



15 EMI Music Publishing and Sony seal \$1.9 billion deal



24 The miraculous rise of Nigeria's football club Mountain Top FC



SUPPLEMENT INSIDE

رمضان	
Ramadan Hours	
IMSAK	03:11
FAJR	03:21
DHUHR	11:45
ASR	15:20
MAGHRIB	18:38
ISHA	20:06

More expats, more unemployed citizens: NA committee reveals

MPs want probe into alleged government payments

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly budgets committee said yesterday that the number of residence permits granted to expatriates had increased which resulted in a rise in the number of unemployed Kuwaitis. The panel said the conclusion was reached by a field survey on the numbers of manpower in the country conducted by the Central Statistics Department.

The committee made the remarks while discussing the 2018/2019 budget for the Manpower Authority and its final

statements for the 2017/2018 fiscal year. Lawmakers have been pressing the government to speed up replacing expatriate employees in government jobs to create jobs for nationals. The Assembly has even set up a special committee to study such issues.

In another development, seven lawmakers signed a letter to the National Assembly calling for an official probe into alleged government payments to MPs. The letter wants the National Assembly to inform the Anti-Corruption Authority to launch an official investigation into state-

ments by MP Ahmad Al-Fadhl that the government will pay MPs before the summer.

The statements were exposed in a video posted on social media and shows Fadhil telling someone the government will be making the payments before the summer. Fadhil had acknowledged making the remarks but explained that the payments were intended for needy Kuwaitis in which lawmakers act as middlemen to secure the financial assistance. He also said that many Kuwaiti lawmakers regularly do the same and secure payments from various government bodies to their voters.

Later, opposition MP Riyadh Al-Adasani threatened to grill the prime minister unless the government issues a statement explaining the issue. The statement was issued on Monday following the Cabinet weekly meeting in which the government distanced itself from paying to lawmakers and insisting that any aid to citizens is done through legal channels. Adasani said yesterday that he would support any move to investigate the issue by the Anti-Corruption Authority but he also called for the Audit Bureau to probe the issue.

A slice of Ramadan

Ramadan Kareem

By Mariam-Joyce DSouza

By way of introduction, the 30 days of this beautiful, glorious and bountiful month called 'Ramadan' are divided into three parts - each comprising of ten days. The first ten days are the days of Mercy; the middle ten days are the days of Forgiveness; and the last ten days are the days of Salvation. This article refers to the first ten days of mercy. My dear readers, it's the most wonderful time of the year and a great opportunity to make and establish resolutions.

This is a special month because it symbolizes the spirit of worship, sacrifice and most challenging of all - God consciousness - all leading to becoming merciful ourselves thus resulting in receiving God's blessings of mercy. Hence, I take this opportunity to urge you to seek opportunities to be merciful. Show leniency, clemency and compassion. Be graceful, tender-hearted, generous and kind. Practice pity, charity and forgiveness. Exercise humanity, humanness, forbearance, soft-heartedness and tolerance. Maintain mildness of character, sympathy, empathy and benevolence.

So in these ten days (and hopefully always), attach your name to at least one of these traits. This is a special quote for those readers who house the books of hadiths on their bookshelf: Allah created mercy in one hundred parts and sent down to earth only one part. Because of this one part, there is mutual love amongst creation, so much so that an animal will lift up its hoof from its young one, fearing that it might harm it. Allah has reserved the remaining ninety-nine parts of this mercy to favor His believing servants on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as recorded in Bukhari and Muslim, Book #037, Hadith #6631.

I would like to share this little story I recently read. And so as most stories begin, once upon a time, in a small rural village, there lived a young orphan boy with his paternal relatives. Due to the scarcity of water in the village, the young boy awoke early every morning, carried his pot and headed for the stream with the aim of fetching water for the family.

Sadly for him, he alone had this task as a routine every morning and evening while his cousins were given other lenient tasks. Yet, the young boy bore no grudge against his family. He continued to love them and carried out his task, diligently. However, on his way back from the stream, with a pot filled to the brim with water, he usually encountered some individuals who invariably were thirsty. Despite knowing that his aunt would berate him (often get a beating too) for fetching half-filled pots, this boy would stop and offer water to these individuals.

One day, he couldn't bear the scolding from his aunt, so he swore never to give anyone water. But on one particular day on his way back, he met a strange looking man who begged him for water. The strange man lay by the road side with an injury. The young boy remembered his vow - never to give anyone water - but contemplated for a moment. His heart filled with mercy for the stranger and so he gave the man some water. When he got home, his aunt noticed the half-filled pot, and again pounced on him - this time with even more cruelty than ever before.

As she was beating this young lad, there was a knock on the door. It was the strange wounded man - a mailman who would have died of thirst on the way if not for the boy's mercy. Apparently, he came from town with an envelope for this very same young boy. It contained a scholarship with an additional gift of cash for the boy! You can only imagine the boy's feelings of profound joy, deep happiness and intense gratitude which was reflected in his profession.

The boy grew up to be a famous orator and he always opened his lectures talking about his childhood experience because he realized that it was God who had put him in the "mailman's way" and it was God who had placed mercy in his heart for others. With mercy comes a heart filled with compassion and love for the giver and the beneficiary. It is rightly said that where there is mercy, there is life. Your everyday good deeds, however small, are never in vain for they shall return to you when least expected.

Continued on Page 24

Kuwait urged to cancel the kafeel system

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Society for Human Rights (KSHR) called on the state to cancel the sponsorship (or kafeel) system and transfer the sponsorship to the government. In a report released yesterday

on the condition of labor forces in Kuwait, KSHR also called for updating labor legislation and criminalize its violators, and ensuring decent work for laborers, especially domestic labor.

Furthermore, KSHR demanded an end to administrative deportation, avoid tasking expats' remittances and stop discrimination against foreigners living in Kuwait. The Unit of Monitoring and Following-up

Worker Rights' Issues in Kuwait has issued a report on the status of migrant workers in Kuwait during the first third of 2018, in which they discussed the legal changes that targeted the workers and the impact of these changes at the local and international level.

The report talked about the activation of administrative innovations that protect the status of workers in their workplaces, control the labor market, and oblige employers to implement the provisions of the Labor Law, besides addressing the violations against workers, postpone the application of the decision that prevents the employment of workers under 30 years with university qualifications, and workers' benefit directly from His Highness the Crown Prince, which included detainees in prisons, especially those detained on financial issues.

Continued on Page 24

Kuwait Defense Minister chairs SCPD's meeting

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presided over the 11th meeting of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) yesterday. The council discussed items listed on the agenda that included a memorandum of the media and general policies committee's view on a strategy

to counter terrorism. Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Services Affairs Jenan Boushehri said after the meeting.

The gathering also focused on a memorandum on the economic development committee's view regarding Jaber hospital. Boushehri, also Acting Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, added. A visual presentation was showcased during the meeting on the plan of institutions and bodies belonging to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry so as to achieve the desired development in line with the vision of His Highness the Amir, she noted. — KUNA

Saudi urged not to turn Iraq into 'cold war' front

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia should avoid turning Iraq into a "battleground in a cold war" with its regional rival Tehran, the International Crisis Group said yesterday.

Iraq, located between Sunni-ruled Saudi Arabia and predominantly Shiite Iran, could undergo political change following an upset election victory by cleric Moqtada Sadr. The key populist Shiite leader, seen as resisting Iran's influence in Iraq, made a surprise visit to Riyadh last year.

But a group of Iran allies won second place in last week's polls, raising fears of a new proxy confrontation between Tehran and Riyadh which are already at odds in the Yemen and Syria conflicts. "In projecting its

influence in Iraq, Riyadh should resist the temptation to transform the country into the latest battleground in a cold war with Tehran," the ICG said in a report.

While Saudi Arabia supported Iraq in its war with Iran during the 1980s, Riyadh was on the frontline against Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Relations have warmed between Saudi Arabia and post-Saddam Iraq since last year after a series of visits by officials from both countries, the reopening of a border post for the first time

in 27 years, and the resumption of commercial flights. In March, Saudi King Salman promised Iraq to finance the construction a football stadium with a capacity of up to 100,000 people.

"Saudi Arabia's renewed interest in engaging with Iraq overtly derives from a desire to counter Iranian influence," said the ICG. "The kingdom's financial might gives it leverage, but not enough to have things its way," said the Brussels-based

Continued on Page 24

Saudi Airlines makes emergency landing

RIYADH: A Saudi Arabian Airlines Airbus A330 jet made an emergency landing in the western Red Sea city of Jeddah, injuring 53 people, aviation officials said yesterday. The Saudia aircraft was travelling from the Muslim holy city of Madinah to Dhaka with 151 people on board, but had to be diverted to Jeddah late Monday after it suffered a malfunction in the hydraulic system, the kingdom's Aviation Investigation Bureau said. Footage posted online showed the plane leaving a trail of flame along the runway as it skidded on its nose before screeching to a halt.

"The passengers were evacuated by

emergency slides. 52 of them were slightly injured, while one female passenger suffered a fracture during the evacuation and is now receiving treatment," AIB said in a statement. "AIB has launched an investigation into this accident." The aircraft circled over Jeddah for several hours as its landing gear failed to drop, forcing the captain to make the emergency landing, Saudi media reported. In a similar incident in January 2014, a Saudi Arabian Airlines Boeing 767 jet made an emergency landing in Madinah, injuring 29 people, according to the aviation authority.— AFP



JEDDAH: Officials inspect a Saudi Arabian Airlines Airbus A330 jet yesterday after it makes an emergency landing in the western Red Sea city of Jeddah, injuring 53 people yesterday.



KUWAIT: Shoppers buy fruits and vegetables at a market in Kuwait City during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah presides over the 11th meeting of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) — KUNA

Local

Bahraini Prime Minister greets Amir on the advent of Ramadan

Sheikh Sabah hosts iftar for visiting Bahraini premier



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Dasman Palace on Monday the visiting Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended the meeting during which the Bahraini Premier greeted His Highness the Amir on the advent of the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan. The two sides exchanged friendly talks amid an atmosphere that reflected spirit of brotherhood and the well-established and distinctive relations between the leaders of the two countries, as well as serious endeavors to support bilateral cooperation on all levels.

They also reviewed issues of mutual interest in light of the pan-GCC solid ties. The meeting was attended by National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, senior Sheikhs, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Saba, and senior state officials. His Highness the Amir also held an iftar banquet in honor of the visiting Bahraini Prime Minister and his accompanying delegation. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomes Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa along with a host of senior officials.

Art competition reminds students of consumerism's downsides

KUWAIT: The 23rd Annual Art Competition for school students by the Radisson Blu Hotel in Kuwait City, themed 'Bring Back to Life!', attracted approximately 300 students from 25 local schools, including special needs schools. As part of its strong commitment to empowering the youth and advancing education in Kuwait, Gulf Bank supported the event as a Platinum Sponsor.

The theme of this year's competition aimed at raising awareness of the dangers of developing a throw-away mentality influenced by strong consumerism in a playful, engaging manner. The aspiring artists went to work with great enthusiasm, taking on the task of turning unwanted, discarded objects found at home or in their neighborhood into works of art.

The winners were selected by a committee that commended the originality of all works of art designed and constructed as part of the competition. All participants were honored at a ceremony hosted at the hotel on May 12, 2018 under the patronage of the Ministry of Education, with a Ministry official attending the awards. Gulf Bank was represented by Corporate Partner Salwa Marafie and Mohammed Al-Otaibi, Corporate Communications Manager, who also helped with the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Commenting on the event, Otaibi said, "It is an honor to be part of this wonderful arts competition, providing a platform for some of the best and brightest young artists in the country to showcase their talent. We wish each and every one of them great success in further developing their creative skills and hope to see them again in the future."

Salwa Marafie added, "The works on display are some of the best I've seen by students this young, and I am astounded at the creativity and craftsmanship of our participants. Turning discarded, allegedly useless and worthless objects into works of art shows that the old adage of 'one man's trash being another man's treasure' rings true."

Gulf Bank's corporate social responsibility program is committed to initiatives and events that benefit the local community. Over the past year, the Bank has sponsored events focusing on youth, education, health and fitness, helping the underprivileged, women's empowerment as well as promoting Kuwait's heritage and culture.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Brunei's new Ambassador to Kuwait Haji Ahmad Jumat. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Australia's new Ambassador to Kuwait Jonathan Gilbert.

Crown Prince receives new ambassadors

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Brunei's new Ambassador to Kuwait Haji Ahmad Jumat at Seif Palace yesterday. His Highness also received Australia's new Ambassador to Kuwait Jonathan Gilbert on the occasion of his new appointment. The receptions were attended by Director of Protocols and Ceremonials at His Highness's Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad bin Khaled Al Saud. The two sides discussed ways to further improve the exceptional relations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Separately, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem received a number of foreign Ambassadors to Kuwait. Ghanem met with Switzerland Ambassador Benedict Gubler, Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar, Czech Ambassador Martin Dvorak and Belgian Ambassador. The



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with Ambassador of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to Kuwait Wang Di.

meetings dealt with enhancing cooperation between their countries and Kuwait as well as issues of common interest and latest regional and international developments. Ghanem also met with the UN Development Program (UNDP) Resident Coordinator and Kuwait's Resident Representative Tareq Al-Sheikh. The meeting was attended by MIP Mubarak Al-Harees.

In other news, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah received the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to Kuwait Wang Di. The two men discussed the current arrangements of the proposed official visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Beijing, as well as aspects of bilateral relations between the two countries. — KUNA



Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem meets with Swiss Ambassador Benedict Gubler.



Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem meets with Indian Ambassador Jeeva Sagar.

Kuwait treatment of migrant labor: A step forward and two steps backward

Prepared by the Labor Issues Monitoring and Follow-up Unit in Kuwait, Kuwait Society for Human Rights

Introduction

Kuwait's population is 4,564,204 people; 3,182,367 are non-Kuwaitis and 1,381,837 Kuwaitis, i.e. 30.28 percent of the population are Kuwaitis, and 69.72 percent are non-Kuwaitis. This means there is a shortage of Kuwaiti population which has led to complaints about the "demographic imbalance" and complaints about "the depletion of public services, such as health facilities and roads, traffic congestion and environmental pollution. Also, in the field of work, Kuwaitis complained about "unemployment among citizens, waste of public funds, and preference over Kuwaitis."

Migrant labor is a major driver of many vital economic sectors in the country, the most important of which are the real estate market, banks, telecommunications, automobiles and private education activities, as well as a large purchasing power in the nutrition, retail and public transportation sectors.

A step forward

A number of positive steps that have been taken in the Kuwaiti labor market were monitored during the reporting period:

1. On January 23, the Ministry of the Interior issued Ministerial Decision No. 64 of 2018 on the rules of deporting foreigners who have not obtained residence permits or whose residence permits have expired in order to exempt violators of residency law, who wish to leave the country, from financial fines and security procedures so that they may return. Furthermore, those who wish to stay in the country are exempted from being referred to investigation provided that they pay the fines due in order to settle their status in the event they meet the conditions of residence.

The decision, which was initiated on January 29 and lasted until February 22, stipulated that violators should be allowed to complete their travel procedures from any of the designated ports directly and without being required to have the consent of any party unless it is required by security authority or travel ban.

2. In February, the Public Authority of Manpower (PAM) introduced a new automated system in the Relations Department for the reception of labor complaints electronically through the PAM website available on: www.manpower.gov.kw/Labor-services.html, especially for complaints related to cancellation and transfer, financial dues, passport recovery and final cancellation of travel. This system also informs the workers via an SMS of the absconding report if filed by the employer. Also, an SMS is sent to the employer against whom a complaint is filed. Such system aims to stop malicious reports and inspect whether the worker is absent from the workplace or not.

3. Introducing mechanisms pertaining to the workers protection and labor market control as well as obliging employers to implement the Labor Law provisions and dealing with the violations perpetrated against workers. These developments included the issuance of a number of decisions by the PAM on the mechanism of labor inspection, labor care and occupational safety.

4. Issuance of an administrative circular No. 103 of 2018 by the PAM, which includes the conditions for transferring migrant workers in the public sector to work in the private sector subject to the approval of the government agency in which the worker works and obtaining the security approval from the Ministry of Interior.

5. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah issued an Amiri pardon which included citizens and residents detained in prisons, and many prisoners, especially those sentenced to financial issues.

6. Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh announced the postponement of implementing the decision to stop the recruitment of workers who hold university certificates and are below 30 years old for further studying, after the decision was to be implemented by the beginning of 2018.

7. On April 7, Civil Service Commission (CSC) adopted regulations for hiring migrant workers' expertise for the first time in jobs like doctors, pharmacists, auxiliary medical services and nursing, provided that the general assessment of the academic qualification is very good at a minimum.

8. On April 26, the Kuwaiti judiciary issued a ruling on a human trafficking case against a citizen, which was a precedent and the first of its kind. This is perhaps the most prominent of the positive aspects witnessed by the Kuwaiti labor scene during the reporting period. The Kuwaiti Criminal Court sentenced a Kuwaiti citizen along with three with no nationality (statelessness) to life imprisonment after being found guilty of human trafficking in accordance with Law No. 91 of 2013 on Combating Human Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants; they were convicted of trafficking a group of Asian workers in medical institutes for massages and forcing them to engage in adultery with customers.

9. According to statistics issued by the Department of Domestic Labor, during the reporting period, the Department revoked the licenses of 8 domestic employment offices and suspended the activity of 6 other offices due to non-compliance and violation of the law. The Department also investigated 631 complaints and referred 108 of them to trial and recovered 12,267 dinars to workers in the domestic sector.

Steps backward:

Despite the good efforts made by the government to protect and preserve the rights of non-Kuwaiti workers, and in parallel with those hailed efforts, there were counter-measures targeting workers:

1. On April 1, the Parliamentary Finance Committee approved bills on imposing fees on remittances of expatriates after ensuring that there was no constitutional violation by a majority of 4 to 1, with 1 percent deducted for every 99 dinars, 2 percent for the amount between 100 - 199 dinars, 3 percent for the sum of 200 - 299 dinars, 4 percent of the amount between 300 - 399, and 5 percent is deducted from amounts over 400 per remittance, which pushes towards the emergence of a market parallel to external remittances.

2. On January 9, the Restructuring of the Workforce and State's Executive Apparatus Program held a discussion session with the Industry and Labor Committee at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the presence of representatives of sectors and quality activities and all unions to discuss the implementation of the Cabinet Decision No. 1028 of 2014 on the amendment of the national employment rates to private employers.

3. In January, it was announced that the decision of Kuwaitization of government posts will be forced and the policy of replacing migrant workers with the national employment will be implemented. The decision aims to reduce the number of migrant workers in government agencies on an annual basis in order to reach by 2022 the percentages specified for each job group. In light of that, a number of workers in a number of institutions were terminated.

Kuwaitization of jobs, a problem or solution

The number of civil servants in the Kuwaiti government jobs is 306,030 employees. The country's citizens make up 226,269 jobs, i.e. 73.94 percent, while the number of migrants is 79,761, representing 26.06 percent.

Migrant labor work in the different government sectors; however, the largest number of them work in the Ministries of Health and Education, whose representatives reported, during a meeting with the Replacement and Employment Committee, that the two ministries cannot apply the replacement policy to the difficulty of the matter.

There is a general tendency to modify the composition of the workforce in the government apparatus by appointing the country's citizens instead of other migrant workers. The CSB has developed a plan aimed at linking the

actual needs of the labor market in government agencies with the required specialties by sending the state employees on scholarships or study leave.

The Civil Service Commission issued Decree No. (11) of 2017 on the Rules and Procedures for Kuwaitization of Government Jobs, which obliges the government agencies to reduce the number of non-Kuwaiti employees on an annual basis for a period of five years.

On January 17, the Parliamentary Replacement and Employment Committee met with the CSB to discuss the Kuwaitization process. The meeting stated that the number of unemployed Kuwaitis is about 12,000, most of them do not have academic qualifications, while others do not have any qualification, which makes it difficult to find job opportunities for them.

Five years ago, the government expressed its intention to reduce the number of foreign residents. At that time, the country's budget had suffered a financial deficit resulting from the formidable decline in oil prices. Since then, the demographic composition has started to be addressed more and more, and solutions have been presented in this regard. The most prominent solutions are the launch of a reform program depending on reducing subsidies and imposing duties and taxes, especially for expats. The discussion about such an issue has expanded, and racist actions have taken place.

The government has announced that it will reduce the number of expats to 1 million, i.e. more than 2 million deportations, up to 100,000 every year until 2023, coinciding with the job Kuwaitization decision that gave the government agencies a period of five years to implement it ending in 2022. In parallel with the announcement of civil jobs nationalization, negative calls emerged by the members of the National Assembly and leading officials assuming different positions.

Laborers' rights: opportunities for violations are high

Kuwait has ratified 19 ILO Conventions, including seven of the eight fundamental conventions, which have given priority to international labor standards and are supposedly to guarantee the rights of workers in its domestic laws, but are based primarily on the recruitment of migrant workers under the sponsorship system.

