'Everything You've Come To Expect'. Speaking on BBC 6Music, he added: "I suppose on the last Monkeys record, and even the record I did just before this with Miles [Kane], there are songs that are about what they're about, you know? "Like 'Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High' or whatever, it starts and ends with here. "Maybe that thing spills onto some of the other tracks or the tone of that, but I think I became less concerned on this album [with] compartmentalizing every idea to the point where each song became this episode that starts and ends in three minutes."

Mel B wants to add to her solo repertoire



Mel B wants to do more solo music. The Spice Girl has revealed that she is hoping to make time to write some tunes for herself in the "future", when she's not busy working with her bandmates - Emma Bunton, Geri Horner, Victoria Beckham and Mel C - on their comeback. She told the Metro newspaper: "I'd love to do more solo stuff. "It's not something I am planning on imminently but definitely in the future. "I will try and squeeze that out." The 42-year-old singer hasn't released a solo song since 2013's 'For Once in My Life', which peaked at number two on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Songs chart. Whilst she has released two solo records, 2000's 'Hot', which she put out a month before the release of the 'Say You'll Be There' group's final album 'Forever'. It included the singles, 'I Want You Back', featuring Missy Elliott, 'Tell Me', 'Feels So Good' and 'Lullaby', and was followed up with the record 'L.A. State of Mind' in 2005. The 'Viva Forever' hitmakers sparked speculation they are planning to release new music and go on tour after all five members reunited at Geri's house earlier this year. However, despite teasing fans about a tour, Mel says she and her bandmates haven't decided exactly what they are going to do yet, though they are working hard with their manager Simon Fuller on projects. She said: "We haven't figured it out yet. "All five of us signed to Simon Fuller a couple of

months ago. "We are working on a master plan, so once we've all decided... "The good thing is that all five of us are back together... "As in details ... that's being sorted out as we speak. "We'll see. I'm not going to stay this, this and this. "I love my girls, I love performing, I love touring the world, doing interviews and just being creative and writing music, so we'll see."

Maren Morris wants to get out of 'comfort zone' on new album



Maren Morris is "trying to get out of her comfort zone" with her new album. The 'Seeing Blind' hitmaker hopes her next LP will be a "natural step" following her 2016 debut album 'HERO'. She said: "I think there was already a good bit of that with my first record, but with this one probably more. I think that's a natural next step for me. I'm trying to get out of my comfort zone a little more on this album." And the 28-year-old singer feels she is in a "healthier headspace" now than she was when she was working on her first LP. She added: "The lyrics are more grown-up. I recorded my debut album when I was 24; I'm 28 now. Doesn't feel like that long ago, but a lot has happened in that chunk of time. I'm in a healthier headspace; I'm less judgmental of myself ... Keith Urban has actually given me a lot of

great advice. He's like, 'This is a snapshot of your life. It's like a yearbook, so don't overthink your second album. It's just songs that reflect those years of time and then you move on and you make another album. Don't even worry about the deadlines; they whoosh past. Just focus on being in there.' That took some of the heat off me." Maren loves the "production element" of making music too. She told Rolling Stone magazine: "I love sparring back and forth with people and just geeking out over mixes. I love the production element of making records. Even when I moved to Nashville the reason I learned about production was from being in demo sessions from my songs when I was just a writer. I learned my voice sounds better with this certain kind of effect, or what guitars sound too slick and polished."

Wiley documentary heading for big screen



Wiley's journey to becoming the Godfather of Grime is set to be the subject of a new documentary. The 'Wearing My Rolex' hitmaker - whose real name is Richard Cowie - says that while the film will focus on the "highs and lows" of his life and career, he's doing it for Grime as a genre and the "lost" musicians who have brought it to the mainstream. He said: "This is my life, my highs and lows, but it's not really all about me. "When I make music, help the scene or even do something like this, it's like I'm not alone any more. It's for people who grew up like me. I'm doing it to help people who are lost like me." The 39-year-old rapper - who was awarded an MBE this year - is yet to choose who will portray him in the documentary. The film is being helmed by Adam Smith - who has worked on similar projects for The Chemical Brothers and Mike Skinner from The Streets - and Wiley's sister Janaya Cowie is reportedly set to executive produce. Pulse Films - who did Beyonce's 65-minute visual film 'Lemonade' - and BMG are producing the documentary, which is titled 'Wiley'. Speaking last year, Wiley - who released his 12th studio album 'Godfather II', the second half of 2017's 'Godfather' - claimed the sound currently enjoying chart success "is not grime". He explained: "No-one's had a grime number one. "Any number one that anyone's had, it's pop music. "England is built on pop music, that's why the show was called 'Top of the Pops'. It's a strong pop market." Wiley insisted he didn't wish to detract from the recent success of acts like Stormzy and Skepta. But he feels that the sound he helped to create has been watered down over time in order to make it more radio-friendly. The London rapper said: "Stormzy and Skepta have made it into something today that pays as well as pop does." Meanwhile, speaking of his royal title, he said: "I'm honored to be receiving an MBE. It feels like the school grade I wanted and didn't get but now I'm finally there."