This system links labor visas to those who recruited them, which raises the chances of abuse and exploitation of labor. In addition, it restricts the workers' freedom and places them under the responsibility of the sponsors, which gives the sponsors the power to control the workers' life in terms of renewing residence and moving to another work. Such system also gives the sponsors the mechanism of deporting the worker through absconding reports and provides the sponsors with facilities to be a trader of residencies and a key contributor to the increase of marginal employment.

The migrant labor in Kuwait operates according to a number of laws. The workers of private and oil sectors are subject to Law No. (6) of 2010 on the Work in the Private Sector. This law grants many rights to the workers. During the reporting period, it was noticed that the law contains a number of gaps, such as the fact that it does not criminalize the violation of its clauses, e.g. seizing the passport with the sponsor; compliance with the number of work hours; financial entitlements; end of service benefits and the delay of the worker's salary for seven days. However, the new amendments addressed these gaps and identified penalties in the same law for violators. Yet, the law still does not contain a clause that grants the worker an annual increase in pay.

As for domestic labor, they are included in the Kuwaiti Domestic Employment Law No. 68 of 2015. This sector tops the list of the highest jobs occupied by migrant workers, according to the statistics of the Public Authority for Civil Information, which quoted the word "servant" when referring to the

domestic workers, which is necessarily a word with racist implications related to color and function. The KSHR has called in previous human rights reports to replace the word "servant" with the word "domestic worker," which the concerned bodies responded to.

The workers in this sector possess a vital and important law that guarantees many of the worker's rights. However, it is noted that the length of work hours, which is 12 hours as a maximum, contains only one hour for rest, but the long hours are not commensurate with the decision of the Ministry of Interior that the salaries of workers in this sector should be 60 dinars (about \$200) as a minimum. This is a major burden on the worker and has led to a number of problems, for example, the suspension of Indian domestic workers, and the requirement of the Government of India that the domestic worker's salary should not be less than 75 dinars (about \$250).

Director of Domestic Employment Department at the Ministry of Interior Mohammed Al-Ajmi had complained that the law prevented them from taking any punitive measures in order not to violate the provisions of the law. He also added that they wish to deposit the salaries of workers in this sector with banks, pointing out that the Central Bank and the Union of Banks strongly rejected that.

The KSHR has received many complaints from domestic workers. These complaints were similar in content, complaining about "long work hours without rest; working for long hours without pay; being prevented from annual leaves." Domestic labor is subjected to many violations, sometimes amounting to slavery, torture, humiliation and rape, which has caused political problems between the Government of Kuwait and the Philippines in addition to a number of countries such as Sri Lanka, India and Ethiopia.

Migrant workers in Kuwait are generally subjected to racist decisions, while receiving a large amount of accusations. Also, speeches of violence have spread over social media and other media outlets, and the responsible for such speeches are mostly members of the National Assembly or government officials.

Meanwhile, workers in Kuwait and their families do not have the right to education in public schools. Kuwait has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Article 40 of the Kuwaiti Constitution, however, guarantees the right to education for Kuwaitis only.

Kuwait and the Philippines: playing on the strings of workers

The reporting period witnessed the emergence of a diplomatic crisis between Kuwait and the Philippines as a result of the Philippines' laborers situation in Kuwait, domestic workers in particular. A Filipino domestic worker died in Kuwait and a forensic report from Kuwait stated that the cause of death was "angina pectoris", yet after her body was sent to the Philippines, a forensic report from the Philippines showed that the cause of death was an assault.

Things have started to escalate, until another issue emerged, a female Filipino body stored in a freezer in a deserted apartment in Kuwait was found, which escalated the crisis between the two countries, especially after the Philippines announced the suspension of sending its nationals to work in Kuwait. The crisis has surfaced and witnessed successive developments and unprecedented diplomatic moves, especially after the Philippines Embassy in Kuwait violated the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961 and freed a number of domestic workers in a clear violation of the role of the Kuwaiti Ministry of the Interior. This led to ordering the Philippines ambassador to leave Kuwait's territory within a week, being an unacceptable person, and the Philippines summoned the Kuwaiti ambassador to the Philippines for consultation.

Meanwhile, the Philippines declared a "total ban" on the travel of its workers to Kuwait, including those who have obtained work permits and who have not yet left for

Kuwait. The previous ban prevented Filipinos from applying for work permits in Kuwait. Since then, the two countries are working on reaching an agreement to protect the rights of Filipino workers in Kuwait.

According to Philippine authorities, 252,000 of its nationals work in Kuwait, most of them in domestic labor, with about 170,000 domestic workers. Philippine employment has benefited from the decision to resolve the situation. The Philippine Embassy sent from 150 to 200 violation cases for departure on daily basis from the total of 10,000 violators.

The expats exhausted our resources'

The media, social media, members of the National Assembly and government officials have repeatedly pointed out that increasing the number of migrants necessarily leads to a number of risks and burdens on the state treasury, health and education services, environmental pollution, erosion of public roads and traffic congestion as well as hindering development plans and their responsibility for the spread of unemployment and other countless problems.

Perhaps the most highlighted talks that are being promoted against migrants are that their presence represents a real threat to the Kuwaiti national economy as a result of their "continued depletion" of the state's resources, either through the benefits they receive along with government salaries such as travel tickets, housing allowance and annual leave or through the external remittances.

These very signals necessarily changed the whole thing from finding solutions to the problems of the country, to the task of "encircling the pockets of immigrants". A number of decisions have been taken to implement the mission, beginning with reconsidering the issue of joining the family and raising its costs, to removing health support, huge increases in health services that do not depend on the health insurance paid by the resident annually, and then approving the Kuwaitization "nationalization" of the government jobs, laying off the non-governmental employees and finally imposing taxes on the migrant labor remittances.

Many citizens have acquired a racist culture towards migrants. The continuous passive indoctrination through various media platforms and the various media addressing society issues according to the theory of "citizen and expatriate" has communicated to the society in general, especially children in an indirect manner, messages of mobilization towards both parties, whether intentionally or unintentionally, everyone may become in enmity with everyone.

Addressing the issues superficially necessarily presents Kuwait in a bad image abroad, whether through the migrants themselves, who communicate what is happening in the country with their friends around the world, or through publications of local and international media and human rights organizations.

Recommendations

This Kuwaiti Human Rights Society report recommends that positive steps should continue to protect workers' rights in Kuwait, reduce racist attacks targeting them and deal with them as a problem. The KSHR also hopes to rationalize speeches against migrant workers aimed at spreading hatred in the society. The KSHR recommends:

1. Cancel the sponsorship system and transfer the sponsorship to the government.
2. Update labor legislation and criminalize its violators.
3. Ensure decent work for laborers, especially domestic labor.
4. Administrative deportation shall be canceled permanently and replaced by judicial deportation.
5. Stop targeting migrants' pockets and refrain from discrimination in official decisions.
6. Non-discrimination in the right to education and health.
7. Replace the term servant in the official transactions or official websites.

Kuwaiti blogger sentenced over state security charges

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

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday sentenced Kuwaiti blogger Sager Al-Hashash to five years in prison with labor over charges pressed against him by the State Security Department for slandering His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Notably, this verdict adds up the total imprisonment sentences issued against Hashash to 70 years.

Meanwhile, the court of appeal yesterday seconded a previous verdict by the first instance court on annulling the minister of education's decision to prevent any citizen from resuming his/her university studies two years after graduation from high school. The case was filed by lawyer Sultan Al-Towalrah demanding mandating the minister to accept allowing his client to continue university studies in Egypt as stipulated by the Kuwaiti constitution, which protects citizens' right of education.

Price increases

More than 30 major consumer companies have submitted requests to the pricing committee to increase prices of their products by 5 to 10 percent, Al-Rai reported yesterday quoting sources. The companies gave legal and financial justifications, most notably that changes took place in

their products and an increase in costs by the main supplier, the sources said. The committee stopped reviews of any price increase until after Ramadan, even if it is justified, in order to maintain the market balance and avoid artificial price hikes, according to the sources.

The price-setting committee includes the social affairs, commerce and industry ministries and the cooperatives union, as it monitors retail prices in cooperatives to ensure price stability. The committee can approve price increases of any product by up to 5 percent, but in case of increases over this percentage, it will be referred to a higher committee. This committee is headed by the assistant under-secretary for the consumer protection sector at the commerce ministry. Sources said the halt in price hikes does not mean their rejection, but the matter is postponed until after Ramadan. They will then be reviewed to see whether the justifications are valid or not. They said a committee was formed to monitor prices that are set by the union and others to stop any increases in this month, warning violating co-ops will be issued citations. The sources said the union did not approve any increase in prices of goods under its control, and that what is being said about price variations is untrue.

On strike

The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) threatened

to refer whoever instigates or calls the authority's employees to go on strike for investigations - by referring authority employees to its legal affairs department and bloggers and others to the public prosecution. Official sources at the authority said that officials checked various departments to explore the reasons of resentment and repeated calls for strikes amongst employees, adding that they found that the main reason was the delay in paying excellent performance bonuses, and promised to work on accelerating the process.

Education reforms

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) bloc, which includes PAAET colleges teaching staff members and PAAET employees syndicate, issued a statement expressing joy over the reforms started by Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Al-Azmi with the aim of fighting corruption and all forms of cheating. "An academic staff member with a fake degree or stolen paper is more dangerous to education than a high school student who tries to cheat on his or her final exams," the bloc stressed in a statement.

Ministry warns of 'e-marijuana'

The Interior Ministry's relations and security media department said the criminal security division and nar-

cotics detectives detected a new method of abusing marijuana using electronic cigarettes spreading in Kuwait. Accordingly, the criminal security sector called for caution in dealing with this scourge and to report any suspicious acts with the aim of protecting families.

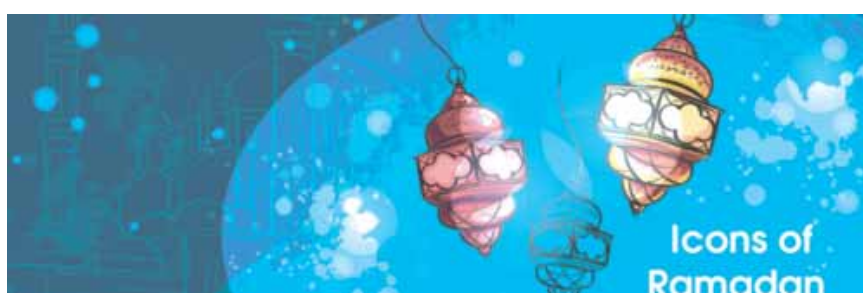
Vehicle impounded

Farwaniya detectives announced impounding a pickup truck that was used in reckless driving and stunts, said security sources. Case papers indicate that policemen were dispatched to deal with a reckless driver in Fardous who had been endangering his and others' lives. The source added that the driver fled the scene on foot on seeing the police. However, detectives filed several traffic tickets against the vehicle's owner, including for reckless driving, causing disturbance from the exhaust, sticking illegal decals, escaping from a police patrol and using illegal window tinting. A case was filed and a search is on for the driver.

Missing diver's gun found

Voluntary diving teams found a fishing gun suspected of belonging to missing diver Saud Al-Musallam. Al-Rai reported. The interior ministry gave permission to the group to dive in the area in search of Musallam, who disappeared without a trace.

Local



Icons of Ramadan

Traffic in Ramadan

By Ben Garcia

Kuwait Times celebrates Ramadan in Kuwait with 30 days of the Icons of Ramadan. We will highlight our favorite activities, events, symbols and foods that are popular during this holy month, along with Kuwait's Ramadan culture, history and traditions.

Empty streets in Ramadan at dusk mean all members of the family are back home to be with their loved ones for iftar. Streets are empty of cars and the roads are free of traffic jams in the evening, which happens only during Ramadan. Eating iftar together is a tra-

dition kept alive by Muslims wherever they are in the world. Every member of the family is required to be home in anticipation of the breaking of the fast.

The streets of Kuwait get back to normal only a few minutes after iftar. This time, people prepare for more social gatherings in homes, mosques, parks, restaurants and cafes, and streets get busy. Another local phenomenon is that of traffic jams two or three days before Ramadan, when people rush to stock food.

Email us at local@kuwaittimes.com with your favorite symbols of Ramadan and Ramadan photos.



History of Kuwait



KUWAIT: The Square of Derwazat Abdul Razzak Square as it appeared circa 1960. The picture shows a group of shops lined up on the main street with large sign boards advertising soft drinks and sheets used for protection from the sun; all signs of the region's blazing hot summer. (Source: 'Pictures of the old markets of Kuwait' by Ali Al-Rais, Center of Research and Studies on Kuwait 2017. Researched by Mohammad Zakaria Abu El Ella, heritage researcher in the Ministry of Information)



KUWAIT: Faisal Al-Hamad Al-Midta, Nabil Maarouf, John Mathieu, Aisha Al Sayegh, and Charlotte Simon.

NBK Capital held 'graish' event for its employees

KUWAIT: In celebration of the holy month of Ramadan, NBK Capital, the region's leading investment company, held a 'graish' event for the employees of the company to express the spirit of tradition and the family values of the Kuwaiti society and to show appreciation to the employees for their hard work.

Based on its firm belief that the community comes first, NBK Capital continues its leadership in embodying these principles rooted in its culture and succeeded in organizing this traditional Kuwaiti 'graish' in this holy

month of Ramadan by providing a fun and entertaining atmosphere for the event in which all employees enjoyed and exchanged congratulations and sharing a meal together to welcome the month of fasting as part of this tradition. To express the importance of this initiative and to celebrate the month of Ramadan, NBK Capital's CEO Faisal Al-Hamad participated in this occasion, alongside the company's leaders, and wished all employees and their families a blessed month.

It is worth mentioning that NBK Capital organizes and implements social and cultural programs that contribute in such traditions to benefit both employees and the community culture, as well as seeking to establish lasting and positive relations between all members of the company in all its departments. NBK Capital is keen to create this kind of event for employees and gather them at one table to enhance the family spirit of the Company and to recognize all employees for their efforts.



Part of the graish event for the employees of NBK Capital.



Zain's iftar halls.

Zain offers 50,000 iftar meals throughout the holy month

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, launched its annual 'Iftar Al-Saem' initiative to provide fasting individuals with iftar meals as part of its extensive social campaign during the holy month of Ramadan. The company will be distributing nearly 50,000 iftar meals throughout the holy month.

This annual initiative, which comes for the thirteenth consecutive time this year, is considered a main pillar of Zain's comprehensive Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility (CSSR) campaign during the holy month of Ramadan. The iftar meal banquets are supervised by Zain's volunteers team in three main halls at Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Khaitan, and Hawalli.

Zain started the preparations for this initiative before the arrival of Ramadan, where the company was keen to cover the most populated areas of Kuwait, especially in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Khaitan, and Hawalli, in order to meet the needs of the maximum amount of underprivileged individuals and families who are in most need of an iftar meal after a hard day of work.

This initiative is part of a series of programs the company is organizing throughout the Holy Month of Ramadan with the aim of having a deep positive impact on the community's various segments, especially the most vulnerable ones. Zain affirmed that its social and CSSR campaign during the Holy Month



KUWAIT: Zain volunteers at one of the halls.

of Ramadan includes an extensive array of initiatives and programs that focus on helping less fortunate people to enjoy Ramadan happily, as well as celebrating the true spirit the Holy month brings.

Zain's solid Corporate Sustainability and

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





International Flavors

Imam and artichokes: Traditional Palestinian dish from Jerusalem



Rima Al-Khaldi, the wife of the Palestinian ambassador to Kuwait. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Faten Omar

With an entire month's worth of Ramadan meals to prepare, try mixing up your menus with these recipes from around the world. Today, Kuwait Times will introduce you to a traditional Palestinian dish from Jerusalem. Rima Al-Khaldi, the wife of the Palestinian ambassador to Kuwait prepared her favorite Qudsi dishes. "I am preparing two Palestinian dishes - artichokes with meat and pine nuts, and Imam, which is eggplant with meat. I always choose



Ramadan meals that include vegetables so that they are healthy and light to the stomach. These simple meals start the rest of day, with enough fuel to get you through," Khaldi said.

- Ingredients**
 Fresh or frozen artichokes
 2 chopped onions
 1/2 kg of minced meat
 Salt and black pepper
 1/4 teaspoon spices
 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
 2 tablespoons pine nuts
 Vegetable oil for frying
 Eggplant (2 kg)

- Preparation:**
 1- Fry the onions in a pan of oil until they turn golden.



- 2- In a bowl, combine the salt and allspice. Add the meat to the onions and the spice mixture, stirring to combine, until the meat loses its pink color.
 3- Roast the pine nuts. Then add to the meat after it is done.
 4- Slice the eggplants, then fry them.
 5- Fill the pre-prepared artichokes with the meat and put them in a Pyrex bowl with two cups of water and salt.
 5- Place the bowl in the oven (at medium temperature) for an hour or until artichokes are done.

- For the eggplant:**
 1- Peel the eggplant and divide it into longitudinal slices.
 2- Put a little salt on it, then fry it.
 3- Place the fried slices of eggplant on the serving dish and put the rest of the meat over it.
 4- The two dishes (Imam and artichokes) can be served with rice, salad and yogurt.



SKYLINE TEAM VISITS KUWAIT



www.skylinebuilders.com

With 22 luxury projects across Kerala. Book your home now!

143rd PROJECT

LAUNCHING TODAY

SKYLINE RHYTHM
LUXURY APARTMENTS

OPP. MAR BASELIOS PUBLIC SCHOOL, DEVALOKAM, KOTTAYAM.

<p>TRIVANDRUM</p> <p>NEARING COMPLETION</p> <p>CAMBRIDGE, MUKKOLAKKAL</p>	<p>KOLLAM</p> <p>ONGOING</p> <p>MARBELLA, KADAPPAKKADA</p>	<p>THIRUVALLA</p> <p>NEARING COMPLETION</p> <p>THE EDGE, THIRUMOOLAPURAM</p>
<p>KOTTAYAM</p> <p>READY TO OCCUPY</p> <p>OASIS, 1 KM FROM MC ROAD</p>	<p>PALA</p> <p>READY TO OCCUPY</p> <p>GRACE, NEXT TO ST. THOMAS CATHEDRAL</p>	<p>KOCHI</p> <p>ONGOING</p> <p>24 CARAT, ELAMAKKARA</p>
<p>KOCHI</p> <p>NEARING COMPLETION</p> <p>SPECTRA, KAKKANAD</p>	<p>THRISSUR</p> <p>NEARING COMPLETION</p> <p>ZENITH, NELLIKUNNU</p>	<p>KANNUR</p> <p>JUST LAUNCHED</p> <p>UPPER CREST, MELE CHOVVA</p>
<p>SYNERGY, CHERANALLOOR</p> <p>ONGOING</p> <p>SYNERGY, CHERANALLOOR</p>	<p>CALICUT</p> <p>JUST LAUNCHED</p> <p>BLUE VISTA, PUTHIYANGADI</p>	
<p>BROWN, KAKKANAD</p> <p>NEARING COMPLETION</p> <p>BROWN, KAKKANAD</p>		

Venue: KUWAIT CONTINENTAL HOTEL AT FARWANIYA

Date: 21st May to 2nd June, 2018

Email: kuwait@skylinebuilders.com

Phone: 67003536 66732662

Skyline Builders®

The address says it all

29 YEARS OF EXPERTISE | 125 PROJECTS DELIVERED | 6900+ SATISFIED CUSTOMERS | CRISIL HIGHEST RATING DA2+ IN KERALA | OVER 1.44 Cr SQ.FT. OF BUILT-UP AREA



Calif university sued over sexual abuse by doctor

Heavy casualties as blast rocks Kandahar



(Left) Malaysia's former prime minister Najib Razak speaks to the media after being questioned at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) office in Putrajaya yesterday. (Right) MACC chief commissioner Shukri Abdull speaks during a press conference at the MACC office. —AFP

Najib quizzed over 1MDB scandal

Anti-graft chief was 'sent a bullet' over investigation

PUTRAJAYA: Former Malaysian leader Najib Razak was questioned by anti-corruption authorities yesterday after his shock election loss, as the top graft fighter revealed he faced threats and a bullet in the post when the old regime suppressed a probe into a massive financial scandal. Najib's coalition suffered a defeat at the May 9 poll, beaten by a reformist alliance led by Mahathir Mohamad, which broke their six-decade stranglehold on power. Mahathir, who first served as premier from 1981-2003 and came out of retirement aged 92 to take on Najib, campaigned on claims that the former leader and his cronies looted sovereign wealth fund 1MDB.

Billions of dollars were allegedly stolen from the fund in a sophisticated fraud, and used to buy everything from artworks to high-end real estate. Najib and his reviled, luxury-loving wife Rosmah Mansor have had a swift fall from grace. They have been barred from leaving the country, and police have seized handbags, jewels and cash during raids on properties linked to the couple. Public disgust at the corruption allegations swirling around them at a time middle-class Malaysians were suffering due to rising living costs and stagnant salaries was seen as a major factor in Najib's defeat.

The ousted leader pushed through a huge media scrum as he arrived at the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) headquarters in the administra-

tive capital of Putrajaya to be quizzed about 1MDB money allegedly ending up in his personal bank accounts. He left after about five hours looking exhausted, and told waiting reporters that officials had "acted professionally" as they took his statement. The questioning is due to continue tomorrow.

Wide-ranging probe

The toppled regime went to great lengths to put a halt to scrutiny of the problems surrounding 1MDB, closing down domestic probes, sacking critics from government, jailing those who spoke out, and muzzling the media. New MACC chief Shukri Abdull, a long-time senior figure in the agency who retired but has been brought back by Mahathir, shed tears at a press conference as he told how he came under "tremendous pressure" during an earlier probe into a 1MDB subsidiary.

He recounted how witnesses were intimidated, authorities tried to push him into early retirement, and that he even received a bullet in the post. Shukri said

the harassment reached a "very frightening" level and at one point he briefly fled to the United States as he feared arrest. "Our witnesses were abducted. Some of them were questioned by others as to what they revealed to us," he said. "I received a bullet at my home," he added. "I did not even tell my wife and my family, I did not lodge a police report." As pressure mounted, Shukri decided to retire in 2016.

Suspicious transfers

Najib was summoned by the anti-corruption body to give a statement over SRC International, an energy company that was originally a subsidiary of 1MDB. According to an investigation by the Wall Street Journal, 42 million ringgit (\$10.6 million) originating from SRC was transferred to Najib's personal bank accounts. It is just one small part in the graft scandal, which is being investigated in several countries. Hundreds of millions of dollars from 1MDB allegedly ended up in Najib's accounts but the lender and the investment vehicle have denied any wrongdoing.



Finmin says govt received parliament

Mahathir has vowed to fully investigate the financial scandal and on Monday the new government set up a task force headed by high-ranking current and former officials to probe the controversy. Following the fall of the corruption-riddled regime, which had led Malaysia since independence from Britain in 1957, figures linked to the 1MDB scandal have been making appearances. Mahathir met at the weekend with Xavier Justo, a former executive with PetroSaudi, a company that was allegedly involved in corrupt deals with 1MDB. The Swiss national is believed to have leaked documents related to the scandal to the media. He was jailed in Thailand for attempting to blackmail his former employer but was released in 2016.

"It is clear that the previous government has conducted an exercise of deception to the public about certain hot-button items, especially 1MDB, and even misrepresented the financial situation to parliament," new Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said in a statement. Lim said he had discovered that Malaysia has been "bailing out" 1Malaysia Development Berhad debt obligations since April 2017, but the true financial situation was still unclear because officials were unable to access certain "red files". The bailout had cost 6.98 billion ringgit (\$1.8 billion) so far, but more payments of 954 million ringgit would fall due by November, and from 2022 Malaysia would be required to make further payments running into billions of ringgit, Lim said. —Agencies

Commemorative coin struck for Trump-Kim summit

WASHINGTON: A commemorative coin featuring US President Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un has been struck by the White House Communications Agency ahead of their planned summit next month. In a statement, deputy spokesman Raj Shah insisted that "the White House did not have any input into the design and manufacture of the coin". The coin depicts Trump and Kim, described as North Korea's "Supreme Leader," in profile facing each other in front of a background of US and North Korean flags.

At the top of the front, the words "Peace Talks" are emblazoned, with the date "2018" beneath. The back of the coin features a picture of the White House, Air Force One and the presidential seal. Trump is scheduled to hold a landmark summit with the North Korean leader in Singapore on June 12, but Pyongyang has recently threatened to pull out over US demands for "unilateral nuclear abandonment."

The White House Communications Agency regularly issues commemorative or challenge coins to present to foreign guests, diplomats and members of the military. A number of the coins are available for sale through the White House Gift Office. "Since 2003, White House Communications Agency (WHCA) members have ordered a limited number of commercially designed and manufactured souvenir travel coins for purchase," Shah explained. "These coins are designed, manufactured and made by an American coin manufacturer. These souvenir coins are only ordered after a trip has been publicly announced."

Meanwhile, the USS Milius, one of the US Navy's most advanced guided missile destroyers, arrived in Japan yesterday to reinforce defenses against any ballistic missile attacks by North Korea, or anyone else in East Asia. The warship's arrival at Yokosuka Naval Base comes three weeks before the unprecedented meeting between Trump and Kim. The show of force is a reminder of the military pressure that can be brought to bear on North Korea as the United States seeks to press it to abandon its nuclear weapons and its ballistic missile program.

The deployment of the Milius to Japan was delayed



WASHINGTON: A coin for the upcoming US-North Korea summit is seen on Monday. —AFP

by almost a year so it could undergo upgrades to its Aegis air defence system to enhance its ability to detect and target missiles. Armed with missiles designed to shoot down warheads in space, the Milius will be part of a naval destroyer force that would be the first US line of defense against any long-range ballistic missiles fired at it by North Korea. The force, under a security treaty between Japan and the United States, would also defend Japan from attack.

"What the Milius has now is the latest and greatest upgrade for the combat system," Commander Jennifer Pontius, the ship's captain, said in Yokosuka after her ship docked. "It creates increased capacity in various mission areas such as ballistic missile defense, electronic warfare, undersea warfare and air warfare." The Milius' dockside welcome under a bright afternoon sky in Yokosuka, the headquarters of the US Seventh Fleet, came amid uncertainty over whether the

Trump-Kim meeting will go ahead.

North Korea said last week it was reconsidering the summit after calling off separate talks with South Korea in a protest over US-South Korean air combat drills known as Max Thunder. North Korea said it would walk away from dialogue if the United States insisted on it unilaterally abandoning its nuclear arsenal, which it says it needs to defend itself against US aggression. Trump has warned that failure to reach a denuclearization agreement could lead to "decimation" of Kim's rule.

The Milius joins two other ships in the Seventh Fleet with similar upgrades and reinforces the fleet after two other US warships in the region were crippled in collisions with commercial ships last year. With the Milius, the US Navy has 13 ships based at Yokosuka, including the USS Ronald Reagan, Washington's only forward deployed carrier. —Agencies

9 killed in India after police fire on protesters

NEW DELHI: At least nine were killed yesterday after police fired at protesters calling for the closure of a Vedanta Resources-controlled copper smelter in southern India, a senior police official told Reuters. Residents of the port city of Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu state and environmentalists have been demonstrating against one of India's biggest copper plants for more than three months, alleging it is a major source of pollution and a risk to fisheries.

The latest protest turned violent as a crowd waving black flags stormed the district government headquarters and an apartment block for Vedanta employees, a company official said, declining to be named for fear of being targeted. Protesters set vehicles on fire and threw stones at police, prompting the police to open fire. "Nine people have been confirmed dead," said police official Kapil Kumar Saratkar.

The head of national opposition party Congress, Rahul Gandhi, slammed the authorities for use of deadly force. "The gunning down by the police of 9 people in ...Tamil Nadu, is a brutal example of state sponsored terrorism. These citizens were murdered for protesting against injustice. My thoughts & prayers are with the families of these martyrs and the injured," Gandhi said in a tweet.

Local TV showed police trying to disperse the crowd with tear gas and water cannons. Smoke rose from several parts of the sleepy port city near the tip of the Indian peninsula. State Minister D Jayakumar in a televised address yesterday said police have fired on protesters and that it was "unavoidable".

Plan to double output

The plant, which can produce 400,000 tonnes of copper a year, has been shut for more than 50 days and will remain closed until at least June 6 because the local pollution regulator will not allow it to operate due to alleged non-compliance with environmental rules. Environmental activists and some local politicians want the government to shut the plant down permanently. "The inaction of the government has led to the people's protests, and police resorting to firing to control it. Action should be taken to shut down the plant immediately to address this issue," M K Stalin, leader of the main opposition group in Tamil Nadu, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, said in a Facebook post.

Vedanta says the protests are based on "false allegations" and that it plans to double capacity at the smelter to 800,000 tonnes per year. "We would like to restart the plant as soon as possible, in a peaceful manner," P Ramnath, chief executive of Vedanta Ltd's copper business told Reuters. The plant was shut for more than two months in 2013 by an Indian environmental court after residents complained about emissions. —Reuters

International

Iraq court sentences Belgian to death for IS membership

Jadaoun pleads not guilty, insists he had 'got lost'

BAGHDAD: An Iraqi court yesterday sentenced a Belgian militant, who threatened Europe in propaganda videos, to death by hanging for membership of the Islamic State group. The tough punishment is the latest doled out in the conflict-scarred country to foreigners who flocked to the self-declared caliphate of IS. Tarik Jadaoun - known by his nom de guerre Abu Hamza Al-Beljiki - earlier pleaded not guilty to a range of terror charges, insisting he had "got lost" and pleading for mercy.

Born in 1988, Jadaoun - who was captured in ex-IS bastion Mosul in August - appeared before the Baghdad court dressed in a beige prison uniform with a shaved head and bushy moustache. The hearing lasted for less than 10 minutes, with a judge sentencing him to be "hanged until death". Jadaoun - who refused to defend himself after the charges were read out - was immediately taken out of court with his face covered by guards and

loaded into a prison van.

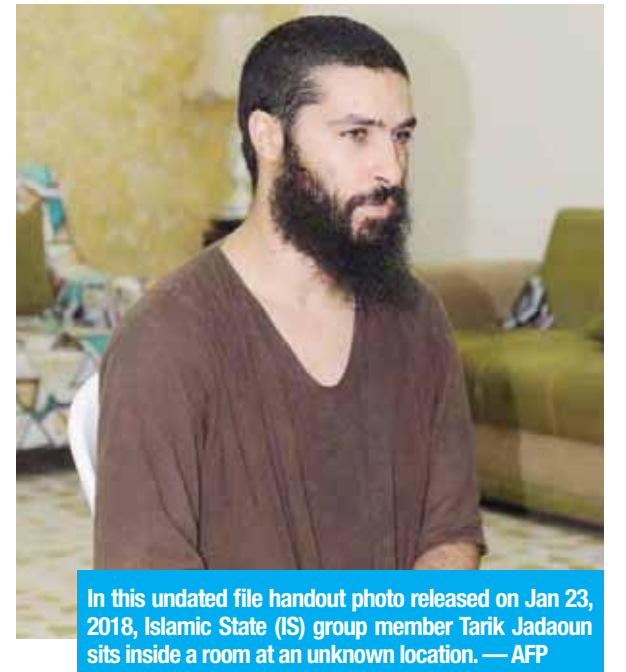
He now has 30 days to appeal the verdict during which time the sentence should not be carried out. In addition, he was sentenced to three years in prison and handed a fine worth \$2,300 for illegally crossing the Iraqi border. In a statement released after the sentencing, the Iraqi judiciary described Jadaoun as "among the most wanted foreign terrorists who fought in Syria and Iraq". Jadaoun, who has Moroccan roots, said during a first hearing on

May 10 that he was forced by "one of the top IS commanders" to appear in videos threatening attacks against Belgium and France. The footage saw Jadaoun earn the moniker "the new Abaaoud", after his compatriot Abdelhamid Abaaoud, one of the organizers of Nov 2015 attacks in Paris.

He claimed that he had not been a fighter for IS but

was instead in charge of a group of nurses. "I took care of everybody," he told the earlier hearing. Investigators had previously alleged that Jadaoun was in charge of the "cubs of the caliphate" - about 60 children aged eight to 13 who received intensive fitness and weapons training. There was no mention of these allegations at his trial. In total, Iraqi courts have sentenced to death more than 300 people, including dozens of foreigners, for belonging to IS, judicial sources said last month.

Since January, some 100 foreign nationals have been sentenced to death in Baghdad and around 185 to life in prison, officials said. Iraq has previously executed dual nationals accused of belonging to groups including Al-Qaeda, but is yet to put to death any Westerners sentenced over IS links. Thousands of foreign fighters from across the world flocked to the black banner of the militants as the group seized swathes of Iraq and Syria in 2014. Their "caliphate" has since been reduced to a rump territory of desert in the east of war-torn Syria. The fate of those who survived ferocious onslaughts by various forces against IS has been a major headache for their home governments, which are often against seeing them return. — AFP



In this undated file handout photo released on Jan 23, 2018, Islamic State (IS) group member Tarik Jadaoun sits inside a room at an unknown location. — AFP

Hearing lasts for less than 10 minutes



Violent crime hits France as Macron presents poverty plan

PARIS: Shocking images of masked gunmen opening fire in Marseille and a brutal daylight murder underlined the problem of urban violence in France yesterday as President Emmanuel Macron announces a strategy to tackle the issue. One person was injured on Monday when black-clad men carrying Kalashnikov machine guns opened fire in a notorious area known for drug-dealing in Marseille at around 5:00 pm (1500 GMT).

Footage of the incident in the crime-ridden Busserine public housing estate, which was broadcast on French television, showed a carload of men dressed like commandoes openly brandishing their weapons. "According to a witness, one person was kidnapped and put in a car by people who fired in the air several times," Marseille prosecutor Xavier Tarabeux told reporters. The brazen display of muscle was thought to be linked to a local turf war for control of the drug trade in the sprawling industrial city, where tit-for-tat murders between rival gangs are common.

Elsewhere in France, police in the southern city of Pau are still investigating the murder of a 32-year-old man in another poverty-ridden, high-immigration area, who was beaten to death by a gang of teenagers.

Terrified witnesses, some of them picnicking with children early on Friday evening, have helped identify three suspects who are thought to have taken part in what Le Parisien newspaper described as a "horrifying lynching".

The incidents came as Macron prepares to unveil a long-awaited strategy for tackling the entrenched social problems which are concentrated in many ghettoized areas of the country's towns and cities. The 40-year-old leader has faced criticism from many associations and leftist lawmakers for failing to put the problems of the poorest areas of France at the heart of his agenda since his election in May 2017.

A host of local officials from such areas, where immigrants have concentrated over decades, have warned about the problems of crime, poverty and Islamism blighting the lives of local families. Many of the jihadists inspired by the Islamic State group that have struck France since 2015 have hailed from marginalized, often high-rise areas known as "les banlieues" where public housing is concentrated.

Not 'top-down'

Presidential aides have said Macron will avoid announcing a new strategy based on huge increases in public spending. "The aim is not to reinvent grand projects" that are "top-down", an aide told reporters last week. Macron is likely instead to insist on his government's record of investing in schools in poor areas, creating a new community police service for crime-hit zones, and economic reforms which he believes will generate more jobs. He is also expected to back new efforts to tackle discrimination that sees many young



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron gestures as he speaks during the presentation of the French government's battle plan for the country's most deprived areas yesterday. — AFP

people from poor areas, particularly those with African or Arab-sounding names, struggle to find jobs. Also over the weekend, a 41-year-old man was stabbed to death in a shop after a row in a gang-plagued area of Seine-Saint-Denis northeast of Paris. Ten people have been arrested. — AFP

Kidnappings multiply in Cameroon's restive Anglophone region

YAOUNDE: Kidnappings are proliferating in Cameroon's violence-torn English-speaking region, where officials, foreigners and locals alike are finding themselves targeted for abduction. Since Anglophone separatists declared independence last October, dozens of people have gone missing - on average, a fresh case is reported by the local media every week. "At least 50 people have been kidnapped," Felix Agbor Ngonkho, of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, told AFP. Many more abductions are probably not even being reported, he added.

"It has become impossible for a Cameroonian car carrying foreigners or bearing the license plate of a French-speaking region to travel through the English-speaking regions without being attacked by armed men emerging from the forest," a human rights activist said. Kidnappings, say commentators, have been adopted as a tool for separatists to enforce discipline in anti-government protests and instil fear among French-speaking officials, almost regardless of rank.

"The separatists have a guerrilla mentality that involves control of the region and the population," said Hans De Marie Heungoup, Central Africa analyst with the International Crisis Group (ICG) think tank. "The kidnappings are part of this logic, a tool to enforce allegiance to those who haven't taken up the separatist cause." The presence of a large English-speaking minority - about a fifth of Cameroon's population of 22 million - dates back to the colonial period.

It was once a German colony that after World War I was divided between Britain and France. In 1960, the French colony gained independence, becoming Cameroon, and the following year, the British-ruled Southern Cameroons was amalgamated into it, becoming the Northwest and Southwest Regions. For years, resentment built among Anglophones, fostered by perceived marginalization in education, the judiciary and the economy at the hands of the French majority. Demands for greater autonomy were rejected by 85-year-old President Paul Biya, in power for more than 35 years, leading to an escalation that last October 1 led to the declaration of the self-described "Republic of Ambazonia".

'Dirty war'

Clashes are now an everyday occurrence, leading to scores of fatalities among separatists and police and military alike. But in what local people are calling a "dirty war", civilians are also suffering badly, at the hands of the security forces - accused by the US last week of "targeted killings" and the burning and looting of villages - and of the separatists. In one instance, a teacher was gunned down at a school in the town of Muyuka, in the Southwest Region, when three armed men riding motorcycles fired gunshots as they sped past.

Two Tunisians working near Kumba in the Southwest were abducted in late March. One of them was later killed. The following month a group of Western tourists were briefly kidnapped in the same region. Separatist fighters have torched numerous school buildings and early this month kidnapped a priest who was headmaster of a Catholic boarding school. The priest was seized the day after St Bede's College received a televised visit from the regional governor. It was the first time the church had been pulled into the regional struggle. The abducted priest was freed the following day and the Catholic church has called on all parties to avoid "a useless and unwarranted civil war". — AFP

Italy sparks fears of new Europe crisis

BRUSSELS: Fears of a new European crisis grew yesterday over Italy's incoming eurosceptic government, which has vowed to reject the Brussels austerity diet and to crack down on immigrants. Governments and markets have suddenly become unsettled as the prospect of populists taking the helm of the EU's fourth biggest economy suddenly becomes a reality after months of deadlock. A period when the rest of the world seemed to be in denial finally seemed to be over as Italy's president was tasked Tuesday on whether to approve little-known lawyer Giuseppe Conte as prime minister.

The anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the anti-immigrant League - together the EU's worst nightmare - put his name forward to represent the biggest winners from March's election. "There are some things there that are worrying, yes," EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom told reporters in Brussels on Tuesday when asked about the Italian situation. Fear number one is that Italy, a founder member of both the EU and the euro, is set to irk financial markets and trigger a new eurozone crisis by refusing to stick to public spending and debt targets set by Brussels. The bloc's enforcer for the euro, European Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis, issued a tough public warning to the incoming Italian administration to pursue a "responsible" budget policy.

'Stay on course'

"We view it as important that the Italian government remains on course in pursuing a responsible budget policy," Dombrovskis told the German business daily Handelsblatt. The non-sense Latvian noted that Italy has the second highest level of state debt after Greece, explaining why Brussels is anxious that Rome continues to follow the EU rules. Dombrovskis noted that the coalition's plan to drastically slash taxes and reverse pension cuts will be costly. "We can only advise it to stay on course in terms of economic and fiscal policies, to stimulate growth through

structural reforms and to keep the budget deficit under control," said Dombrovskis.

French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire meanwhile warned on Sunday that the "financial stability of the eurozone will be threatened" if Italy "takes the risk of not respecting its commitments on debt and the deficit." The Frenchman also warned that Italy still had to clean up its debt-laden banks, whose health has long been a worry for the eurozone. The spectre of Greece hovers over everything, with memories still fresh of how the leftist Syriza government brought the country to the brink of a "Grexit" from the euro in 2015 with similar vows to resist EU austerity - although in that case Athens finally backed down.

It is also not the first time that the prospect of an Italian crisis has spooked the markets - in 2011 longtime premier Silvio Berlusconi was toppled by fears that it could be overwhelmed. "Although we have to brace ourselves for significant noise, including clashes between Rome and Brussels, a truly disruptive crisis is probably not on the cards for now," Berenberg analyst Holger Schmieding said. "However, if highly-indebted Italy loosens the fiscal reins and reverses some recent reforms... the country would become vulnerable to a debt crisis if and when the next cyclical recession exposes the country's weaknesses."

'Worst case'

The fears growing in Europe are not just linked to the economy, however. Alarm is also rising about the success of Five Star's anti-EU platform and the anti-immigrant stance of the League. They have revived fears in Brussels and other capitals that Europe has failed to roll back the wave of right-wing populism that sparked the 2016 Brexit vote as successfully as first thought. Those fears had been sidelined after the Europe-loving French President Emmanuel Macron beat far-right candidate Marine Le Pen in elections last year, but now the specter has returned.