Saoirse Ronan Fame can be distracting

Saoirse Ronan admits fame can be “distracting”. The 24-year-old actress has recently emerged as one of the most in-demand young stars in Hollywood, but Saoirse has revealed her determination to stay grounded, saying she doesn’t want fame to distract her from her work. The ‘Lady Bird’ actress shared: “I can see how it can be distracting, especially when you do get a bit more recognizable, and maybe you’re sort of in the public eye a little bit more and stuff. “But if you’re aware of why it is you’re doing this - it should be because you love it - it keeps you quite level-headed.” Despite the success she’s enjoyed as an actress, Saoirse often goes about her day to day life unnoticed. And she has revealed that a large number of people still don’t realise that she’s Irish. Speaking on ITV’s ‘Lorraine’, Saoirse added: “You know, most people still don’t know that I’m Irish. “I have a lot of people coming up to me in Ireland lately, when I’ve been home, and friends of mine who apparently love me say that my voice is very, very loud and it travels across time and space ... I was in a supermarket the other day and someone was like, ‘Is it you, is it yourself?’ “I was like, ‘Who do you think I am?’ ‘Are you Saoirse? I didn’t know it was you by looking at you, but I heard your voice.’ So it tends to be the voice...”

Wright ‘down’ for female Marvel movie



Letitia Wright is “down” for an “all-female Marvel cinematic experience”. The ‘Black Panther’ star would love to see a Marvel movie centering around all the female characters from the Marvel universe coming together. She said: “Let’s just do it! I think if we’re going into the next phase of Marvel, we’ve gotta completely tick that off the list. An all-female Marvel cinematic experience, I’m down for that.” And the 24-year-old actress is also hopeful that her character Shuri will be given a “bit more responsibility of having a say in what happens in the land” in the inevitable sequel of the hit movie rather than be stuck in the lab. She added to Entertainment Tonight: “I would like to see [Shuri] venture out [of Wakanda] a little bit more and go on different missions around the world, and hopefully, she can go on those missions with her brother. I’d like to see her have a bit more responsibility in the land as well. She is a princess and I think in the first film she’s kind of like, ‘Yeah, I’m a princess ... but I’m in the lab.’ But for her to have a bit more responsibility of having a say in what happens in the land as well, and what goes on, that would be cool because it can show a little bit more of maturity for her.” Meanwhile, Wright hopes ‘Black Panther’ will make “different normal”. She explained: “So many young black women love science, technology, engineering and maths. But that’s not the widely held image of the kind of person who likes those things. We’re happy that people are feeling the film, but we also just want it to become normal. We’re trying to make different normal.”— Bang Showbiz

Streep ‘to star in Panama Papers film’

Meryl Streep is set to star in Steven Soderbergh’s Panama Papers movie. The 68-year-old actress is being lined up to appear in the forthcoming drama film, ‘The Laundromat’, and Gary Oldman and Antonio Banderas are also said to be in early discussions about appearing in the motion picture. According to The Hollywood Reporter, details of who Streep might play are as yet being kept under wraps. Soderbergh will helm the project, and Scott Z. Burns has penned the script, which is based on the Jake

Bernstein book, ‘Secrecy World: Inside the Panama Papers Investigation of Illicit Money Networks and the Global Elite’. The Panama Papers are 11.5 million documents belonging to the world’s fourth biggest law firm, Mossack Fonseca, which were leaked in 2015. The docs revealed how some wealthy and powerful people were able to funnel money illegally around the globe. Soderbergh, Burns, Michael Sugar, Lawrence Grey, and Gregory Jacobs will produce the movie. News of the Papers came about after a whistle blower - whose



identity has never been revealed - passed the documents to German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung. In a statement, ‘John Doe’ said his “life is in danger” and told the publication he leaked the documents “simply because I understood enough about their contents to realize the scale of the injustices they described”. The movie has drawn comparisons to the Oscar-winning film ‘Spotlight’, which told the story of a group of journalists who revealed the cover-up of sexual abuse by Catholic priests in the US. The film was also produced by Sugar.

Lars Von Trier’s new movie sparks Cannes Film Festival walkout

More than 100 people reportedly walked out of the premiere of Lars Von Trier’s new movie ‘The House That Jack Built’ on Monday night. The 62-year-old director has only just returned to the Cannes Film Festival after previously making a series of provocative remarks about Adolf Hitler, but his latest effort left some moviegoers feeling less than impressed, with the murder drama leaving members of the audience in shock. Variety reporter Ramin Setoodeh explained that the walkouts came on the back of “Matt Dillon aiming a rifle at two small children, blowing their heads off”. Another contentious moment in the film sees Dillon’s on-screen character give a speech in which he claimed that men



are “always the victim” of assumed guilt. On the other hand, The Hollywood Reporter has claimed that the film earned a six-minute standing ovation from the half-empty movie theatre. Von Trier hasn’t been invited to Cannes since 2011, when his movie ‘Melancholia’ screened in the festival’s main competition. Asked about his German roots and his interest in the Nazi aesthetic at a press conference, Von Trier delivered a controversial response. He said at the time: “I thought I was a Jew for a long time, and I was very happy ... But it turned out that I was not a Jew ... “And then I found out that I was really a Nazi, because my family was German. Which also gave me some pleasure. What can I say?”