European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker warned ahead of the Italian elections that a victory for them would be a "worst-case" scenario - a remark that itself sent the markets tumbling. The doom-laden warnings have wound up Italy's new powers. "Let us get started first, and then you can criticize us," Luigi Di Maio, the young Five Star chief, said Monday. — AFP

News in brief

Iransians 'will punch Pompeo'

BEIRUT: A senior Iranian military commander poured scorn on US threats to tighten sanctions on Tuesday, saying the Islamic Republic's people would respond by punching US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in the mouth. Pompeo said on Monday Washington would impose new penalties if Tehran did not make sweeping changes, including dropping its nuclear program and pulling out of the Syrian civil war. "The people of Iran should stand united in the face of this and they will deliver a strong punch to the mouth of the American Secretary of State and anyone who backs them," Ismail Kowsari, the deputy commander of the Sarollah Revolutionary Guards base in Tehran said. "Who are you and America to tell us to limit the range of ballistic missiles?" he added. — AFP

Two Sherpas killed on Everest

KATHMANDU: Two Sherpa guides working on Everest were confirmed dead yesterday, bringing the death toll on the world's highest peak this spring climbing season to five. The two guides - both ethnic Sherpas from the valleys that surround Everest - were working on opposite sides of the mountain, which straddles the border between Nepal and Tibet. Experienced guide Damai Sarki Sherpa, 37, fell more than 60 m into a crevasse on Monday as he was helping a foreign climber to a rescue helicopter on the Nepal side of the mountain. Pasang Norbu Sherpa perished just below the summit in Tibet from a suspected heart attack, his employer said. A third guide, Lama Babu Sherpa, went missing near Everest's summit earlier this month and is presumed dead. — AFP

Corker turns down Trump offer

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump offered Senator Bob Corker the chance to be the US ambassador to Australia, but the Republican lawmaker, currently chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said on Monday he turned the position down. "At the end of the day, I just felt like it wasn't the right fit and I still had work to do in the Senate," Corker told Reuters. Corker, 65, has announced his intention to retire from the Senate when his second six-year term ends in December. A former businessman and mayor of Chattanooga, Tennessee, Corker has had an up-and-down relationship with Trump. He said he still has work to do in the Senate. "Right now we're kind of sprinting toward the finish line, if you will," Corker said. He said he was open to serving in another "challenging" position at some point, if the opportunity arose. — Reuters

Suicide attack kills 2 in Libya

BENHAZI: A suicide attack yesterday against a checkpoint in eastern Libya killed at least two militiamen loyal to strongman Khalifa Haftar, a security source said. The attack south of the city of Ajdabiya comes after the Islamic State group claimed a string of deadly assaults against roadblocks run by Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA). In another incident armed men also stormed another checkpoint some 150 km away and kidnapped one of the militiamen deployed at the location, the militia security source said. Haftar supports an administration based in the east of the country. A UN-backed unity government based in the capital has struggled to assert its authority outside the west. — AFP

Hariri to accelerate govt formation

BEIRUT: Outgoing Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri said yesterday a decision had been taken to form a new government quickly. Lebanese news outlet Al-Jadeed reported him as saying, "There is a decision to accelerate government formation, and I think the sanctions on Hezbollah could have a positive impact and speed up the birth of the new government." Al-Jadeed said. Lebanon held parliamentary elections at the start of May and the outgoing parliament's term expired on Monday. — Reuters

International

16 killed, 38 wounded by car bomb in southern Afghan city

Minivan explodes as security forces try to defuse it

KANDAHAR: At least 16 people were killed and 38 wounded yesterday when a minivan packed with explosives exploded as members of the security forces were trying to defuse it in southern Afghanistan, officials said. Police and intelligence officers in the city of Kandahar had already cleared the area around a bus station where the van was found, said the provincial governor's spokesman Daud Ahmadi. "As the security forces were trying to defuse the van, it detonated," said police spokesman Mohammad Qasim Azad.

"The latest figures show 16 dead and 38 wounded people brought to the hospital. We still have two ambulances at the site because there might be more people under the rubble," said Dr Nehmat Barak, chief of the Mirwais Hospital in Kandahar. Ahmadi confirmed the toll, adding that the dead included four members of the security forces. At least five children and 10 members of the security forces were among the wounded.

The blast was so powerful that most of the casualties were passersby outside the cleared area. "When I was going to my shop the area was closed by the security forces," one witness who did not give his name told AFP. "I was waiting for the way to be opened when a big explosion happened and I escaped from the area. My co-workers who were already in the shop have disappeared and I have no news about what happened to them."

Another witness said he was inside his shop when the explosives detonated. "I found myself among smoke and

bloodstains and saw my hand broken," he said. Ahmadi said security forces also found a large container of explosives, rocket-propelled grenades, suicide vests and ammunition near the site. "The terrorists planned to conduct a big attack at the end of Ramadan in the city among crowds of people as they went out shopping for Eid... security forces prevented a disaster from happening," one security official told AFP.

'Few signs of progress'

No group immediately claimed responsibility. The blast was quickly condemned by President Ashraf Ghani, who praised the "brave" officers who dealt with it. The Taliban are stepping up their spring offensive across the war-torn country. Late Monday the insurgents attacked two districts in the southeastern province of Ghazni, briefly capturing the police headquarters in one of them before being pushed back, said governor's

spokesman Aref Noori.

He said 16 members of the security forces had been killed in the fighting and the Taliban also suffered "heavy" losses, with sporadic clashes continuing yesterday. Last week the militants attacked the western city of Farah but were driven back by commandos supported by the Afghan and US Air Force. On Monday the Taliban warned Kabul residents to avoid "military centers" in the heavily fortified city, saying they are planning more attacks there.



KANDAHAR: A wounded Afghan man lays on a bed at a hospital after being injured when a minivan stuffed with explosives detonated yesterday. — AFP

A US government watchdog also warned Monday that upbeat assessments of improving security in the country did not match facts on the ground. The Pentagon's Office of the Inspector General said there were "few signs of progress" in the fight against the Taliban. Top US officials and military commanders insist that Afghan police and

troops - who have suffered thousands of casualties and are beset by low morale and corruption - are now doing a better job. But the Taliban still control swathes of the country and are staging repeated attacks, while the Islamic State group has conducted a series of high-profile suicide blasts in Kabul and elsewhere. — AFP



Pentagon sees few signs of progress against Taliban

The Pentagon's Office of the Inspector General said there were "few signs of progress" in the fight against the Taliban. Top US officials and military commanders insist that Afghan police and

Aussie archbishop guilty of hiding child sex abuse

SYDNEY: An Australian archbishop was yesterday found guilty of covering up child sex abuse in the 1970s - one of the highest-ranked church officials globally to be successfully prosecuted for such offences. Adelaide Archbishop Philip Wilson, 67, was accused of concealing abuse by notorious pedophile priest Jim Fletcher in the Hunter region of New South Wales state by failing to report the allegations.

He denied the charges and his legal team made four attempts to have the case thrown out, arguing Wilson's diagnosis of Alzheimer's should preclude him from trial - even though it did not prevent him retaining his position in the church. Magistrate Robert Stone found him guilty at Newcastle Local Court of concealing a serious indictable offence of another person, with the archbishop facing a maximum of two years in jail. Sentencing will be at a later date. "I am obviously disappointed at the decision published today," Wilson said in a brief statement. "I will now have to consider the reasons and consult closely with my lawyers to determine the next steps." There was no dispute that Fletcher, who is now dead, sexually abused altar boy Peter Creigh, with the hearing focused on whether Wilson, then a junior priest, was told about it. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported from the court that Stone found Creigh, who broke down in tears after the verdict, to be a truthful and reliable witness. Stone added that he did not accept Wilson could not remember a 1976 conversation in which Creigh described the abuse in detail, saying he "had no motive or interest to deceive or make up the conversation".

'Safety of children paramount'

Peter Gogarty, another Fletcher victim, told ABC he hoped the verdict would "open the doors for other jurisdictions to start looking at trying to prosecute people who deliberately looked after their institution and, literally, threw children to the wolves". The charges, laid in 2015, stemmed from the work of Strike Force Lantle, which since 2010 investigated claims of child abuse concealment by former and current clergy attached to the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese of the Catholic Church.

Wilson grew up in the area and was a priest in Maitland before Pope John Paul II appointed him Bishop of Wollongong in 1996. Five years later he became the Archbishop of Adelaide. His conviction is another headache for Pope Francis, whose papacy has been haunted by allegations of sex abuse among Catholic priests. Last week, 34 Chilean bishops announced their resignation over a child sex abuse scandal.

Several members of the Chilean church hierarchy are accused by victims of ignoring and covering up child abuse by Chilean paedophile priest Fernando Karadima during the 1980s and 1990s. Australia has also been plagued by the issue with a national inquiry into child sexual abuse ordered in 2012 after a decade of pressure to investigate widespread allegations of institutional pedophilia. The commission spoke to thousands of victims and heard claims of abuse involving churches, orphanages, sporting clubs, youth groups and schools.

Mark Coleridge, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, a national body used by bishops to address issues of national significance, said Wilson had yet to decide whether to appeal. "The Catholic Church, like other institutions, has learned a great deal about the tragedy of child sexual abuse and has implemented stronger programs, policies and procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults," he said. "The safety of children and vulnerable adults is paramount for the church and its ministries." — AFP

'Crazy hope' for missing kin in Marawi

ILIGAN, Philippines: Ten men from the same family vanished after militants invaded the Philippine city of Marawi a year ago - each day since, their wives have prayed their bones do not lie in its devastated landscape. The women have been told to accept their husbands were likely among the 1,200 killed in the five-month battle that flattened swathes of the city, but they refuse to move on until they know for sure. "I am hoping he will come home. All of us are hoping they will return. Even if my family says I am crazy, I told them my husband will come back," Melgie Powao said of her spouse Victor.

One year after the battle, reconstruction work is due to begin and the authorities say jihadists are far from mounting another such attack. Yet, the families of the scores still missing are the overlooked victims of the Philippines' deadliest confrontation with Islamists. The fighting left behind hundreds of corpses, with more likely to be found in the conflict area which has yet to be completely cleared of unexploded bombs.

The Powao men - fathers and brothers, cousins and uncles - from neighboring Iligan city were in Marawi for construction

jobs when clashes with Islamic State-aligned fighters broke out on May 23 last year. In the fighting that ensued, government airstrikes on Marawi and house-to-house fighting left neighborhoods in ruins that have been compared to battlegrounds in Syria or Iraq. Only one of the Powao group - the eleventh man - escaped and it was from him the wives learned that an airstrike may have killed some of them, while militants herded others into a van. "Until I see their bodies, I won't believe they are dead," 31-year-old Alma Tome said of her husband Rowel and the others. The Powaos are among 78 people officially listed as missing, though possibly hundreds more disappeared. Some families were hesitant to file reports out of fear they could be targeted by authorities hunting for anyone with links to jihadists.

Many of Marawi's 200,000 residents fled their homes, including more than 10,000 people from the so-called "ground zero". However so many explosives were left behind after the shooting stopped that even a year later thousands of residents have been allowed to visit - but not return to - their shattered homes. The Powaos' ordeal began on the first day of the siege, which was the last time they heard from their men. In a shaking voice, Melgie's husband told her over the phone not to worry.

But after months of waiting the women made a search trip to Marawi. They even visited funeral homes but could not bear looking at the corpses' faces. "We were running out of pictures as we gave them to authorities to try to get help, but we went



ILIGAN: In this photo taken on April 2, 2018, (from left) Alma Tome, Evelyn Powao and Melgie Powao, whose husbands are still missing one year after the Marawi siege, show photos of their husbands during an interview on the southern island of Mindanao. — AFP

home without any news," said Melgie, 24. The women gave DNA samples to police in October to check against recovered corpses, but have heard nothing yet. Allan Tabell, who heads the group identifying the remains, told AFP that authorities are doing their best. "We're not expecting it to be done overnight. It's a long process but we have to respect that it's a process... we cannot afford any mistakes," he said. The testing will go on as the rebuilding of the city creeps into action. Philippine authorities estimate it will cost \$987 million to put Marawi right again. The work is expected to start in June.

Four Chinese companies and one Malaysian firm put in bids to handle the

project that will involve the huge task of carting away hundreds of tonnes of debris, and which is expected to take years. In the meantime the Powao women will continue to seek answers, struggling with the gaping absence in their lives. Alma, with her two-year-old son in her arms, said the boy sometimes picks up her ringing phone thinking his dad is on the other end. He calls out "papa" when a car stops in front of their house. "The pain is double," said Alma, who also has a one-year-old toddler. Melgie says the Powao women don't need aid, just answers. "All we want is to see the DNA results. Even if they are just bones, at least we can bury them properly and grieve," she said. — AFP

Arrests as protest greets fourth year of Thai junta rule

BANGKOK: Thai police detained leaders of an anti-junta protest yesterday who had tried to mark the fourth anniversary of a coup by marching to Government House, one of the largest acts of dissent since the army grabbed power. Protest leaders flashed a three finger salute as they were led into a police van - a resistance symbol borrowed by Thailand's anti-coup movement from the Hollywood movie "The Hunger Games".

Disquiet with the junta is simmering in Thailand, despite a ban on political gatherings since a coup toppled the elected government of Yingluck Shinawatra on May 22, 2014. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, who as army chief booted Yingluck's administration from power, has suggested elections will be held in February next year. But the timetable for a return to democracy has repeatedly slipped and patience with his junta is wearing thin among many sections of Thai society.

Starting at sunrise, hundreds of student activists and middle-aged "Red Shirt" supporters of the toppled civilian government gathered to march from a university where they had camped overnight to the seat of government. Wielding banners, Thai flags and fans with a cartoon of the premier mocked-up as "Pinocchio", they were stopped by police lines blocking their route. "It is the four-year anniversary of the coup and I think now is the time to change," said Rangsiman Rome, one of the protest organizers. Hours later after five of his co-leaders were detained by police, he and two other core organizers said they would surrender to face charges linked to violating the ban on political protest. "I am well aware of your disappointment but it's the only way to avoid violence," he told a crowd that had held on for an hours-long standoff that included tense scuffles with police. The protest dispersed after the detentions.

Junta fatigued

Addressing reporters, Thailand's gruff premier Prayut



BANGKOK: Demonstrators gather near a police barricade outside Thammasat University during a protest to mark the fourth year of junta rule yesterday. — AFP

was unmoved by the noisy show of discontent with his rule. "If you ask me, am I in a good mood? I am," he said. "Today is May 22nd and we review what he has done since 2014... there are many things. It is better to give us support." Yet Thailand remains divided. Large sections of society - including the Bangkok middle class - have wearied of rule by a conservative military that has intruded into the lives of ordinary Thais whilst overseeing a widening of the kingdom's rich-poor wealth gap.

"We want elections. Nothing is being done to guarantee they happen in February," protester Anuthee Dejthevaporn, 30, told AFP. Prayut, who draws backing from an arch-royalist Bangkok elite, says he was forced to seize power to heal the kingdom's caustic politics and reboot an economy cramped by corruption and protest. But critics say he has done nothing to heal the country's bitter divides, with his regime banning political gatherings of five or more people while silencing criticism with legal charges and tight monitoring of prominent activists.

In between, a junta-appointed national assembly has signed off on a new constitution that ties future elected governments to a 20-year plan for the country. The charter also creates an appointed upper house and other checks on the power of future civilian governments, in what analysts say is a brazen assault on the political base of the Shinawatras. Yingluck, her older brother Thaksin or their proxies have won all Thai general elections since 2001. But their governments were hit by two coups and endless legal cases that have seen the siblings flee abroad to avoid jail. — AFP

Calls to end South Korea abortion ban reach top court

SEOUL: A decades-old abortion ban that activists say endangers women - even if it is only sporadically enforced - will be challenged in South Korea's supreme court this week. Along with Ireland, which holds a referendum on reforming strict abortion laws on Friday, South Korea is one of the few industrialized nations where the procedure is illegal except for instances of rape, incest and when the mother's health is at risk. Women who terminate a pregnancy face a fine and a year in jail, while doctors who carry out terminations can get up to two years behind bars. In reality, the 1953 law rarely results in prosecutions. But there are growing calls for change as activists argue criminalization leaves women vulnerable to unsafe procedures and the changing whims of politicians as well as blackmail from their partners. "It's anachronistic," Kim Dong-sik, a researcher at the state-run Korean Women's Development Institute, told AFP. "We are still stuck in 1953." Calls to repeal the law have gained traction in recent years with more than 230,000 people signing a petition to legalize abortion last year. On Thursday the Constitutional Court is due to review a challenge from a doctor who was prosecuted for performing nearly 70 abortions. But opposition is staunch in a country that remains conservative towards female sexuality and highly influenced by evangelical Christianity.

Historically, enforcement of the law has been patchy as South Korea morphed from an impoverished nation to one of Asia's wealthiest economies. "The country has a history of tacitly encouraging abortion and contraception when it needs to reduce population, and when low birthrate became an issue, it clamped down on abortion," said Jay Kim, from the non-profit advocacy group Womenlink. In the 1960s when South Korea was poorer, Kim said, abortion buses roamed the streets as authorities fretted about overpopulation and pushed a semi-official "one child per family" policy. — AFP

International

Same grief, different outcomes: Texas mulling school safety

Teen gunman 'confused,' his lawyers say

SANTA FE, Texas: Mourners knelt before white wooden crosses on Monday outside the Texas high school where 10 people were killed in the fourth deadly US school shooting this year, an image recalling similar gatherings after February's Florida school massacre. A few dozen people, including student survivors of the attack, family members, chaplains and police, gathered at 10 am outside Santa Fe High School to observe a moment of silence called for by Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

In contrast to Florida, where the deaths of 17 teens and educators sparked a youth-led movement calling for new restrictions on gun ownership, the Texas tragedy saw elected officials and survivors alike voicing support for gun rights. Some embraced the idea of arming teachers, a strategy advocated by the National Rifle Association and US President Donald Trump but largely rejected by survivors and parents in Parkland, Florida, after the carnage there.

"I'd be comfortable with our teachers having guns," said Tessa Ybarra, 15, a sophomore at Santa Fe High School. "If Ms T and Ms Perkins had had guns, maybe they could have protected themselves," she said, referring to Cynthia Tisdale and Glenda Ann Perkins, the two teachers killed on Friday. Abbott, who noted that the 17-year-old accused of the attack appeared to have used weapons legally owned by his father, planned yesterday to open a three-day series of roundtable meetings with educators and law enforcement officials on improving school safety.

"We need to do more than just pray for the victims and the families," Abbott said on Friday at the school, located about 50 km southeast of Houston, following the attack. He said any changes considered to state laws would "protect Second Amendment rights". The Second Amendment of the US Constitution enshrines the right to bear arms. Gun rights proponents say it prohibits regulations on gun ownership and argue that enforcement of existing laws should be sufficient to stop violence like the scenes that played out in Santa Fe.

The US Supreme Court has avoided major gun cases for a number of years, leaving in place restrictions on guns enacted by some states. Gun control groups point to the regular toll of shootings across the United States as evidence that more needs

to be done to rein in the proliferation of weapons. Abbott said the list of nearly two dozen participants for his meetings includes both supporters and opponents of arming teachers.

Mike Collier, a Democrat running for Texas lieutenant governor, expressed skepticism that the talks would bring significant change. "Dozens of Texans have been killed in massacres just six months apart... and our state leadership feebly announces 'roundtables,'" Collier said, alluding to the fatal shooting in November of 26 people at a church in rural Sutherland Springs.

Police arrested Dimitrios Pagourtzis, 17, at the Santa Fe school following the rampage they said he committed with a shotgun and .38-caliber pistol. He is charged with capital murder of 10 victims - two teachers and eight students, including Pakistani exchange student Sabika Sheikh, 17. Her father, Aziz Sheikh, said on Monday he hoped his daughter's death would spur gun control in the United States. "Sabika's case should become an example to change the gun laws," Sheikh said in a phone interview.

Shotgun giveaway

Abbott's re-election campaign website on Monday dropped a contest offering donors the chance to win a shotgun, a fundraising promotion that Texas gun-control advocates criticized as insensitive. Campaign spokesman John Wittman said the contest began on May 1, well before Friday's gun violence, though critics noted the shotgun offer remained posted days after the shooting. "Abbott's decision to continue the raffle was disrespectful to the Santa Fe community," Houston March for Our Lives, a group which is part of the national protest movement that arose from the Florida high school massacre, said on Twitter.

Police said Pagourtzis confessed to Friday's killings after he was taken into custody, but they have offered no motive yet for the massacre. Pagourtzis is being held without bond, on suicide watch, at the Galveston County Jail in nearby Galveston. Sheriff Henry Trocheset said, Pagourtzis' family said in a statement it was "saddened and dismayed" by the shooting.

Pagourtzis's attorneys told reporters Monday that their client was "in a state" of mental confusion. "I think that there is defini-



SANTA FE, Texas: Mourners pray around a memorial in front of Santa Fe High School on Monday. —AFP

tely something going on in terms of mental health history," attorney Nicholas Poehl told NBC News. "I still think he's very confused about the incident." Law enforcement offered a new timeline of the rampage, saying that two school police officers challenged the gunman four minutes after the attack began.