Pegg teases Quentin Tarantino’s Star Trek

Simon Pegg has promised Quentin Tarantino’s ‘Star Trek’ idea won’t make for an “ordinary” movie. The 48-year-old actor - who plays Montgomery ‘Scotty’ Scott in the money-spinning sci-fi franchise - has given fans an insight into what they can expect from the new movie, which is based on Tarantino’s ideas. Simon told ComingSoon.net: “Everyone sort of assumes it’s gonna be like ‘Pulp Fiction’ in space, but I think his devotion to ‘Trek’ and his understanding of it ... “It won’t be ordinary, it’ll have him all over it, but it won’t be anything a ‘Star Trek’ fan will have to worry about. He has an acute understanding of the story and he’d never do anything to tear it down. I haven’t read the treatment yet, but I might be able to in the next couple of weeks, so I’m excited about that.”



Simon has also clarified the role he will play in the next film in the franchise. The British star - who previously co-wrote ‘Star Trek Beyond’ - explained: “The script for 4 is being written by [JD] Payne and [Patrick] McKay and then also obviously Quentin turned up at the office a couple of months ago and said, ‘Hey, I’ve got an idea!’ So that’s in the hope for further down the line. It’s a good time for ‘Star Trek’, I think.” Meanwhile, it was recently announced that S.J. Clarkson is to direct ‘Star Trek 4’, thereby becoming the first female to helm a movie in the franchise.

Gomez ‘loved’ her Met Gala look despite critics

Selena Gomez has shrugged off critics of her Met Gala look. The 25-year-old star - who is said to have been thrilled with her red carpet look - has seemingly hit back at her haters in a cryptic Instagram post, after fans criticized Selena’s spray tan and relaxed hairstyle for the annual fundraiser event in New York City.



Alongside a shrug emoji, Selena captioned a video of herself running away from the Metropolitan Museum Of Art: ‘Me when I see my pictures from MET (sic)’ Despite this, a source close to the brunette beauty has insisted she ‘felt great’ about her look. As a result, Selena was eager to ‘clap back’ at the people who were mocking her appearance. The insider told People: ‘In person, she honestly felt great but not everything looks the same as it does in person, she was just clapping back at people who were commenting on her tan and hair and wanted to make a joke about it. [She] got it when she saw the photos.’ The eWolves’ singer ‘loved’ the design of her Coach dress and was involved in choosing which outfit to wear. The source continued: ‘She had two outfits to choose from and decided on Sunday which one she was going to go with, she loved the dress and was very involved with it.’ Selena collaborated with the American designer on a sell-out handbag design last year, and is currently in the process of designing her own range of clothing with the company. For the Met Gala, Selena chose to wear a custom Coach floor-length gown made from vintage cream silk gauze - which was reminiscent of the fall 2018 runway collection.



CHERYL GOT BEAUTY SECRETS FROM THE SPICE GIRLS

Cheryl learnt beauty tricks from a Geri Horner. The 34-year-old former Girls Aloud star revealed she and her fellow bandmates - made up of Kimberley Walsh, Nadine Coyle, Sarah Harding and Nicola Roberts - used to seek beauty and makeup advice from the Spice Girls when they were just starting out with their music careers. Speaking to Glamour.com, Cheryl confessed: (Geri Horner and the Spice Girls used to teach us) loads of stuff in the early days”. And now the LOreal ambassador has her own collection with the drugstore beauty brand for fans to recreate her signature red lip and bronzed skin, but Cheryl’s top makeup trick is to match her blush color to her eye-shadow. She said: “Whatever colour blush I use on my cheeks, I will also use on my eyelids.” The brunette beauty likes to pamper herself with luxury skincare and believes it’s worth investing in more expensive products for better results. She explained: “I’ve got a couple of luxury serums from Skinceuticals. I use the Hyaluronic Acid Intensifier serum, which is really great. It is luxury and it’s a little bit more of an expense but it’s worth it if you want results. If you take care of your skin, your makeup looks fresher. Having a good base makes it far easier than trying to cover skin ailments with makeup as you’re not really addressing the problem.” After giving birth to son Bear with boyfriend Liam Payne, 24, last year and refusing the help of a nanny so that she could be a hands-on mother to their son, Cheryl says it was important for Liam to cook meals for their family so she could have time to rest with the baby. She added: “Sleep when the baby sleeps! I used to do that for the first couple of months - just nap with him. I also used to try and keep on top of the steriliser and all that as much as possible so it didn’t build up because then that’s painful. Also, get your husband to cook!”.

HART TO STAR IN REMAKE OF UPTOWN SATURDAY NIGHT



Kevin Hart is set to star in the remake of ‘Uptown Saturday Night’. The 38-year-old actor - who recently starred in ‘Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle’ - has agreed to appear in the remake of the 1974 buddy comedy, which featured Sidney Poitier and Bill Cosby. In the original movie, the two central characters are robbed and end up going off in search of a winning lottery ticket. Will Smith was, at one stage, in line to feature in the film, but he will instead settle for a producer role, according to The Hollywood Reporter. Kenya Barris, who created the American comedy series ‘Black-ish’, is the most recent person to have penned a draft for the film’s script. Despite being one of Hollywood’s most in-demand stars, Kevin previously claimed that fame isn’t “real”, adding that it can be easily “snatched from you”. The ‘Central Intelligence’ star explained: “This s**t ain’t real. It can be snatched from you. Look at how many stars they build up to beat down. “Look at Britney Spears when she was the hottest thing ever. Then Britney went through a meltdown and everybody is like ‘Well we don’t know about this chick here.’ Then she got back again and everybody was like, ‘We love you Britney!’ It was like ‘What?!’ You’re all over the place, people. “It’s not like your life changes because of the level of success that you have. At the end of the day people are people. “If you come up to take a picture of me and I’m with my kids, I’m gonna politely tell you, ‘Hey man, I appreciate your support, but I’m on daddy time right now.’ As a person you should understand that.”



Reynolds feels excited to work with Goddard on X-Force

Ryan Reynolds is relishing the prospect of working with Drew Goddard on an ‘X-Force’ movie. The 41-year-old actor is set to reprise the role of Deadpool for the eagerly-awaited film, which is being written and directed by Drew, and Ryan has revealed he’s extremely excited to work with the 43-year-old moviemaker. Ryan shared: “I just wanna work with Drew. I mean, I love him and he has such an interesting take on where he wants to take that world. “I see it being a real ensemble on a lot of levels just because I think it’s interesting for Deadpool to kinda function in the way he does in his own universe. You always get to sort of find some way to position him as the underdog or take everything away from him, but for him to function in an ensemble [in ‘X-Force’] is a lot of fun.” The Hollywood star admitted he’s excited about the prospect of working alongside a “couple” of new characters, as well as collaborating with Drew. Ryan told Collider: “I think there’s a real opportunity to not burden the narrative by shattering [Deadpool’s] life, so then at the beginning our movie you get to have him just be part of the team, which is obviously a very challenging prospect for someone like Wade Wilson. “So, I’m really excited about that. I’m excited about a couple new characters that we’re talking about. And I’m really especially excited to work with Drew. He’s just amazing.”



Chewbacca poses yesterday during a photocall for the film “Solo : A Star Wars Story” at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos



US director Ron Howard (right) yesterday with Chewbacca during a photocall for the film “Solo : A Star Wars Story”.



(From left) US actor Alden Ehrenreich, Chewbacca and British actress Emilia Clarke.

‘Solo: A Star Wars Story’ touches down in Cannes



The Han Solo spinoff “Solo: A Star Wars Story” has touched down at the Cannes Film Festival, bringing its cast and a full-sized Chewbacca to the French Riviera extravaganza. Director Ron Howard, wearing a hat that read “A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away,” introduced his cast yesterday before the film’s international premiere at Cannes.

Stars Alden Ehrenreich, Donald Glover, Emilia Clarke, Woody Harrelson and “Chewbacca” actor Joonas Suotamo posed for photographers to promote the biggest Hollywood blockbuster at this year’s festival. “Solo” is the third “Star Wars” film to land at Cannes, following “Attack of the Clones” in 2002 and “Revenge of the Sith” in 2005. It will be released in France on May 23, two days before its release in the United States. — AP

British actress Emilia Clarke (left) and US actor Woody Harrelson.



British actress Thandie Newton

Review

Insane as ever, ‘Deadpool 2’ doesn’t disappoint

At a recent screening of “Deadpool 2,” the audience didn’t get up when the end credits came up, patiently sitting through the scrolling names of visual effects supervisors and lighting specialists. Real “Deadpool” fans know to stick around until the ushers toss them out. That’s because the filmmakers aren’t content with containing their sprawling, anarchic and subversive hero in any conventional box. No, in the world of Deadpool, even the boring end credits are studded with jokes and teases.

So hold onto your seats as Ryan Reynolds once more dons the red suit and katana swords for this saucy, over-stuffed and very entertaining sequel to the 2016 massive hit “Deadpool,” which became the second-highest grossing R-rated film domestically after “The Passion of the Christ.” How do we know that? Deadpool happily brags about it in the new film, continuing his breaking-the-fourth-wall humor. Just some of the other things that get derided this time are “Yentl,” “Frozen,” “Stranger Things,” Wolverine, Jared Kushner, cultural appropriation, Brad Pitt, the Norwegian band A-ha, “Basic Instinct,” “Robocop,” fanny packs, “Say Anything,” dubstep, “Sharknado” and Reynolds himself, who mocks his disastrous earlier decision to play Green Lantern.