A gun battle ensued, with the gunman in a classroom and officers in the hallway, Trocheset told a news conference. "They contained him in that one area, isolated," he said, "so that he did no more damage to other classes." Recalling the attack on ABC television's "Good Morning America", student Trenton Beazely said the shooter "was playing music, making jokes, had slogans and rhymes he kept saying." "Every time he'd kill someone he'd

say, 'another one bites the dust.'"

February's massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, prompted enactment of a law creating a \$67 million statewide fund to train school personnel to carry weapons on the job, though the measure excludes most classroom teachers. Parkland rejected its share of that funding. In Santa Fe, some students were more interested in that idea. Said 18-year-old Cassidy Monroe: "In some cases arming teachers may help". Other students and parents said they supported installation of metal detectors at school entrances. Cindy Evans, 48, whose 15-year-old son attends Santa Fe High, said she felt the solution ultimately lay elsewhere. —Agencies

Calif university sued over sexual abuse by doctor

LOS ANGELES: Five women filed lawsuits on Monday alleging that a doctor who worked at the University of Southern California for nearly three decades sexually abused them, and that the school ignored the misconduct. The two civil lawsuits filed in Los Angeles Superior Court list graphic detail years of alleged abuse by George Tyndall, who worked as a gynecologist at the university's Student Health Center until he retired last year.

One of the women - who were not identified in the lawsuits - alleges that Tyndall forced his entire hand and wrist into her vagina while examining her during an appointment in 2003 and made vulgar comments about her genitalia. Another woman details how Tyndall, 71, groped her breasts and leered at her on what was her first appointment with a gynecologist in 2008. "Just before groping her breasts, Tyndall would lecherously rub his hands together in front of plaintiff ... and would

say 'I just want to get them warm for you,'" according to the lawsuit, a copy of which were obtained by AFP.

The lawsuits - one filed on behalf of four women and the other on behalf of a former law student - allege that the university failed to act against Tyndall despite complaints about his behavior going back to at least the year 2000. They say that the school only launched a probe in 2016 after a supervising nurse upset at USC's inaction reported him to the campus rape crisis center. He was then allowed to "quietly" resign in June of last year.

"Rather than addressing and properly investigating the complaints, including taking appropriate disciplinary action and/or terminating the employment of Tyndall, the USC defendants kept the complaints secret to avoid negative publicity despite their actual knowledge of such misconduct," one of the lawsuits states.

The lawsuits say that USC never once reported Tyndall to law enforcement despite dozens of complaints about his behavior by co-workers. Tyndall could not be reached for comment on Monday. In earlier interviews with The Los Angeles Times, which first wrote about the alleged abuse, he said he had "done nothing wrong" and had "never had any sexual urges" toward patients. —AFP

One of Cuba's three air crash survivors dies



HOLGUIN, Cuba: A relative of Norma Suarez Niles, who died in the plane crash in Havana that killed 110 people, is carried by a man after she fainted during her funeral on Monday. —AFP

HAVANA: One of the three women who survived Cuba's worst air crash in decades has died from her injuries, the health ministry said Monday, raising the toll to 111. The 23-year-old, Gretell Landrove, was admitted to hospital with life-threatening injuries and she did not make medical progress, the ministry said in a statement read out on state television. The other two women survivors were still in critical condition. Earlier, doctors had indicated that two of the Cuban survivors of Friday's crash were fighting for their lives at Havana's Calixto Garcia hospital.

A Boeing 737 leased to national carrier Cubana de Aviacion crashed shortly after taking off from Havana's Jose Marti airport on Friday with 113 passengers and crew aboard. The Cuban government is investigating the cause of the crash and has so far identified 33 of the dead, some of whom have already been buried. Transport Minister Adel Yzquierdo has said one of the plane's two black boxes had been recovered in "good condition," and the other was likely to be found. Their data will be key to

determining what happened.

The 39-year-old plane, leased from a Mexican company, Global Air, was on a domestic flight to the eastern city of Holguin, where most of the passengers were from. In Mexico, Global Air's operations were suspended so that Mexican aviation authorities can run inspections of the aircraft it leases, on the heels of the tragedy in Cuba. The review will double inspect aircraft already certified as safe to fly, and assist as needed in the investigation of the accident in Cuba, a company statement said.

Built in 1979, according to the Mexican government, the plane last passed inspection in November 2017. The accident happened at 12:08pm (1608 GMT). The plane crashed in a potato field close to Havana's airport. Witnesses and airport officials told AFP that the aircraft plunged as it was making its first turn after take-off. Almost all of what remained of the plane was a mangled carcass of burned metal. It came down just 200 m from houses between the Boyeros and Santiago de Las Vegas districts south of Havana. —AFP

SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW

25

KD

*** your subscription for one year for only kd 25 and get 4 free tickets to Paintball kuwait valued at kd37**

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 27.500

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 27.500

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 27.500

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

30 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

50 بطاقة
Paintballs
Value KD 9.250

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

In UK, chefs stir up food waste revolution in the kitchen

As a young cook working in a high-end restaurant, Douglas McMaster once saw hundreds of gem lettuces peeled directly into the bin and thrown out with only their root served - as garnish. That was one of the experiences that drove McMaster to open Britain's first zero-waste restaurant, one of a rising number of eateries on a drive to cut food waste as millions of people in a growing global population struggle to get enough to eat.

"We like to think of zero waste as not having a bin," said McMaster, a talkative 31-year-old with long hair and hipster beard who won the young chef of the year award from British public broadcaster BBC in 2009. Food waste is increasingly viewed as unethical in a world of rising hunger and environmentally destructive, dumped in landfills where it rots, releasing greenhouse gases, while fuel, water, and energy needed to grow, store and carry it is wasted.

Globally, one third of all food produced - worth nearly \$1 trillion - is binned every year, according to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Saving a fraction of that would be enough to feed the 815 million people that go to bed hungry every night and could help meet the needs of a growing global population, set to reach 9.8 billion by 2050 from the current 7.6 billion, UN agencies say.

Chefs stand accused of being wasteful in their kitchens with the hospitality sector accounting for almost 10 percent of the food thrown out by shops and consumers in Britain each year. But growing numbers are joining the ranks of entrepreneurs and innovators working to tackle the issue, backed by socially-conscious consumers who support a United Nations target to halve food waste at retail and consumer level by 2030. Some chefs like Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall have used their celebrity status to raise awareness or campaign for new regulations. Others have launched concept restaurants, soup kitchens and social enterprises that turn waste into meals.

From the farm and back

McMaster opened his restaurant, Silo, in Brighton in 2014, sourcing from local farmers, avoiding packaging, and trying to put everything into a dish, including byproducts. They left from making cheese transforms into sauce for potatoes, while bread crusts become miso soup, McMaster said. Remains and inedible parts, such as egg shells and bones, are turned into compost that is handed back to the farmers.

"Every natural thing has a purpose, you just got to find out what that purpose is," said McMaster, sipping a cup of coffee in an office above the restaurant which uses disposed materials like industrial floor tiles and cabinet frames as furniture. McMaster acknowledges his restaurant has little impact in the global fight against waste but he hopes it sets an example. For restaurants, hotels and catering services are increasingly trying to reduce what they bin, many of whom due to the awareness that cutting waste is also good for business, said Liz Goodwin of the think tank World Resources Institute.

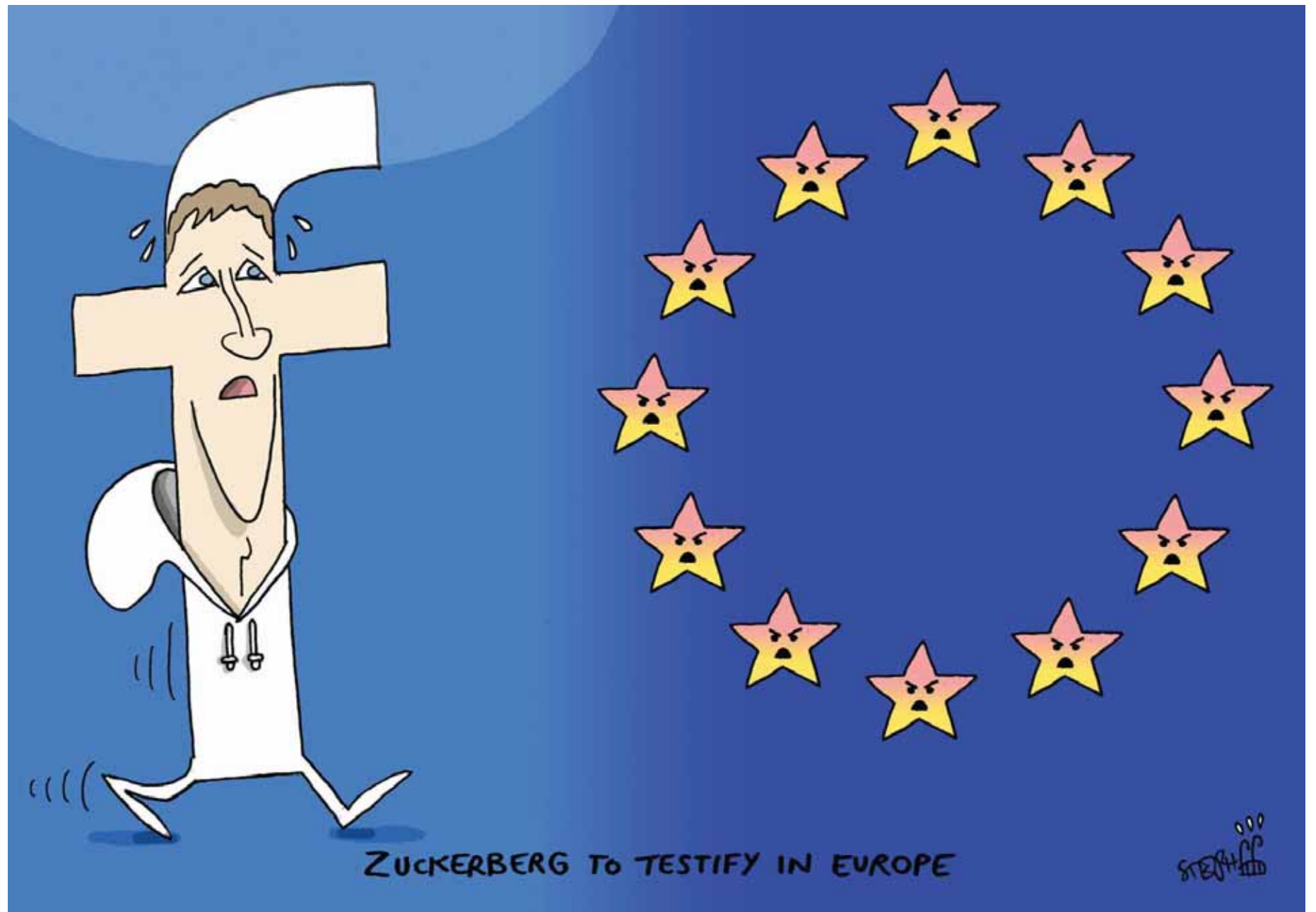
A 2017 study found cutting food waste boosts income and lowers costs, and several big chains, including KFC and Nando's, have committed to reduce their output in coming years. But Goodwin said while businesses were cutting waste, families were slow to do so despite producing more than 70 percent of all post-harvest waste. She hoped chefs could influence this. "If the chef says it is really important not to waste food, that is a message that the costumers will take home," she said.

Stars and scraps

In June last year, Michelin-starred chef Massimo Bottura of Italy opened a new restaurant in central London, the Refettorio Felix, which doesn't welcome wealthy diners but caters for the poor cooking meals from supermarket scraps. Unlike soup kitchens, guests don't queue but are served at the table surrounded by the work of artists and designers. Bottura and more than 50 other famous chefs have cooked at the restaurant, with some of their recipes and tips compiled into a cookbook that aims to teach people how to reduce waste at home. "We are making a revolution bringing ethics into the kitchen," said Bottura, whose restaurant Osteria Francescana in Modena, northern Italy, was voted the best in the world in 2016.

"We need to look at normal ingredients that we all have in the fridge under another light. A tomato that is too ripe is not good for a salad but can be used to make a wonderful sauce". In Leeds in northern England, chef Adam Smith is taking food destined for landfills to local schools to support low-income families and teach pupils about food waste.

"We educate young people about the environmental issue," he said, speaking from a warehouse in the city's outskirts where his organization, The Real Junk Food Project (TRJFP), is based. Smith started TRJFP in 2013 as a single cafe serving meals from ingredients salvaged from restaurants and supermarkets. Within a few years it had ballooned into a network of more than 120 eateries and stores, including Britain's first pay-what-you-like food waste supermarket. —Reuters



Hezbollah and allies gain sway in parliament

Lebanon's new parliament is due to meet for the first time today and is expected to reelect Shiite politician Nabih Berri as speaker, a post he has held since 1992. The heavily armed Shiite movement Hezbollah together with groups and individuals that are politically aligned to it won at least 70 of parliament's 128 seats in the May 6 election. The result was a political boost for the Iran-backed group, which declared it "a victory" for the "choice of the resistance", a reference to its powerful arsenal that has been a major point of contention in Lebanon for years.

Differences - and in some cases conflict - between some parties in the Hezbollah-aligned camp means it does not operate with unified goals in domestic politics, and Hezbollah does not see eye to eye with its allies on all issues. But for Hezbollah it has been politically vital to have their support for its possession of arms, which it says are needed to deter Israel and - in more recent years - to protect Lebanon from Islamist insurgents in Syria. Here is the breakdown:

Hezbollah - 12 Seats

Founded in 1982 by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and deemed a terrorist group by the United States, Hezbollah is the most powerful group in Lebanon thanks to a heavily armed militia that has fought several wars with Israel. It has grown militarily stronger since joining the war in neighboring Syria in 2012 in support of President Bashar Al-Assad.

Amal Movement - 13 Seats

The Shiite Amal Movement is led by Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and has been closely aligned with Hezbollah since the end of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. Amal has maintained very close ties to the Syrian government since it was founded in 1974.

Small Hezbollah Aligned Parties - 14 Seats

These include the Maronite Christian Marada party, the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party, the Baath Party, the Armenian Tashnag and the Druze Lebanese Democratic Party, which were all represented in the previous parliament.

Colombo's wetlands float to top of flood prevention plan

On the surface, Sri Lanka's capital Colombo looks like any other fast-growing South Asian city, with buildings stretching as far as the eye can see and skyscrapers rearing up along its coast. But beneath the concrete, Colombo hides a wilder and wetter past. Before it became the nerve centre of Sri Lankan politics and business, the city was a region dotted with wetlands and about 30 km of canals that helped absorb and disperse the massive rains that come in from the Indian Ocean.

In the past four decades, as the island adopted an aggressive development policy, its natural flood protection systems were built over, both by authorized and informal construction. "Flash flooding is now a frequent thing," said NS Wijayarathne, deputy general manager for wetlands at the Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation, a government body. Experts say Colombo's long-neglected wetlands could help alleviate worsening floods - and are set to make a comeback as a key pillar of a major flood prevention program.

Floods occurred in 2016 and 2017 during the monsoon, and smaller deluges have happened this year even before the onset of the monsoon, including in the past few days. Weather patterns have changed drastically since the 1970s, with rains becoming shorter but more intense, as the planet has warmed. That shift has raised the risk of flooding in the Colombo Metropolitan Area, home to about a quarter of the island nation's population of 21 million. In November 2010, heavy rains brought the city to a standstill for a week, causing damage worth as much as \$100 million, said World Bank consultant Nadeera Rajapakse Rubaroe.

Fast-shrinking wetlands

The \$321-million Metro Colombo Urban Development Project - about two-thirds of it funded by the World Bank - aims to strengthen flood protection and urban planning.

In addition, the heads of four Hezbollah-aligned parties that were not part of the last parliament won Sunni seats this time. They are Osama Saad, Abdulrahim Mrad, Adnan Trabulsi and Faisal Karami.

Independents - 11 Seats

This group includes non-Shiites who are politically aligned with Hezbollah and Amal and ran on lists backed by the parties. Several prominent Hezbollah supporters running as independents have also returned to public office for the first time since the withdrawal of Syrian forces in 2005. Among them is Jamil Al-Sayyed, a retired Shiite general and close friend of Assad, who ran as independent and is a staunch supporter of Hezbollah and its regional allies.

Free Patriotic Movement - 20 seats

The FPM, founded by Maronite Christian politician Michel Aoun, has been a political ally of Hezbollah since 2006. The alliance is particularly important to Hezbollah because the FPM is the biggest Christian force in parliament. Hezbollah's backing for Aoun was vital to his bid to become head of state, a goal he finally realized in 2016 in a political deal that saw Saad Al-Hariri become prime minister. Aoun has said Hezbollah's weapons are critical to the defense of Lebanon. In an interview last year, he said the US-backed Lebanese army was not strong enough to confront Israel and so Hezbollah's arms were a necessity.

Aoun said after the 2018 election he intended to call a national dialogue to address issues including "a national defense strategy" - a phrase that implies discussion of Hezbollah's arms - but without giving further details. His son-in-law, FPM leader Gebran Bassil, came under fire in Lebanon last year for saying Lebanon did not have an ideological problem with Israel. But in his role as foreign minister, Bassil has acted in Hezbollah's interests at the Arab League. Nasrallah said in April the FPM alliance remained strong but this did not mean the parties had become one. Groups that oppose Hezbollah arms -

Future Movement - 20 Seats

Led by Saad al-Hariri, Future lost more than a third of

its seats, but it remains the biggest Sunni-led party. Hariri led a Saudi-backed alliance through years of political conflict with Hezbollah and its allies that spilled into a brief civil war in 2008 over the group's arms. The "March 14" alliance won a majority in 2009, but began disintegrating after the election and suffered from waning Saudi support. Hariri still wants Hezbollah disarmed but says this is an issue that should be resolved by dialogue at the regional level. His focus is on reviving the stagnant economy and reforming the heavily indebted state.

Lebanese Forces (LF) - 15 Seats

Led by Maronite Christian politician Samir Geagea, the Lebanese Forces is Hezbollah's most significant Christian opponent. The LF, which emerged from a powerful civil war militia, has also been fiercely critical of Hezbollah's role in the war in neighboring Syria. It is one of the biggest winners in the election, almost doubling its seats. Geagea said the result showed "March 14" still enjoys popular support.

Kataeb Party, Others - 5 Seats

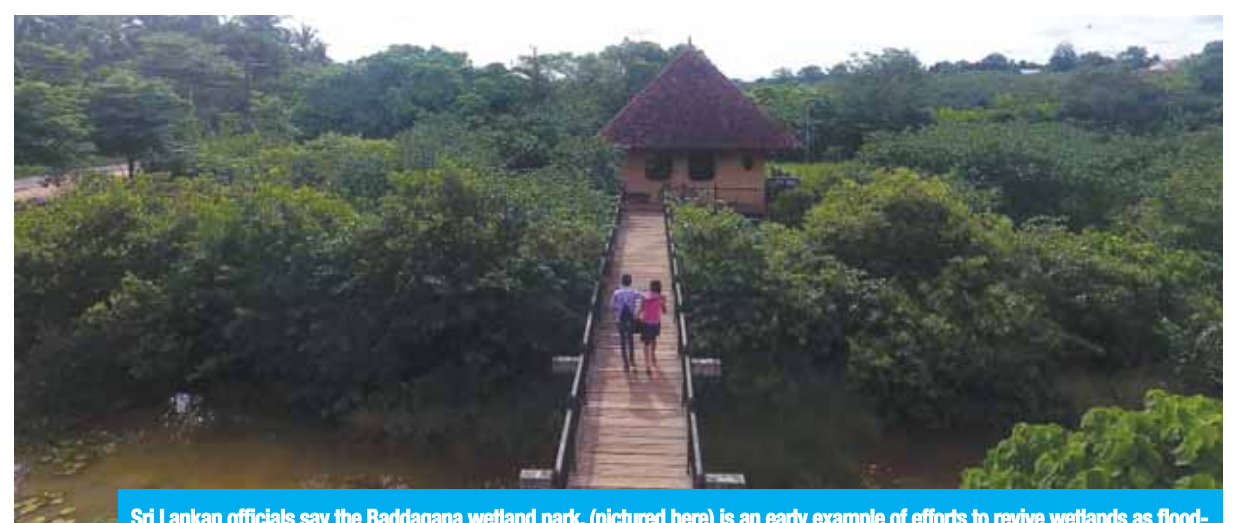
The Kataeb, also known as the Phalange Party, is led by Maronite Christian politician Sami Gemayel, who took over the leadership from his father, former President Amin Gemayel. Separately, at least two other of the newly elected MPs are known to have positions opposed to Hezbollah's weapons.