Domestic bliss

“Deadpool 2” is as gruesome and violent as the first, but perhaps the biggest victim is the very concept of superhero movies. Our anti-hero adores mocking the moral clarity, earnestness and predictable stunts of his distant cousins. And, as a Marvel property, he especially delights in lampooning D.C. Comics. “So dark,” Deadpool says to another superhero. “Are you sure you’re not from

the DC Universe?” In this film, which reunites the original writing team of Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick, we begin by finding our unkillable mercenary in the same domestic bliss where we left him. But if “Deadpool” was an origin story, “Deadpool 2” is a quest tale and our hero this time encounters the time traveling soldier Cable (Josh Brolin), a motley crew of mutants he calls X-Force - “Isn’t that a little derivative?” someone asks snarkily - and various superheroes and mutants, all set to a lively soundtrack that includes Air Supply, Peter Gabriel, “Annie” and an original song with filthy lyrics. If something can be oddly sweet while heads are being decapitated, it’s this film.

Some favorites from the first film are back - some only briefly - such as housemate Leslie Uggams, girlfriend Morena Baccarin and cab driver Karan Soni. The new characters don’t have time to make much of an impression, except for Zazie Beetz from “Atlanta” who has a great turn as Domino, a strong, sardonic superhero who relies on luck. (Someone please write her own film.)

Slow motion

Deadpool, of course, helps us along the film’s convoluted plot with such post-modern cracks as “Big CGI fight coming up!” or the put-down, “That’s just lazy writing” or, after a cool sequence, “Tell me they got that in slow motion.” Director David Leitch replaces Tim Miller but there’s been no noticeable change in tone or corrosion in the franchise’s terrific special effects. If anything, the surprising success of the original has resulted in more money and more insane sequences, like a chase sequence with a truck convoy and a bizarre scene when Deadpool’s legs regrow after he is cut in half, giving him baby limbs for a time. Reynolds is once again at his arch and nihilist best here, while acting and jumping in so much facial prosthetics that it makes him look like he’s inside melted cheese - or, as the first movie put it, an avocado that had relations with an older avocado.

To really appreciate “Deadpool 2” you have to have seen the original and probably every other Marvel superhero film, too. And be up on pop culture, from Cher to Broadway musicals. (It’s a good thing there’s no quiz at the end.) Speaking of ends, don’t embarrass yourself by getting up to leave when it seems to be over. And get ready to happily sit through “Deadpool 3,” too. “Deadpool 2,” 20th Century Fox release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for “strong violence and language throughout, sexual references and brief drug material.” Running time: 119 minutes. Three stars out of four. — AP



Actors Blake Lively (left) and Ryan Reynolds attend the ‘Deadpool 2’ screening at AMC Loews Lincoln Square in New York City. — AFP photos



In this file photo, singer and fashion icon Rihanna appears at an event to promote her new lingerie brand Savage X in the Brooklyn borough of New York. — AP

Man charged with stalking Rihanna, burglarizing her home

Authorities say a man who broke into Rihanna’s Hollywood Hills home and spent 12 hours there has been charged with stalking the singer, who was not at home at the time. Los Angeles County prosecutors say 26-year-old Eduardo Leon of Fullerton was charged Monday with felony counts of stalking, burglary and vandalism, and a misdemeanor count of resisting arrest.

He appeared in court Monday and pleaded not guilty to all of the charges. Leon is accused of climbing over a fence and breaking into the house on May 9. Authorities say Rihanna’s assistant found him and called police. — AP

RITA MORENO: ‘DISCRIMINATION, THAT’S MY LIFE’

She was five years old when she arrived by boat from Puerto Rico with her seamstress mother, dropping anchor in front of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor. Rosita Dolores Alverio may have been a small child, but in no time at all she became Rita Moreno, the star who conquered Broadway and Hollywood-living the American dream after growing up in the Bronx.

The actress, singer and dancer is currently the only Latina among 12-strong esteemed “EGOT” winners circle, those who have bagged each an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar and a Tony award. At 86, she exudes vitality, grace and elegance but has never forgotten the racism and sexism she suffered for decades. “Discrimination, that’s my life since I was a young woman!” she tells AFP at an interview shortly before receiving an Ellis Island medal of honor at a gala dinner honoring successful immigrants. “Racial bias, sexual harassment was all over the place when I was a young woman on film.”

Her incredible life includes a fiery and toxic eight-year romance with Marlon Brando that pushed her into a suicide attempt, and flings with Elvis Presley, Dennis Hopper and Anthony Quinn. In the end she married an affable cardiologist from New York, with whom she had a daughter. Their 46-year marriage ended only with his death in 2010. In the recent interview on Ellis Island in front of the Statue of Liberty and the spot where 12 million immigrants disembarked in the first half of the 20th century-Moreno says her life is better than ever. “This is the best time in my life,” she enthuses. “I have a book out about my life, I have an album in Spanish... I have a career that’s ongoing... I am very, very fortunate.”

Racial bias

Her hair now silver, Moreno easily looks a generation younger-her face youthful, her mind quick and mischievous

and still with a dancer’s poise, dressed in a pastel blue dress and white gloves. Asked about the secret of eternal youth, she grins. “We carry our age very well in my family,” she told AFP on the sidelines of the gala dinner, culminating with spectacular fireworks. Moreno, who says she was harassed as a teenager by a former studio head, is thrilled with the #MeToo movement since the downfall of Harvey Weinstein. “I think it’s a movement that’s going to grow more and more and more,” she said. After her first role on Broadway at age 13 came small “ethnic” roles on film-playing Indian, Arab and Polynesian parts, and performing in the 1952 movie “Singing in the Rain” with Gene Kelly.

At 17 she signed a contract with MGM and in 1962 became the first Latina to win an Oscar for acting for her role as the sexy Anita in 1961’s “West Side Story”—which narrates the rivalry between two New York gangs and is based on a Broadway musical inspired by “Romeo and Juliet.” Then... nothing. “After I won my Oscar nobody came to me,” she said.—AFP



In this file photo actress Rita Moreno presents the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film during the 90th Annual Academy Awards in Hollywood, California. — AFP

Lifestyle | Music & Movies



US director Spike Lee (center) speaks yesterday as US actor Adam Driver (left) and US actor John David Washington listen during a press conference for the film "BlackKkKlansman". — AFP photos



US director Spike Lee (center) poses yesterday with (from left) US actress Damaris Lewis, Finnish actor Jasper Paakkonen, US actress Laura Harrier, US actor Adam Driver, US actor Topher Grace, US actor John David Washington and US actor Corey Hawkins during a photocall for the film 'BlackKkKlansman' at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France.



(From left) US actor John David Washington, US director Spike Lee and US actor Adam Driver yesterday during a photocall for the film "BlackKkKlansman".

In Cannes, Spike Lee lambasts Trump over white supremacists

In a passionate, expletive-ridden monologue at the Cannes Film Festival, director Spike Lee lambasted Donald Trump for the US president's response to last year's violent white supremacist protest in Charlottesville, Virginia. Lee spoke to reporters yesterday after his "BlackKkKlansman" premiered Monday night at Cannes to a rousing standing ovation.

The 1979-set film, loosely based on a true story, is about black police detective Ron Stallworth (played by John David Washington, Denzel's son) and a Jewish detective (Adam Driver) who together infiltrated a Ku Klux Klan cell in Colorado. Topher Grace plays former KKK leader David Duke.

The 61-year-old filmmaker said that following the violence in Charlottesville, the US president had the opportunity to denounce the Ku Klux Klan and the alt-right. But

Trump instead chose to say there was "blame on both sides" in the unrest between the neo-Nazi groups and counter-protesters. He said Trump - whom he refused to call by name - had "a chance to say we are about love and not hate," and sharply criticized him for not denouncing the KKK. "It was a defining moment and he could have said to the United States and the world that we're better than that," said Lee.

"BlackKkKlansman," produced by Jordan Peele (director of "Get Out"), concludes by connecting the period tale with today. It ends with actual footage from Charlottesville, as well as Trump's televised response. The final image is an upside-down American flag that fades to black and white. Focus Features will release the film in August, on the year anniversary of Charlottesville.

Having already wrapped the film, Lee added the

Charlottesville coda after the unrest last summer. "Right away, I knew that this had to be the coda for the film, but I had to do something first," said Lee. Before inserting footage of the car that plowed through crowds in Virginia, killing counter-protester Heather Heyer, Lee said he telephoned Heyer's mother. "I was not going to put that murder scene in the film without her blessing," said Lee.

Lee called Charlottesville an "ugly, ugly, ugly blemish on America," but he also repeatedly stressed to the international Cannes media that the racism depicted in "BlackKkKlansman" isn't unique to the United States. "This right -wing (expletive) is not just America. It's all over the world. And we have to wake up," said Lee. "We can't be silent. It's not black, white, or brown. It's everybody. We all live on this planet, and this guy in the White House has the nuclear code. I go to bed thinking about it."

At the premiere Monday, Lee was outfitted in a shiny purple-and-orange tuxedo and wore one ring declaring "love" on one hand, and "hate" on the other, paying homage to the jewelry won by the character Radio Raheem in his previous film "Do the Right Thing." He bounced into the premiere at the Palais announcing: "Brooklyn's in the house!" Lee has frequently debuted films at Cannes, including "Do the Right Thing" in 1989. He hopes "BlackKkKlansman" shakes people from their slumber. "I know it in my heart," said Lee. "We're on the right side of history with this film." — AP

Von Trier targets #MeToo in shocking serial killer film



(From left) US actor Matt Dillon, US actress Siobhan Fallon Hogan, Danish director Lars Von Trier, Swiss actor Bruno Ganz and Danish actress Sofie Grabol pose as they arrive for the screening of the film 'The House that Jack Built'. —AFP

Controversial director Lars von Trier kicked up a storm of anger at the Cannes film festival yesterday with a brutal serial killer film which many see as giving the finger to the #MeToo movement. The Danish provocateur, who was banned from Cannes for seven years for saying he understood Hitler, has a frustrated architect played by Matt Dillon kill a string of women and children in scenes of such "abhorrent cruelty" that many critics walked out. "Vile movie. Should not have been made. Actors (also) culpable," said American entertainment reporter Roger Friedman, while another who left tweeted, "Gross. Pretentious. Vomit. Torturous. Pathetic."