Progressive Socialist Party - 9 Seats

Led by Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, the PSP has wavered on the issue of Hezbollah's arms over the years. It was a pillar of the March 14 alliance until the 2009 election, but repositioned itself in the political centre after that vote. Jumblatt said last year that Hezbollah itself should be the one to decide when its weapons are put up for discussion.

Others - 9 Seats

These include political independents such as former Prime Minister Najib Mikati, veteran Christian politician Michel al-Murr and others whose views on Hezbollah and its arms could not immediately be confirmed. — Reuters



Sri Lankan officials say the Baddagana wetland park, (pictured here) is an early example of efforts to revive wetlands as flood-water retention areas in the capital. It is also popular among Colombo residents as a nature trail. — Reuters

Under the plan, what is left of the city's wetlands are being revived to retain excess water. Two such areas have been developed in the past three years near a lake close to the city's parliament building in the eastern suburbs of Baddagana and Diyasaru Thalawathugoda.

Wijayarathne said at least 10 more locations around the lake can be developed into similar parkland. There is no time to lose, say experts. "In terms of flood protection and mitigation, the wetlands in Colombo play an indispensable role, and are at an absolutely critical threshold," the World Bank's Rubaroe said. The city has been losing its wetlands at an alarming rate, she added. Only about 17 percent of Colombo's territory consists of wetlands that have not been encroached on, covering some 20 square km combined.

That surface area can retain close to 40 percent of the rainfall the area receives annually - the equivalent of 27,000 Olympic swimming pools of water. If Colombo were to lose all its wetlands, flooding would shave off about 1 percent of its annual gross domestic product of some \$53 billion, according to a World Bank study. Projections by the bank and the government show that without the wetlands, major floods like the one in 2010 -

which rose as high as 5 meters (16 ft) in some areas - could be 1.8 meters higher.

People's parks

To be successful, experts say city communities must have a say in - and gain from - the rehabilitation of the wetlands. "People have to feel part and parcel of the project - they need to experience that these projects make very real changes to their lives," said Sameera Premarathana, manager at Baddagana Park, which offers a nature trail for the public. The plan aims to develop the revivable wetlands around the parliament lake so that they offer recreational, tourist and other benefits, rather than leaving the land unused. Premarathana said that when Baddagana Park first opened, local people showed little interest, and some even blamed the park for adding to floods in the area. But after the incidence of flooding reduced to almost nothing, they started to grasp the importance of the park, its manager said. Local residents have also earned money from running the car park and providing refreshments for visitors, who number some 7,000 a month. The green space has become popular with school children on educational tours, with some joining the park conservation society. — Reuters

Business

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018

13 Syrian Kurd traders suffer from twin tax systems

13 Merkel seeks united front with China amid Trump trade fears

14 Tamdeen Group breaks ground on KD 250 million Al-Khiran project



QINGDAO: Imported cars at a parking lot near a port in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province. China will cut tariffs on most imported cars to 15 percent from July 1, the finance ministry said yesterday following a thaw in trade tensions with the United States.—AFP

China, US near deal on ZTE reprieve

Beijing cuts car import tariffs to 15% from 25%

BEIJING: Washington neared a deal to lift its ban on US firms supplying Chinese telecoms gear maker ZTE Corp, sources said yesterday, and Beijing announced tariff cuts on car imports, further easing trade tensions between the world's two largest economies.

The reprieve for ZTE, hit by a seven-year ban in April that had crippled its operations, could include China removing tariffs on imported US agricultural products, as well as buying more American farm goods, two people briefed on the matter told Reuters. The sources declined to be identified because the negotiations are confidential. Representatives for the US Treasury and Commerce departments did not immediately reply to a request for comment. White House representatives also did not immediately reply. ZTE, based in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, did not immediately reply to requests for comment. Washington and Beijing stepped back from the brink of full-blown trade war after talks last week, with the United States appearing to set aside for now its demands that China revamp key planks of its industrial policy in exchange for buying more farm products.

US President Donald Trump has adopted a more conciliatory stance in the trade dispute with China as North Korea, whose chief ally is Beijing, has called into question a summit planned for next month in Singapore with Trump. Many in the US government and in industry are dismayed that Trump appears to be backing off his tough stance on forcing China to open its mar-

kets more and tackle what they see as China's unfair trade and market access practices.

Some in the US government and business community have said they opposed what they saw as a clear-cut legal case against ZTE being used as a bargaining chip in the broader trade conflict. Republican Senator Marco Rubio, who has been critical of Trump's moves toward ZTE, blasted his administration over the reported agreement for having "surrendered" to Beijing and pledged that Congress, led by Trump's fellow Republicans, would seek to block any deal with the company.

"Making changes to their board and a fine won't stop them from spying and stealing from us. But this is too important to be over. We will begin working on veto-proof congressional action," Rubio said in a pair of tweets yesterday. The steep cut in import tariffs for autos and car parts follows China's pledge last month to open its car market, the world's largest, that included a timeline to remove long-standing caps on foreign ownership of automotive ventures.

Import tariffs will be cut to 15 percent for most vehicles from 25 percent from July 1, the Ministry of Finance said, a move like-

ly to boost carmakers that ship high-end cars to China, such as Tesla Inc and German giants BMW and Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz. Tariffs for auto parts would be cut to 6 percent from mostly about 10 percent.

'Handshake deal'

White House advisers have previously said the ban against ZTE was being reexamined, and the firm would still face "harsh" punishment, including enforced changes of management and at board level. One source told Reuters there was a "handshake deal" on ZTE between US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He during talks in Washington last week that would drop the ban in exchange for purchase of more US farm products.

The second person said China might also eliminate tariffs on US agriculture products it assessed in response to US steel duties, and that ZTE could still be forced to replace its leadership, among other penalties. The ZTE deal, while not yet cemented, was likely to be finalized before or during a planned trip by US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to Beijing next

week to help reach a broader pact to avert a trade war, both sources said.

ZTE, which is publicly traded but whose largest shareholder is a Chinese state-owned enterprise, had been hit with penalties for breaking a 2017 agreement after it was caught illegally shipping US goods to Iran and North Korea, in an investigation dating to the Obama administration. American companies provide an estimated 25 percent to 30 percent of components in ZTE's equipment, which includes smartphones and gear to build telecommunications networks.

In May, Trump signalled a stunning reversal on ZTE when he said he would help the company get "back into business, fast", saying the ban would cost too many jobs in China. Chinese officials had made the issue a key focus of their demands during talks in Beijing this month, threatening to halt talks on broader two-way trade disputes unless Washington agreed to ease the sanctions, sources said at the time.

Chinese officials had viewed the US punishment as an attack exposing their country's dependence on imports of key technologies. "The release of hostage ZTE will be the start of China and the US to implement their trade agreements," Hu Xijin, editor in chief of the Chinese state-backed Global Times tabloid, said on his Twitter account after news of the deal. Washington and Beijing both claimed victory in trade talks on Monday as the world's two largest economies agreed to hold further talks to boost US exports to China.—Reuters



Deal involves China buying more US farm goods

Jazeera Airways welcomes first passengers at new terminal

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost airline, operating regionally and internationally, yesterday welcomed its first passengers at its newly inaugurated Jazeera Terminal (T5) at the Kuwait International Airport. Passengers travelling to Cairo were the first to check in through the new Jazeera terminal, departing from gate B2 at 9:45am. Passengers returning from Najaf were the first to arrive at the new terminal, landing in Kuwait at 12:20pm.

All Jazeera Airways flights to Kuwait landing from Tuesday, May 22, from 12:00pm arrive at the Jazeera terminal, while departing flights are gradually being routed to the Jazeera terminal. All departing flights will be fully served from the new terminal starting Sunday, May 27.

About the Jazeera terminal

The Jazeera terminal is the first terminal owned by a non-government airline in the Middle East and ease traffic congestion at the Kuwait International Airport. The terminal is located next to the main

terminal at Kuwait International Airport.

Facts:

Total size: 4,750 square meters
Annual passenger capacity: 2.5 million
Baggage handling capacity: 1,200 per hour

Check-in alternatives: 12 check-in counters and fully-integrates self-service check-in kiosks

Parking annex: 350 cars capacity, connected by an air-conditioned glass bridge
Single security check for departing and arriving passengers
Connected to three boarding gates

Check-in process

Twelve check-in counters are located at the ground floor level, of which two are dedicated to business travelers and baggage drop-offs for passengers who have checked-in online. Two car park check-in counters and self-service check-in kiosks will be made available in the parking structure and the terminal to enable passengers to check-in.

The terminal has its own passport control desks at departure and arrival, with only one security check after passport control and none required at the gates due to the new passenger flow system designed to separate departing and arriving passengers. The terminal connects directly to the Jazeera Airways dedicated gates B1, B2 and B3 at the Kuwait International Airport.



Short-term parking

The terminal is connected to a parking structure which accommodates 350 cars and gives passengers access to the terminal through a connecting tunnel.

Long-term parking: Park & Fly

Complementing the customer-centric terminal, Jazeera Airways' Park & Fly service will connect passengers to the new terminal through a shuttle. Located at the Jazeera Airways headquarters opposite the Amiri Terminal,

Park & Fly is ideal for passengers who opt to leaving their car at the Airport for a nominal fee of KD2,500 per day. Passengers can park their car, check-in, drop-off their baggage and enjoy a shuttle transport to the new terminal.

New shuttle service: Ride & Fly

Jazeera Airways will soon launch its newest shuttle service, Ride & Fly, enabling passengers to take a shuttle from dedicated bus stops in Kuwait, check-in on-board and travel to the new terminal.

EU fears offer to US not enough to end trade row

BRUSSELS: The EU's own top trade official warned yesterday that the bloc's last-ditch bid to persuade US President Donald Trump to back off stiff tariffs on metals imports from Europe fell short of expectations in Washington. Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström spoke ahead of talks of the EU's 28 trade ministers to discuss an attempt to woo the US away from punishing steel and aluminum tariffs and win Europe a similar break as handed China.

Europe was hit by the shock tariffs in March, part of the protectionist president's threat of an "America First" trade war with Washington's closest partners, including Canada, Mexico and Japan. "If we are exempted, then we are willing to engage in talks and see how we can facilitate trade relations," said Malmström. She has spearheaded a series of talks with US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, a stalwart of Trump's hardball tactics who also plays a role in the parallel negotiations with China. But asked if she thought the EU's gesture to the US was acceptable to Washington, Malmström answered: "I think they don't think it's enough."

The ministers will take encouragement from the US-China development on Sunday with Washington and Beijing backing off from tit-for-tat tariffs after reaching an as-yet unspecified accord on slashing the massive American trade deficit with China. The European Union has said it refuses all trade talks with the United States unless Washington grants a permanent exemption from the painful steel and aluminum tariffs that are set to kick in on June 1.—AFP

Senior Graphic Designer
 Australian College of Kuwait
 Kuwait

You will be responsible to provide lead direction, training and work review; organizes and assign works, set priorities, and follows up to ensure coordination and completion of assigned work, identify operational problems, considers alternatives and recommend solutions, coordinate administrative processes and operations, following procedural guidelines.

Apply Now [JB3802421](#)

Financial Advisor / Financial Consultant - Nexus Financial Services - Kuwait

You will be responsible to offer a full range of life insurance, savings and investment products to our clients, new and existing. Further, you will be able to offer a full range of commercial insurance, employee benefits and personal lines insurance, supported by a first class administration team.

Apply Now [JB3802298](#)

Social Media & Digital Marketing Specialist - IKEA Kuwait

You will be responsible to bring traffic to the store and the website using all the social media platforms and online media. Lead the growth of the IKEA digital presence in all markets. Strive to make the IKEA Brand becomes the natural first choice for home furnishing inspiration, dialogue, and product choice online.

Apply Now [JB3802162](#)

Logistics Dispatcher
 TONS Online Grocery
 Kuwait

You will be responsible to assign ready orders to drivers taking in consideration distance of delivery locations and timings, but also considering any other factor that could delay the task using the computer and/or mobile phone. Monitor the route and status of field units to coordinate and prioritize their schedule.

Apply Now [JB3801782](#)

Insurance Sales Consultant
 Alghanim Industries
 Kuwait

You will be responsible to train VSG salesmen to sell insurance, meet customers and sell insurance when needed, encourage salesmen to sell insurance, assist salesmen to issue policies from showroom, increase the success ratio of insurance at showrooms, coordinate with Shewaikh office, prepare the necessary reports for management, and maintain good / close relation with salesmen.

Apply Now [JB3801123](#)

Administrative Assistant
 Bimad Group
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for receiving Inquiries by email, forwarding the inquiries to the concern person, checking the availability of stock, preparing the offer for Construction and Lumber division according to the rates given by the concern managers, sending the inquiry to the clients, and follow up on the offers sent to the clients.

Apply Now [JB3801418](#)

Product Development Officer
 MGT
 Kuwait

You will be responsible to assist Product Development Manager in preparation of product launch materials including project schedule, operations manual, User Requirements and test plan for proposal illustration system as well as performing User Acceptance Test.

Apply Now [JB3801361](#)

Social Media Executive
 Food Choice Gen Trade and Cont Co - Kuwait

You will be responsible to implement social media strategy for our company, manage Company's brand presence in Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, G+ and other social networks, create engaging and interesting content (posts, videos, promotions, etc.), and identify social media influencers and engage them.

Apply Now [JB3783638](#)

Civil Engineer
 Karam Al Watan
 KSA

You will be responsible to analyze survey reports, maps, drawings, blueprints, aerial photography, and other topographical or geologic data to plan projects, plan and design structures and transportation or hydraulic systems, following construction and government standards, using design software and drawing tools.

Apply Now [JB3802185](#)

Project Manager - Structural
 MDC Business Management Services - KSA

You will be responsible for managing the administration and supervision of field civil construction monitoring activities including site-work, structural steel, concrete, masonry pre-cast, and roofing, provide technical guidance and expertise to ensure completion within established schedule, in accordance with design specifications and contractual obligations.

Apply Now [JB3802588](#)

Sr. Digital Marketing Specialist
 THIQAH Business Services
 KSA

You will be responsible to manage Thiqah's website content and development, develop and maintain social media strategy for each and every brand, manage all digital platforms and digital touch points for Thiqah as well as its partners services portals, managing and maintaining our social media presence across all digital channels.

Apply Now [JB3802464](#)

Sales Executive
 CIGNA Insurance Services
 KSA

You will be responsible to generate and follow up new business leads to meet sales and profitability targets in line with overall strategy, research and develop new business opportunities within assigned industry categories/market segments, prepare focused, client-specific presentations for new business emphasizing the USP's of Cigna versus the competition;

Apply Now [JB3802333](#)

HR Manager
 EZ Marketing
 UAE

You will be responsible to maintain organization staff by establishing a recruiting, testing, and interviewing program; counselling, candidate selection; conducting and analyzing exit interviews; recommending changes, prepare employees for assignments by establishing and conducting orientation and training programs.

Apply Now [JB3801993](#)

Product Manager
 Quest Search & Selection
 UAE

You will be responsible for determining customers' needs and desires by specifying the research needed to obtain market information, recommending the nature and scope of present and future product lines by reviewing product specifications and requirements; appraising new product ideas and/or product or packaging changes.

Apply Now [JB3802484](#)

Strategic Sourcing Specialist
 National Oilwell Varco
 UAE

You will be responsible to manage supplier relationships related to technical product requirements of the ISE group, leverage the group spend/demand to deliver vendor cost savings in line with set objects, rationalize the vendor portfolio to ensure critical supply products are proactively managed for example Just-In-Time.

Apply Now [JB3802457](#)

Key Accounts Manager (HVAC)
 BWP
 UAE

You will be responsible to create new strategic customers, enhance cooperation with existing accounts, develop strong relations with high end users / developers, assist sales team securing projects at higher GP, manage Abu Dhabi sales functions related to a specific Account, and penetrate untapped clients (Consultants, Contractors and Clients).

Apply Now [JB3801070](#)

Sales Executive
 Smartologyit
 Qatar

You will be responsible to identifies business opportunities by identifying prospects and evaluating their position in the industry; researching and analyzing sales options, organizing sales visits, demonstrating and presenting product services, maintains relationships with clients by providing support, information, and guidance.

Apply Now [JB3801544](#)

Project Engineer
 Ramaco Trading & Contracting
 Qatar

You will be responsible to supervise the civil works in projects and ensure that the schedule, plan, design and construction quality are executed as approved. Provide technical expertise to support the projects of Ramaco.

Apply Now [JB3802590](#)

Senior Partnership Officer
 Carriage Logistics General
 Trading - Qatar

You will be responsible to ensure that the restaurants should be in line with Carriage strategy of offering Carriage users with the variety of cuisines and suitable to Carriage image and brand at the same time.

Apply Now [JB3802295](#)

Junior Demand Planner
 Abdullah Abdulghani & Bros Co.
 W.L.L (AAB) - Qatar

You will be responsible to oversee demand planning, ordering and management processes for new and existing products, developing demand forecasts based on demand patterns and business trends, provides support in developing seasonal demand forecasts and anticipates customers reactions to the promotions and discounts.

Apply Now [JB3802229](#)

Business

Merkel seeks united front with China amid Trump trade fears

US-China reconciliation complicates possible German deal

BERLIN: Chancellor Angela Merkel visits China tomorrow seeking to close ranks with the world's biggest exporting nation as US President Donald Trump shakes up explosive issues from trade to Iran's nuclear deal.

Finding a common strategy to ward off a trade war and keep markets open will be Merkel's priority when she meets with President Xi Jinping, as Washington brandishes the threat of imposing punitive tariffs on aluminum and steel imports.

"Both countries are in agreement that open markets and rules-based world trade are necessary. That's the main focus of this trip," Merkel's spokeswoman Martina Fietz said in Berlin on Friday. But closing ranks with Beijing against Washington risks being complicated by Saturday's deal between China and the US to hold off tit-for-tat trade measures.

China's economic health can only benefit Germany as the Asian giant is a big buyer of Made in Germany. But a deal between the US and China effectively leaves Berlin as the main target of Trump's campaign against foreign imports that he claims harm US national security.

The US leader had already singled Germany out for criticism, saying it had "taken advantage" of the US by spending less than Washington on NATO. Underlining what is at stake, French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire warned the US-

China deal may come "at the expense of Europe if Europe is not capable of showing a firm hand".

11 visits in 12 years

Nevertheless, Merkel can look to her carefully nurtured relationship with China over her 12 years as chancellor. No Western leader has visited Beijing as often as Merkel, who will be undertaking her eleventh trip to the country.

In China, she is viewed not only as the main point of contact for Europe, but, crucially, also as a reliable interlocutor—an antithesis of the mercurial Trump. Devoting her weekly podcast to her visit, Merkel stressed that Beijing and Berlin "are both committed to the rules of the WTO" (World Trade Organization) and want to "strengthen multilateralism". But she also underlined that she will press home Germany's longstanding quest for reciprocity in market access as well as the respect of intellectual property. Ahead of her visit, Beijing fired off a rare salvo of criticism. China's envoy to Germany, Shi Mingde, pointed to a "protectionist trend in Germany", as he complained about toughened rules protecting German companies from foreign takeovers.

Only 0.3 percent of foreign investors in Germany stem from China while German firms have put in 80 billion euros in the Asian giant over the last three decades, he told Stuttgarter

Nachrichten. "Economic exchange cannot work as a one-way street," he warned. Meanwhile, looming over the battle on the trade front is another equally thorny issue—the historic Iran nuclear deal, which risks falling apart after Trump pulled the US out. Tehran has demanded that Europe keeps the deal going by continuing economic cooperation, but the US has warned European firms of sanctions if they fail to pull out of Iran.

Merkel "hopes that China can help save the atomic deal that the US has unilaterally ditched," said Die Welt daily. "Because only the giant emerging economy can buy enough raw materials from Iran to give the Mullah regime an incentive to at least officially continue to not build a nuclear weapon."

'Bring Liu Xia to Germany'

With Merkel needing China's cooperation, activists are hoping that human rights issues won't fall by the wayside. They have voiced hopes in particular that Merkel would raise the fate of Liu Xia, the widow of Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo, who is kept under de facto house arrest by China. "Here's hoping Merkel brings #LiuXia to Germany with her—#China would be smart to release the latter now," wrote Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch on Twitter. Late April, German ambassador to China Michael Clauss told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning



BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel gives a speech on her government's budget policy at the Bundestag in Berlin. — AFP

Post that Liu would be welcomed in his country. Asked if Merkel would meet with activists, her spokeswoman Fietz was non-committal, but said "as a general rule, the government and the chancellor campaign constantly for the question of human rights." — AFP

Syrian Kurd traders suffer from twin tax systems

QAMISHLI, Syria: Many Kurds in Syria may dream of self-rule, but for business owners in the semi-autonomous region in the country's north, it now comes with a painful pinch: double taxes. For several months, traders in the self-proclaimed "federal region" in northern Syria have had to pay dues to both Kurdish authorities and the central government in Damascus.