As the killer Jack horribly mutilates one girlfriend, who has suffered a night of controlling behavior, he says: "Why is it always the man's fault... If you are born male you are born to be guilty. Think of the injustice of that." He later makes a wallet from her severed breasts. But the scene that sparked most revulsion was one in which Jack indulges in amateur taxidermy on one of the children he has killed with their mother after inviting them on a picnic.

Before dispatching them, he had them all wear Donald Trump-style red baseball hats. The Hollywood Reporter slammed the film as "an autoerotic ego massage... often as inane as it is unsettling." And there was no doubt that it was "a direct FU to the current climate of reckoning over gender bias and sexual misconduct."

'Gruesome'

Von Trier also seemed to taunt the festival over his ban with images of Hitler and other mass-murdering dictators as the killer rhapsodizes about icons of evil and the sound of German World War II Stuka dive-bombers.

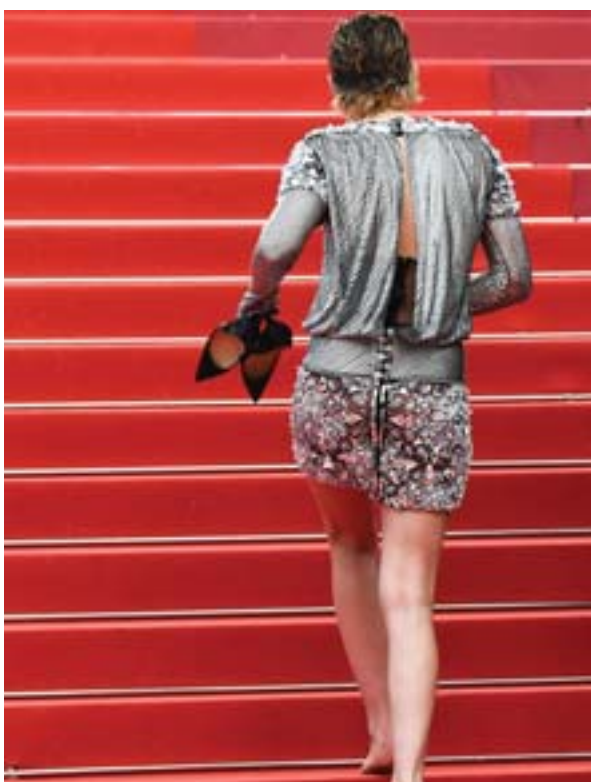
Von Trier, who is notorious for putting his actors through hell, has had to deny accusations he sexually harassed singer Bjork on the set of his 2000 film, "Dancer in the Dark". Danish authorities investigating the production company he founded said female staff had been bullied, humiliated and sexually harassed. —AFP



Kristen Stewart ditches heels to escape Cannes rain

Kristen Stewart took off her high heels and walked the red carpet barefoot as she attended a screening of 'BlackKkKlansman' at the Cannes Film Festival. The 28-year-old actress ensured all eyes were on her as she attended the premiere in a silver top and skirt finished with sky-high Christian Louboutin heels whilst attending the premiere but after the rain started to pour down, Kristen ran towards the Palais des Festivals for shelter, removing her heels to get there more quickly, breaking the festival's 'heels only' rule for the red carpet.

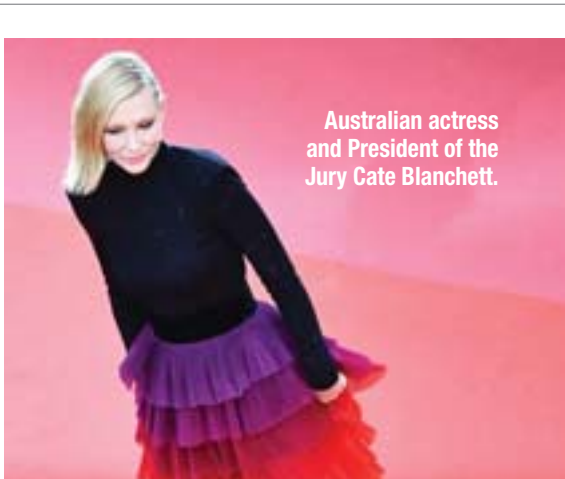
This isn't the first time the 'Twilight: Saga' star has broken the strict Cannes rule on footwear for female guests. In 2016, Kristen made a statement by wearing flats and spoke out about the double standards when it comes to the dress code for women and men. She said: "Things have to change immediately. It has become really obvious that if [a man and I] were walking the red carpet together and someone stopped me and said, 'Excuse me, young lady, you're not wearing heels. You cannot come in.' Then [I'm going to say], 'Neither is my friend. Does he have to wear heels?' It can work both ways." — Bang Showbiz



US actress and member of the Feature Film Jury Kristen Stewart walks barefoot on the red carpet after she removed her shoes. — AFP photos



Russian model Natasha Poly poses as she arrives on May 14, 2018 for the screening of the film "BlackKkKlansman". — AFP photos



Australian actress and President of the Jury Cate Blanchett.