"We don't even know who we're paying anymore," said Afasta, a 29-year-old pharmacist wearing a black face veil who did not give her second name. "We used to make a 50 percent profit, but it's changed since we started paying two sets of taxes," she said, as she handed medicine to a client in her pharmacy in the Kurdish-majority town of Qamishli.

Syria's conflict broke out in 2011 and, in an effort to appease the country's Kurds, government troops withdrew from Kurdish-majority areas the following year. Autonomous administrations were established there that steadily built up their own institutions: schools, police forces, and hospitals.

The central government maintained a limited security presence in two areas, Qamishli and the provincial capital of Hasakeh further south, but it continued to levy taxes. Business owners were paying between 17,000 and 25,000 Syrian pounds yearly to the Damascus regime, which amounts to a range of about \$40 to \$60. But late last year, the autonomous Kurdish administration also piled on its own progressive tax scale for businesses in their area of control.

Follow the money

"This double taxation is weighing heavily on us, especially since our profits were already slim and with economic activity at a low," said Nabil Adam, 34, who sells women's clothes in Qamishli. The taxes are calculated according to a gradual profit scale with 13



QAMISHLI: Employees of a currency exchange counter count banknotes at market street in the northeastern Syrian town of Qamishli. — AFP

different categories. Businesses making under 1.2 million Syrian pounds (around \$2,760) a year pay a symbolic 1,000 pounds (about \$2). Those bringing in a gross profit of between five and seven million pounds, or between \$11,500 and \$16,100, are taxed at seven percent.

The highest rate — 24 percent—is for operations making a gross profit of more than 100 million pounds, or about \$230,000 annually. Since it was introduced in October and until April, the tax has already brought in 349 million Syrian pounds or around \$800,000, said Khaled Mahmud, who manages the autonomous region's financial affairs. "The autonomous administration wants to improve its service provision, so it needs more revenues for the budget," he said. With more resources, local authorities would be able to develop the quality of basic services like electricity and water, create jobs, and even provide healthcare, said Mahmud. But Fayez Abbas, 35, has been impressed by service provision and said he found little incentive to pay more.

"Water, electricity, healthcare, basic services like education—we don't have any of it," said Abbas, who peddles beauty products in Qamishli's covered market. "We would be prepared to pay even more—if the services were actually provided," he added. "We have

a right to know where the money goes."

Costly complaints

Syria's Kurds control around a fourth of the country, but large parts of that land borders Turkey to the north, which has sealed off the border. There is little trade with the rival Syrian rebels who are present to the west or with regime forces to the south.

The economy in northern Syria has always been rooted in agriculture, and Kurds have recently begun extracting and refining crude oil. Even local officials have criticized the hurried implementation of the new tax, which was originally meant to be introduced in 2019. "The financial authority has rushed to implement the taxes to try to cover the cost of it twice increasing public salaries," said Dalbrin Mohammad, a member of the Kurdish legislative council. "The level of economic activity and people's financial situations simply don't allow for its implementation," said Mohammad. But even lodging a formal complaint with Kurdish authorities has a price tag: precisely 5,000 Syrian pounds or \$12, in fact.

"We've been forced to pay a lot of taxes this year," said Rifaat Mohammad, who owns a shoe store in Qamishli. "They said I have to pay 39,000 pounds (\$90), but it should be much less than that since we have lots of discounts and losses," he said.

US LNG projects buoyed by China import talks

BEIJING: China's interest in reducing its trade surplus with United States through increased energy imports could advance plans for US liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants, said energy executives involved in developing new facilities. The White House and China on Saturday said a US trade team would travel to China to explore new energy and agricultural deals. The joint communique lowered trade tensions, lifting stock markets in Asia and the United States on Monday.

There are over two dozen proposed US LNG plants waiting for customer commitments to reach a final investment decision, many of them looking to China for deals. About 13 percent of US LNG cargos went to China last year, according to data provider Genscape. China imported 5.6 billion cubic feet per day last year, making it the world's largest buyer after Japan.

"We see it as a positive development," said William Daughdrill, director of health, safety and environmental at Delin Midstream. Its chief executive was in Asia last week pursuing

customers, Daughdrill said. Delin is proposing a floating LNG facility in the US Gulf of Mexico and aiming for a final investment decision as early as this year to go ahead and produce up to 13 million metric tons per annum (mtpa) of LNG for export. "For us, it's strictly been about marketing to China," said Greg Vesey, chief executive of LNG Ltd, which is developing an LNG plant in Louisiana and another in Nova Scotia in Canada. It hopes to reach a final investment decision on the US project by year-end and begin exports in 2022, he said. "If you look at some forecasts for 2035, there are really only two places that have significant increases in LNG imports. Europe goes up about 100 mtpa and China goes up about 200 mtpa," Vesey said.

Texas LNG, which is proposing a 4-mtpa export facility in Brownsville, Texas, and has five early-stage agreements with Chinese customers, hopes to make a final decision next year, about six months behind its original goal. "Sentiment in the LNG markets is heating up again," said Langry Meyer, co-founder of the company. Texas LNG is not considering developing an import terminal in China, he said, which would likely be needed to expand US exports.

Cheniere Energy Inc this month said it would soon make a final investment decision on a third liquefaction line at its Corpus Christi, Texas, facility. A spokesman on Monday declined further comment on its decision. — Reuters

European equities extend gains as trade war fears ease

LONDON: European stocks rose yesterday, with London hitting a record peak on upbeat global sentiment and easing Italian political worries, dealers said. London's FTSE 100 benchmark index briefly scaled a record pinnacle before paring gains. In early afternoon eurozone trade, Frankfurt won 0.4 percent and Paris added just 0.1 percent. "The FTSE 100 has hit another

record high as global sentiment continues to rise," said CMC Markets analyst David Madden.

"China has agreed to cut tariffs on US imported cars from 25 percent to 15 percent, and this is seen as a sign of improved trading relations. "Thanks to the latest updates from Beijing, investors are even less fearful of a trade war between the US and China."

Milan stocks jumped 0.5 percent as investors awaited fresh news on the formation of a new Italian government. "The calming of tensions over Italy, or at least the lack of news, has allowed European equities to hold steady, but the situation will likely act to cap near-term bullish activity in eurozone stocks," analyst Chris Beauchamp at trading firm IG said.

World oil prices meanwhile pushed higher after Washington flagged harsh sanctions on key producers Iran and Venezuela. — AFP

Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
ads@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Ramadan Hot Deals

from 1 to 31 May 2018

<p>SHARP LC-32LE185M</p> <p>الآن 49 قبل 54 وفر 5</p> <p>32"</p> <p>HDMI USB</p>	<p>SHARP LC-40LE185M</p> <p>الآن 74 قبل 79 وفر 5</p> <p>40"</p> <p>HDMI USB</p>	<p>SHARP LC-55LE570X</p> <p>AQUOS SMART TV androidtv</p> <p>الآن 169 قبل 199 وفر 30</p> <p>55"</p> <p>HDMI USB</p>
--	--	---

2018 / 05 / 31
فترة العروض من 01 / 05 / 2018

BestAYousifi @BestAYousifi #BestAYousifi

Credit: Start from 5KD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

Shop Online: www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khalid str.) • Shuwaikh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

1809 809

Business

Tamdeen Group breaks ground on KD 250 million Al-Khiran project

New Pulse, the largest waterfront tourism destination in Kuwait private sector



KUWAIT: Tamdeen Group, Kuwait's leading property developer, has broken ground on the impressive KD 250 million Al-Khiran Project. The New Pulse of Kuwait, is the largest waterfront recreational tourism destination built by the private sector in Kuwait. The mega project is located in the heart of Sabah Al Ahmad Sea City, with Phase 1 scheduled to open to public in Q1 of 2021.

Spanning 116,000 m² upon completion, The New Pulse of Kuwait will strengthen Kuwait's position as a regional shopping, entertainment and conservative tourism destination. The latest innovative project from Tamdeen Group will be completed in two phases. Phase 1 incorporates a commercial and retail district, including Kuwait's first outlet shopping center, which will further diversify the nation's retail sector.

Phase 1 will also include construction of other leisure activities and services, such as Al-Khiran Park and Kuwait's

largest marina, with a capacity to accommodate more than 900 boats. A 1.25 km boardwalk and the project's captivating design, reminiscent of the beaches of the French Riviera, will enhance the appeal of the all-inclusive destination, which will have approximately 3,500 parking spaces when Phase 1 is complete.

In addition, Phase 2 will incorporate the construction of a five-star hotel and opportunities for mall expansion. The progressive Al-Khiran project aims to draw regional and international tourists. Commenting on the start of the construction of Al-Khiran Project Phase 1, Mohammed Jassim Al-Marzouq, Chairman of Tamdeen Group, said: "Tamdeen Group is committed to strengthening Kuwait's position as a regional destination for shopping, entertainment, and conservative tourism through the development of integrated multi-use projects in strategic areas across the nation. We draw our strength from the

guidance and support of the political leadership, and from the confidence of the citizens and residents in our ability to provide services that support their wellbeing."

"Within this context, Al-Khiran Project is one of our most ambitious real estate plans yet as it elevates the standards of investment in real estate and retail in the country: Kuwait's economy, society and investors will all benefit from". Phase 1 of the Al-Khiran Project is underway with construction of the mall, which includes more than 80,000m² of retail space and approximately 250 commercial units. In addition to the real estate investments, the project will involve a myriad of green spaces and decorative landscaping designed by some of the best landscape architects in the world.

Upon its completion, the mall will be one of the most contemporary destinations for shopping and leisure in the State of Kuwait, particularly the southern area including the Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Ahmadi governorates, which have a population of 1,550,000. The project will directly serve at least 450,000

residents within the vicinity of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City, Sabah Al-Ahmad Residential, Al-Wafra Residential, Al-Khiran and the neighboring areas of Saudi Arabia.

Al-Marzouq added: "Kuwait has a successful future ahead and as the country's leading developer of mix-use projects Tamdeen Group is aligned with the nation's vision for urban development. Tamdeen Group strives to deliver projects that service the continued diversification of the economy and enrich the nation's retail and tourism sectors". "Tamdeen Group's diverse range of projects and ongoing investments demonstrates our commitment to Kuwait's economic development. The recent opening of the Al-Kout Mall, the latest addition to Al-Kout Project that features six different experiences, as well as the Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex, part of 360 MALL's expansion, are examples of Tamdeen Group's continued drive to create world-class projects that provide the best experiences for all".



Al-Khiran project to span 116,000 m² in Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City



Mohammed Jassim Al-Marzouq

French public sector workers strike against Macron reforms

PARIS: French public sector employees joined rail workers in striking yesterday to protest overhauls proposed by President Emmanuel Macron, calling them an "attack" by the centrist leader against civil services as well as their economic security.

It is the third day of major stoppages and demonstrations by public-sector employees since voters last year elected Macron, who has pledged to reduce public spending, trim jobs and reform large parts of the vast French state. All unions representing civil servants have backed yesterday's strike, a show of unity which was last seen around 10 years ago. Their walkout affected schools and daycare centres, flights and some energy infrastructure, while public transport was also disrupted as some workers took part ahead of the next round of two-day strikes at national rail operator SNCF yesterday.

"Thanks to the civil service, all of the unions in this country will be together," said labour leader Bernadette Groison from the FSU union. "That shows how high the stakes are." The centrist government plans public sector reforms next year which would lead to the greater use of contract workers for some state services and a cut of 120,000 jobs by 2022 out of 5.6 million. It has already maintained a pay freeze while Olivier Dussopt, the minister in charge of France's public service, is preparing cost-cutting measures he has said will be "more or less disruptive".

Many civil servants also fear that the government plans to scrap their special status and job-for-life privileges, a measure that has already been announced for new recruits on the state railways, the SNCF. Striking police



MONTPELLIER: Students take part in a demonstration yesterday, in Montpellier, southern France, as part of a day of striking by French public sector workers to protest a series of reforms proposed by the French president, which they consider an attack on key civic services as well as their own economic security. — AFP

officers also snarled traffic on the ring road surrounding Paris to defend their status and retirement benefits. But surveys suggest the movement is struggling to garner widespread support, with 49 percent saying they did not back the striking public workers in a ViaVoice poll published by French daily Le Figaro. Just 40 percent said they supported the movement.

Not backing down

The poll results largely coincide with those concerning the rail reform, which has sparked one of the longest strike sequences ever on the network. Just 42 percent of respondents said the SNCF strike was justified in an Ifof survey published Sunday by the Journal du Dimanche newspaper, compared with 58 percent who said it was not.

Rail workers have been striking every two days out of five since April 3 and was expected to begin a new round of stoppages in the night. The strikes have widely affected high-speed services and commuter trains.

But Macron has vowed to be uncompromising and promised to deliver on his rail reform and cuts to France's public spending, which was part of his election manifesto.

France has one of the biggest public sectors in Europe relative to the size of its economy. The country has not balanced its budget since the 1970s, leading to a public debt equivalent to nearly 100 percent of GDP. But unions accuse Macron, a former investment banker, of wanting to destroy public services—a vital source of employment and a pillar of communal life in many areas of the country.

Around 130-140 demonstrations have been organized by civil servants across the country yesterday. Unions hope turnout will be higher than the last day of action on March 22 when an estimated 300,000 gathered nationwide.

The protests come ahead of a "popular tide" called for Saturday by dozens of associations, leftist parties and unions to support the striking workers and make Macron "back down". — AFP

Airbus moves to comply with WTO ruling on subsidies

PARIS: Airbus said yesterday it had taken steps to comply with a World Trade Organization (WTO) ruling on subsidies for its A350 and A380 jets, which has seen the United States and Europe trade legal blows on behalf of Boeing and Airbus. The move comes after the United States won the right to seek sanctions against European Union goods following a partial victory in its 14-year legal battle against European government support for Airbus at the WTO.

The EU says it expects to strike a similar legal blow in a parallel case on US support for Boeing later this year. "Airbus and the European member states France, Germany, Spain and the UK have agreed on some amendments to A380 and A350XWB Reimbursable Launch Investment (RLI) loans," Airbus said in a statement. "The terms of these amendments - like the terms of the original RLI contracts themselves - remain confidential but they are aligned with current market conditions," it added.

Airbus shares slipped 0.4 percent, slightly underperforming the broader Paris market.

The subsidies row coincides with transatlantic tensions over US aluminum and steel tariffs, and the impact on European firms from Washington's decision to exit an Iran nuclear pact. It is also part of a two-way battle between the EU and the United States over aircraft subsidies that could

spark tit-for-tat reprisals between the two trade superpowers. In a rare public face-off between senior strategists in the dispute, Boeing's chief external lawyer in the case told the BBC that the United States would be free to target any European products, not just aerospace. "The WTO will decide what the proper number is and ... give the US that authority," Robert Novick, co-managing partner at US law firm WilmerHale, told the BBC Today program. "In parallel, the US will develop a list of products on which it might consider imposing counter-measures," he added. The transatlantic dispute stems from mutual claims that the world's two largest panmakers benefited from illegal aid in the form of subsidized government loans to Airbus and research grants or tax breaks to Boeing. Underscoring the cost and complexity of the case, the two sides have been arguing since 2011 about whether they complied with earlier rulings.

Airbus did not say how it would comply with the final ruling on European aid but a European Commission document said it would repay an A350 loan to the UK government this year and reduce the drawdown of other loans.

It also said the bankruptcy of Russian carrier Transaero, resulting in fewer A380 deliveries, had helped it to comply, while other aid had been blunted by the passage of time - an argument that has previously been rejected by Washington. Karl Hennessee, senior vice president and head of litigation at Airbus, told BBC Today that Airbus wanted a peace settlement similar to one between Canada and Brazil that set the tone for global aircraft export financing. Nevertheless, Boeing has appeared to rebuff the offer. "The most important message that Europe and Airbus can send to the rest of the world about the rules of trade in civil aircraft is to comply with this decision," Novick told the BBC. — Reuters

Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya salary account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Uttam Kumar William Madulory as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw.

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year. Customers wishing to open the Al-Thuraya account can do so by simply visiting the nearest Burgan Bank branch and obtain all the necessary details.



German firms can't be totally shielded from US Iran move

BERLIN: Germany's government will help German firms with business in Iran where it can, but cannot entirely shield them from the US decision to quit the Iran nuclear deal and reimpose sanctions against Tehran, the economy minister told a newspaper.

European companies conducting business in Iran face US sanctions after President Donald Trump withdrew from the 2015 nuclear accord between six major powers and Iran. EU officials say there is no easy way to protect EU firms and banks from the extraterritorial nature of the US sanctions. Asked how the German government could assist German firms feeling nervous in the wake of the US decision, Altmaier told the Passauer Neue Presse newspaper that Berlin would help them assess the situation and developments while also urging the US to grant exemptions and deadline extensions.

"We will help where we can, but there is no way of completely averting the consequences of this unilateral withdrawal," he said. German

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas will meet in Washington today with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who has demanded that Iran make sweeping changes or face "the strongest sanctions in history."

Underlining the growing divide with Tehran, a senior commander from Iran's Revolutionary Guards poured scorn on Pompeo's threat yesterday, saying Iran's people would respond by punching the Secretary of State in the mouth.

Michael Gahler, a German conservative in the European Parliament, warned that Washington's get-tough approach would only further strengthen the position of hardliners in Tehran, while doing little to improve Israel's security. "US industry also had no interest in seeing contacts with us worsened indirectly via the policies directed at Iran," Gahler told broadcaster Deutschlandfunk.

Turning to the US decision to impose import duties of 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum - from which European Union countries have been exempted until June 1 - Altmaier said Europe was in favor of free trade and wanted tariffs to be reduced, not raised: "When tariffs are increased, it's the citizens who foot the bill and, if goods become more expensive, jobs are jeopardized."

He said there would be no winner in a tariff or trade war, adding: "If you fight fire with fire, all you're left with is scorched earth. And it would be fatal and that's why I'm fighting for free trade and our jobs with all of my might." — Reuters

Technology

Entertainment giant Sony buys EMI Music Publishing for \$1.9bn

'We are thrilled to bring EMI Music Publishing into the Sony family'

TOKYO: Japanese entertainment giant Sony yesterday unveiled a \$1.9-billion deal to buy industry titan EMI Music Publishing, which has the rights to songs by the likes of Queen and Pharrell Williams. The deal adds a catalogue of more than two million songs—including some of the greatest hits from the 20th century—to Sony's already huge repertoire.

The agreement is Sony's first major deal under new CEO Kenichiro Yoshida, who noted the music business has enjoyed a "resurgence" in recent years due to streaming services provided by companies such as Spotify and Apple. With this purchase, Sony "is becoming one of the biggest music publishing companies, both in name and reality", Yoshida told reporters. "We are thrilled to bring EMI Music Publishing into the Sony family and maintain our number one position in the music publishing industry," Yoshida said in an earlier statement.

"I believe this acquisition will be a particularly significant milestone for our long-term growth," added Yoshida, who took the Sony helm last month. Sony said it had signed a deal with Abu

Dhabi-based investment firm Mubadala to buy its 60 percent holding, giving the Japanese firm a stake of about 90 percent.

The agreement values EMI Music Publishing at \$4.75 billion, the Sony statement said, adding that "the closing of the transaction is subject to certain closing conditions, including regulatory approvals".



A particularly significant milestone

Yoshida also yesterday unveiled Sony's latest strategic plan, which aims to bolster its content business—pursuing the direction his predecessor Kazuo Hirai had taken to revitalize one of Japan's best-known firms. "We are a technology firm, but

the technology means not only electronics but also entertainment and content-creation" in today's world, Yoshida said. Sony will continue to build up its content services—as shown by yesterday's deal—and also invest heavily in cutting-edge technologies including image sensors, he said.

'Over the Rainbow'

"This is part of Sony's strategy under Yoshida to beef up its entertainment businesses," noted Hideki Yasuda, an analyst at Ace Research Institute in Tokyo. "In the music business, copyrights are crucial. So the deal is meaningful and its price appears practical and reasonable," the analyst told AFP, adding that success would depend on the quality of the content Sony creates in the future. The electronics and entertainment behemoth last month reported record annual profits of \$4.5 billion, a roaring recovery supported by better sales across the board and helped by box office blockbusters like its Jumanji reboot. Those figures were seen as a fitting send-off for Hirai, who recently stepped down as the firm's chief executive after spending the past six years pulling the firm out of

deep financial trouble. Hirai led an aggressive restructuring drive at Sony, cutting thousands of jobs while selling business units and assets. EMI is the second-largest music publishing company by revenue and either owns or administers some two million songs, including classics by the likes of Queen, Sam Smith and Pharrell Williams.