Canadian model Winnie Harlow poses as she arrives for the screening of the film "BlackKkKlansman".

U2 to play at New York's historic Apollo Theater

U2 will put on a special one-night show at New York's historic Apollo Theater. Howard Stern yesterday announced the invitation-only event for SiriusXM subscribers during his show on the satellite music service. The company says U2 will play songs from its "Songs of Experience" album along with classics from its career.

Bono calls it a bucket-list moment and says it's "an incredible honor" to play on the same stage in Harlem that has hosted the legends of soul. SiriusXM subscribers can win tickets to the June 11 performance through an invitation sent by email. —AP



In this file photo, musicians, Adam Clayton, from left, Bono, Larry Mullen Jr and The Edge, of the band U2, perform on stage at Twickenham Stadium in London. — AP

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018



Dutch model Daphne Groeneveld poses as she arrives for the screening of the film 'BlackKkKlansman' at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Syrians flock to pop-up Ghouta markets after years under siege

Ahead of the holy Muslim month of Ramadan, a market in Syria's ravaged Douma is drawing hundreds who can finally afford food, cleaning supplies, and toys after years of siege. Sponsored by Syria's ministry of trade, the four-day market opened on Sunday in a vast courtyard in Douma, the main town in the onetime opposition bastion of Eastern Ghouta near the capital. Regime forces recaptured Ghouta last month after a ferocious offensive that displaced tens of thousands, both to government-controlled zones around Damascus and to opposition-held parts of northern Syria.

Those who stayed are trying to piece their lives together, and many from Douma and the surrounding towns

headed to the market on Sunday to buy goods for their damaged homes. Crowds of men, women, and children streamed into the maze of stalls offering detergent, strained yoghurt, and instant coffee, among other goods.

Umm Mohammad, a 50-year-old shopper, peered at the price tag on a can of processed meat before putting it back on the shelf. "My kitchen in Douma was empty, but several days ago I started fixing it up and preparing it to be full of all kinds of things," she told AFP.

She sported a full-body black robe and face veil and was already carrying bags weighed down with food. "I'm going to rush home to my children after buying them butter and halawa," she said, referring to a crumbly, sesame-based sweet. The goods at the market cost just a fraction of what they did months ago, when a five-year siege made food, medicine, and other basic goods either hard to find or too expensive.

'Impossible to pay'

As the stocks at storefronts dwindled over the years, Ghouta's 400,000 residents were left relying on rare deliveries of humanitarian aid or products smuggled in through tunnels. "I haven't seen this in years," said Hassan Saryoul, a 42-year-old resident, holding up a box of paper napkins. "Napkins were like drugs—virtually banned. A kilo of sugar cost 22,000 Syrian pounds (around \$50) but now it's around 500 pounds," he told AFP. He was already carrying bags in both hands and struggling to manoeuvre around the masses of shoppers: "If I could carry even more things, I would have."

Nearly 40 companies are displaying their wares at the "Goodness in Ghouta" market. It is the second such government-backed effort in Ghouta in recent weeks, after a similar market in the nearby town of Kafr Batna. Syria's minister of trade and consumer protection Abdullah Al-



Syrians browse merchandise as they attend the government-sponsored "Ghouta Shopping Festival".

Gharabi told reporters a total of six such markets would be organised throughout Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting which begins late Tuesday.

Ghouta fell to rebels in 2012 and was placed under a crippling siege the following year. With help from its ally Russia, Syria's government recaptured Ghouta one month ago through a blend of military pressure and population transfer deals. Raed Zabadina pulled bottles of laundry detergent, bleach, and shampoo from the shelves behind him and packed them into bags for impatient customers. "It's natural there'd be so many customers in the cleaning section. A big box of detergent costs 500 Syrian pounds here, while a small box in the past would cost 3,000 pounds," he told AFP. "This amount was just impossible for people to pay."

Mohammad al-Hafi, 31, was also barely able to catch his breath behind a booth selling City Cafe, the ubiquitous brand of Syrian instant coffee. "I had to shut the door because of the crowds. People here are buying much more because of how desperately they need food and other goods," Hafi told AFP as he jotted down sales numbers. Just outside the market, Douma remains devastated, with mangled cars rusting outside crumbling buildings and rubble still littering the dusty streets. Syrian flags, portraits of a beaming President Bashar al-Assad, and brightly coloured posters advertising the pop-up flea market were plastered all over the gutted concrete residences. — AFP



Syrian children browse toys on display during the government-sponsored "Ghouta Shopping Festival".



Syrians browse merchandise as they attend the government-sponsored "Ghouta Shopping Festival", in the Eastern Ghouta town of Douma, on the eastern outskirts of the capital Damascus. — AFP photos



Syrian children browse merchandise as they attend the government-sponsored "Ghouta Shopping Festival".



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