As for Sony, it already owns 2.3 million copyrights including the Beatles catalogue, as well as being a massive player in IT, communications, film and gaming. EMI holds a "comprehensive and diverse collection of copyrights for music and lyrics" from a "wide variety of iconic and popular songwriters", the statement said. Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow" continues to be a top-10 money-spinner even today, more than 75 years after its initial release, it added. Current songwriters under its banner include Kanye West, Alicia Keys, Drake, Pink, Fetty Wap and Hozier. Investors, however, appeared dubious about the acquisition and the new strategic plan, with Sony stock closing down nearly two percent, underperforming the wider market which was down 0.42 percent. —AFP



TOKYO: Sony CEO Kenichiro Yoshida holds a press conference at the Sony headquarters. —AFP

As EU privacy law looms, debate swirls on cyber security impact

WASHINGTON: Days ahead of the implementation of a sweeping European privacy law, debate is swirling on whether the measure will have negative consequences for cybersecurity. The controversy is about the so-called internet address book or WHOIS directory, which up to now has been a public database identifying the owners of websites and domains. The database will become largely private under the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation set to take effect May 25, since it contains protected personal information.

US government officials and some cybersecurity professionals fear that without the ability to easily find hackers and other malicious actors through WHOIS, the new rules could lead to a surge in cybercrime, spam and fraud. Critics say the GDPR could take away an important tool used by law enforcement, security researchers, journalists and others.

The lockdown of the WHOIS directory comes after years of negotiations between EU authorities and ICANN, the nonprofit entity that administers the database and manages the online domain system. ICANN—the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers—approved a temporary plan last week that allows access for "legitimate" purposes, but leaves the interpretation to internet registrars, the companies that sell domains and websites.

Assistant Commerce Secretary David Redl, who head the US government division for internet administration, last week called on the EU to delay enforcement of the GDPR for the WHOIS directory. "The loss of access to WHOIS information will negatively affect law enforcement of cybercrimes, cybersecurity and intellectual property rights protection activities globally," Redl said. Rob Joyce, who served as White House cybersecurity coordinator until last month, tweeted in April that "GDPR is going to undercut a key tool for identifying malicious domains on the internet," adding that "cyber criminals are celebrating GDPR."



Caleb Barlow, vice president at IBM security, also warned that the privacy law "may well have negative consequences that, ironically, run contrary to its original intent." Barlow, said in a blog post earlier this month that "cybersecurity professionals use (WHOIS) information to quickly stop cyberthreats" and that the GDPR restrictions could delay or prevent security firms from acting on these threats.

James Scott, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Institute for Critical Infrastructure Technology, acknowledged that the GDPR rules "could hinder security researchers and law enforcement." "The information would likely still be discoverable with a warrant or possibly at the request of law enforcement, but the added anonymization layers would severely delay" the identification of malicious actors.

Some analysts say the concerns about cybercrime are overblown, and that sophisticated cybercriminals can easily hide their tracks from WHOIS. Milton Mueller, a Georgia Tech professor and founder of the Internet Governance Project of independent researchers, said the notion of an upsurge in cybercrime stemming from the rule was "totally bogus."

"There's no evidence that most of the world's cybercrime is stopped or mitigated by WHOIS," Mueller told AFP. "In fact some of the cybercrime is facilitated by WHOIS is because the bad guys can go after that information too." Mueller said the directory had been "exploited" for years by commercial entities, some of which resell the data, and

authoritarian regimes for broad surveillance. "It's fundamentally a matter of due process," he said. "We all agree that when law enforcement has a reasonable cause, they can obtain certain documents, but WHOIS allow unfettered access without any due process check."

No delays

Akram Atallah, president of ICANN's global domains division, told AFP the organization had tried unsuccessfully to get an enforcement delay from the EU for the WHOIS directory to work out rules for access. The temporary rule will strip out any personal information from WHOIS directory but allow access to the data for "legitimate" purposes. Atallah noted, "You will need to get permission to see the rest of the data," he said.

That means the registrars, which include companies that sell websites like GoDaddy, will need to determine who gets access or face hefty fines from the EU. ICANN is working on a process of "accreditation" to grant access, but was unable to predict how long it would take to get a consensus among the government and private stakeholders in the organization.

Matthew Kahn, a Brookings Institution research assistant, said the firms keeping the data are more likely to deny requests rather than face EU penalties.

"With democracies under siege from online election interference and active-measures campaigns, this is no time to hamper governments' and security researchers' abilities to identify and arrest cyber threats," Kahn said on the Lawfare blog. —AFP

are mining, the more work and electricity are needed to earn the tokens.

Fast-rising capacity in the industry has hit profits hard: combined with the fall in bitcoin prices, analysts at Bernstein estimate that mining revenues are just 37 percent of their 2017 peak at roughly \$17 million per day. Last month, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (TSMC), the world's largest chip manufacturer, cited uncertainty in the crypto market as a reason it was cutting its full-year sales target. TSMC is a major producer for Canaan Creative and its larger rival, Bitmain. Cryptocurrency mining is under pressure in China. But last month, China Securities Regulatory Commission vice-chairman Jiang Yang gave Canaan the regulator's apparent approval. Visiting its factory, he said: "no matter what the chip is used for, fundamentally you're still a chip company, and I hope you list in China," according to mainland media reports.

Market test

Bitcoin-related companies have to date largely avoided diving directly into the public market — a fact illustrated by the pricing range suggested for Canaan's deal. Although the two sources were confident the IPO could raise \$2 billion, others with knowledge of the deal said it was more likely to raise between \$500 million and \$1 billion.

A lack of comparable companies makes it harder to price. In Australia, DigitalBTC went public via a backdoor listing in 2014. Eighteen months later, however, the company changed its name to DigitalX and switched its focus to fintech software. Last year in Canada, listed miner Leela Gold became HIVE Blockchain. "It's not your everyday investment world," said HIVE chairman Frank Holmes, who is relatively new to the crypto world, but is a well-known investor in gold. — Reuters

Uber taps into Japan with first taxi-hailing pilot

TOKYO: Uber announced yesterday it would start its first taxi-hailing pilot program in Japan this summer, as it bids to break into a tough market in the world's third largest economy. The US firm has found it difficult to penetrate the Japanese market, where risk averse passengers prefer to stick to their high quality traditional taxi service.

Hailing a taxi rarely takes more than a few seconds in major Japanese cities and there has been a relatively sluggish uptake of services like Uber, where consumers order an unlicensed car via a smartphone app. But Uber said in a statement Tuesday it would launch a pilot program this summer to hook up tourists and residents in the western Awaji island with available taxi drivers.

Uber said it aimed to provide local resi-

dents and tourists with "reliable and safe transportation" on the small island, which is home to just over 150,000 people. "I'm very excited that Uber's technology will contribute to further enhancing the transit environment of Awaji Island," Brooks Entwistle, Uber's Chief Business Officer, said in the statement, adding it will be "the first initiative of its kind in Japan".

Uber is far from alone in targeting the Japanese taxi market, with Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing and Japanese telecom firm SoftBank announcing a deal in early February to develop a taxi app in Japan. SoftBank has heavily invested in the taxi market and recently took a 15 percent stake in Uber. And Sony has said it is planning a joint venture to offer artificial intelligence technology to six taxi operators, which currently own a total of 10,000 vehicles in Tokyo. The technology would use AI to predict demand for taxis and allow companies to more efficiently mobilize their resources. Carmaker Toyota has also announced an investment of 7.5 billion yen (\$70 million) in the JapanTaxi app, which says it is the biggest taxi-hailing app in Japan. — AFP



TOKYO: An Uber Japan Co employee displays the smartphone app he has just used to call his cab.

As bitcoin wobbles, mining rig company plans \$2 billion IPO

HONG KONG: Bitcoins are worth less than half of what they were in December. Mining them is 60 percent less profitable than it was in 2017. Even retailers of hobbyist mining rigs say they are seeing fewer customers. Why, then, is Canaan Inc, a leading cryptocurrency mining rig supplier, looking to raise up to \$2 billion, according to two sources with knowledge of the deal, in the world's biggest bitcoin-focused initial public offering to date?

Canaan is expected to present itself to investors not so much as a bitcoin company, but as a chip designer focused on developing other markets in artificial intelligence and blockchain, the electronic ledger that underpins bitcoin. "Their customers happen to be bitcoin miners. But they are a chip company, not a bitcoin company," said one of the sources. Both declined to be named because information about the IPO has not yet been made public.

The offering for Canaan, which claims to be the world's second-largest bitcoin mining hardware supplier, is scheduled for July, the sources said. Canaan declined to comment. The Beijing-based company's profits rose seven-fold last year to 361 million yuan (\$56.67 million), according to its prospectus, as bitcoin's soaring price drove a surge in demand for its products, sold under the AvalonMiner brand.

But the effects of bitcoin's volatility and rising mining costs can be seen in the shops of Sham Shui Po, just a few kilometres from Hong Kong's central business district, where the IPO has been filed. Businesses selling mining rigs there said demand — especially for high-end machines —

was limping along. Alvin Wong said the only rig in his Hong Kong electronics store this week was plugged in underneath the cash register, busily crunching numbers in search of profit.

"Since we weren't selling the miner, we thought we might as well use it," said Wong, a sales representative at Centralfield, in the Sham Shui Po computer district. The change has come suddenly. Just a few months ago, demand for bitcoin mining gear in Sham Shui Po was booming. Bitcoin prices have fallen 40 percent this year, hurting margins for miners. The cryptocurrency rose from \$1,000 in January last year to more than \$19,000 in December. Currently, one bitcoin is worth about \$8,400.

Promised land

To some, the IPO presents a rare opportunity to buy into a cryptocurrency supply company. They point to the old investing adage that the surest way to make money in a gold rush is to sell mining equipment. "Investors are always looking for crypto 'picks and shovels', and that's what this is," said Jehan Chu, managing partner at Kinetic Capital, a Hong Kong based blockchain and crypto currency investment firm.

Canaan produces mining machines containing application specific integrated circuits, or ASICs, which are chips designed for a single purpose. Its customers are mostly large-scale miners with facilities holding thousands of machines working around the clock. However, the rules governing bitcoin limit the amount that can be mined at one time. This means that the more computers there

Robots fight weeds in challenge to agrochemical giants

YVERDON-LES-BAINS, Switzerland/CHICAGO: In a field of sugar beet in Switzerland, a solar-powered robot that looks like a table on wheels scans the rows of crops with its camera, identifies weeds and zaps them with jets of blue liquid from its mechanical tentacles. Undergoing final tests before the liquid is replaced with weedkiller, the Swiss robot is one of new breed of AI weederers that investors say could disrupt the \$100 billion pesticides and seeds industry by reducing the need for universal herbicides and the genetically modified (GM) crops that tolerate them.

Dominated by companies such as Bayer, DowDuPont, BASF and Syngenta, the industry is bracing for the impact of digital agricultural technology and some firms are already adapting their business models. The stakes are high. Herbicide sales are worth \$26 billion a year and account for 46 percent of pesticides revenue overall while 90 percent of GM seeds have some herbicide tolerance built in, according to market researcher Phillips McDougall.

"Some of the profit pools that are now in the hands of the big agrochemical companies will shift, partly to the farmer and partly to the equipment manufacturers," said Cedric Lecamp, who runs the \$1 billion Pictet-Nutrition fund that invests in companies along the food supply chain. In response, producers such as Germany's Bayer have sought partners for their own precision spraying systems while ChemChina's Syngenta, for example, is looking to develop crop protection products suited to the new equipment.

While still in its infancy, the plant-by-plant approach heralds a marked shift from standard methods of crop production. Now, non-selective weedkillers such as Monsanto's Roundup are sprayed on vast tracts of land planted with tolerant GM seeds, driving one of the most lucrative business models in the industry.

'See and spray'

But ecoRobotix, developer of the Swiss weeder, believes its design could reduce the amount of herbicide farmers use by 20 times. The company said it is close to signing a financing round with investors and is due to go on the market by early 2019. Blue River, a Silicon Valley startup bought by US tractor company Deere & Co. for \$305 million last year, has also developed a machine using on-board cameras to distinguish weeds from crops and only squirt herbicides where necessary. Its "See and Spray" weed control machine, which has been tested in US cotton fields, is towed by a tractor and the developers estimate it could cut herbicide use by 90 percent once crops have started growing.

"A lot of the technology is already available. It's just a question of packaging it together at the right cost for the farmers," said Richard Lightbound, Robo's CEO for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. "If you can reduce herbicides by the factor of 10 it becomes very compelling for the farmer in terms of productivity. It's also eco friendly and that's clearly going to be very popular, if not compulsory, at some stage," he said. While Blue River, based in Sunnyvale, California, is testing a product in cotton fields, it plans to branch into other major crops such as soy. It expects to make the product widely available to farmers in about four to five years, helped by Deere's vast network of equipment dealers. — Reuters

Health

Battle to treat Madagascar women for debilitating fistula

'They weren't going to support a girl who smells all day long'

AMBOVOMBE: "Get rid of the girl who stinks," they said about Sana Rodiny who for three years had to endure unrelenting abuse after developing a fistula. Now at 18 she hopes the people of her small village in southern Madagascar will leave her in peace after she underwent surgery for the debilitating condition that left her incontinent. "I've had fistula since suffering a gang rape by cattle rustlers at the age of 15," Sana told AFP sitting beside her mother.

But she got help and had an operation. Lying on a handmade mat in the shade of a tamarind tree, she recovered in the sandy courtyard of Ambovombe's Monja Jaona hospital. Following her procedure, the constant urine odor she suffered as a result of her fistula is now a thing of the past. "I wasn't interested in boys because they weren't going to support a girl who smells all day long," Sana recalled of those difficult years.

Obstetric fistula refers to the rupturing of tissue between the vagina and the bladder or rectum after prolonged, obstructed labor or, less commonly, violent rape. The condition typically results in urinary or fecal incontinence. Madagascar is one of the worst-hit countries, with 4,000 women affected every year.

An estimated two million female patients have the condition worldwide—most of them in developing countries. It has been nearly eliminated in Western countries due to improved obstetric care and the use of caesarean delivery. Sana was likely "the victim of an assault with a blunt object which perforated her organs," said Yoel Rantomalala, a professor in genitourinary medicine who travelled to southern Madagascar specially to operate on 82 affected women. His mission is part of a targeted assault on fistula being waged jointly by the UN Population Fund and Madagascar's health ministry, funded by Japan.

Unable to seek help

Most of the patients, who live far from hospitals, have been forced to give birth alone or with poorly-equipped and untrained traditional midwives. Insecurity and gang crime in remote southern regions of the Indian Ocean

island nation complicate the situation. Fear of attack means that pregnant women who go into labour at night refuse to venture out onto isolated roads to seek medical help.

"Remoteness, insecurity or the lack of supplies in village pharmacies are the root causes of fistula's persistence," said the head of the Monja Jaona hospital, Paubert Tsivahiny. "Fistula cases (also) affect young mothers and smaller women who can have difficult deliveries." Then there are the traditions of poor societies like Madagascar, where it is not uncommon for parents to trade their daughter's hand in marriage for a dozen or so cattle. Women like Marilina who married young—in her case in an arranged marriage for which her parents received several humped cattle—are particularly vulnerable. After suffering a miscarriage at the age of 14, she had fistula for three years.

Abandoned by husbands

"I had a complication during pregnancy in which the child moved upwards in the womb instead of downwards and after surgery the baby was stillborn—and I had fistula," she said. Marilina's husband abandoned her following the ordeal. Another woman, Molina, now 40, suffered a similar fate after a stillbirth a decade ago.

"My husband didn't love me anymore. He couldn't make love to me because urine was flowing all the time," she said. Those affected often stay silent and even those who come forward have to be persuaded to undergo corrective surgery. "People think there's a risk of organ trafficking or dying on the operating table," said social worker Yvette Brechard. "They even think we're going to take their organs while we're operating on them."

The procedure in surgical terms is relatively simple. It entails trimming and then rejoining the ruptured tissue, and can usually be done on an outpatient basis. Afterwards, patients must avoid falling pregnant for several months to allow adequate healing time. "But married women aren't in control of their lives and they are always told what to do by their in-laws," said Brozany Andriamino, head of the maternity ward at Monja Jaona hospital. "The in-laws often refuse to consider any form of family planning." — AFP



4,000 women affected every year



AMBOVOMBE: Women rest after a fistula surgery at the fistula treatment centre in Monja Joana Hospital. — AFP

Third of girls in S Asia miss school during periods: Report

KATHMANDU: More than a third of girls in South Asia miss school during their periods, a report said yesterday, with a lack of toilets and cultural taboos about menstruation among the factors impeding their education. The study by WaterAid and UNICEF also found many girls across the region—up to two-thirds in Sri Lanka—did not know about menstruation before starting their periods.

Many schools in the region of more than 1.7 billion did not provide enough toilets for girls. This, coupled

with a lack of access to proper sanitary pads, meant students were choosing to stay at home during their periods. "Girls have an irrevocable right to education, which is lost if they feel unable to attend lessons because of a lack of sanitary products or clean, private toilets at school," said Tim Wainwright, WaterAid chief executive, in a statement. "Governments simply need to ensure that every school has clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene."

In one district of eastern Nepal there was just one toilet for every 170 girls, the report found. That was far below the World Health Organization standard recommending a toilet for every 25 girls. Other South Asian countries also failed to meet the global standard. The report—published ahead of Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28 — said two-thirds of girls in Sri Lanka were unaware of menstruation before hitting puberty. —AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader Consultant vascular and general surgery

All general and specialized surgeries such as:

- All critical and non-critical arteries and veins surgeries
- All methods of treating varicose
- Special department for care of injured diabetic foot
- Carrying out delicate procedures such as removing the extra rib
- Treating excess perspiration
- AV connection for dialysis



Telephone: 1871111

Global Medical Center, Bneid Al-Qar
Bour Saeed Street, Block-1, Building-128.

@globalmedcenter
www.globalmed-center.com

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم
Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368

What's On

KFH distributes many Iftar meals to motorists on traffic intersections



KFH volunteers with MOI personnel and Ramadan Aman representatives distribute Iftar meals on traffic intersections.

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continued its "Feed the Fasting" campaign by distributing Iftar meals to motorists on the main roads and traffic intersections of the country as part of Ramadan Aman 'Safe Ramadan' campaign.

This initiative is also part of the Iftar meals project carried out by the bank as part of the Ramadan program "Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 4" that reinforces the firm commitment towards social responsibility. Distributing Iftar meals took place in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Kuwait Voluntary Work Center.

KFH volunteers hand out Iftar meals to drivers on roads and at traffic intersections to break their fast. This campaign was launched to decrease number of car accidents during Ramadan rush hour, as drivers tend to speed before Maghreb prayer to arrive on time for Iftar. Not only does this campaign cultivate the culture of volunteering and giving back to the community, it is also a creative way of raising awareness about traffic and road safety during Ramadan.

The kind gesture is in line with the deeply-rooted values of giving in the Kuwaiti society. KFH's efforts in Ramadan underline the bank's role in the field of social

responsibility, and contributes in strengthening the social ties. KFH voluntary team prepares and distributes over 800 meals daily until end of Ramadan. KFH voluntary team distributes Iftar meals at places that are teeming with fasting people such as Nayef Palace, Souq Al Mubarakeya in addition to Hawalli Governorate and other places in Kuwait. KFH's Ramadan program includes various social and humanitarian events and activities stemming from the bank's endeavors to solidify its commitment towards the society, while supporting all social and humanitarian initiatives.



Special NBK Ramadan commercial



On the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) launched a special TV commercial including a song titled 'Naqsat Heshmah', which focuses on Kuwaiti traditions and values and calls for spreading them. This annual ad is part of NBK's social responsibility and it is daily shown on NBK accounts on Youtube, Instagram and Facebook. In this regard, NBK's assistant PR manager, Manal Faisal Al-Mattar said that the song is sung by Abdul Kareem Abdul Qadir, written by Yousif Al-Shatti and the music is composed by Bashar Al-Shatti. The word 'Naqsat' means sharing whatever food one has with others.



Manal Al-Mattar

Jignesh Shah honored with ASSE Kuwait Chapter Safety Professional of the Year 2018

Jignesh Shah, International Member of our chapter was honored with "ASSE Kuwait Chapter's Safety Professional of the Year (SPY) Award 2018" during 8th GCC HSSE Excellence Award 2018 on April 25th at Radisson blue, Al Hashmi Hall II in Kuwait.

This annual award was instituted by ASSE Kuwait Chapter in 2011 in line with ASSE USA guidelines to recognize the outstanding contributions in advancing the health, safety and environmental profession through exemplary volunteer service to the Chapter, to the society and at professional life. Jignesh Shah has been selected for this award based on the chapter SPY Award guidelines.

Jignesh Shah has become ASSE International member in 2011 from Kuwait Chapter and he has been providing volunteer services to ASSE Kuwait Chapter since he joined and held various elected positions. He served the chapter in past as Director GCC HSE Excellence Award Programs 2017, as Secretary ASSE Kuwait Chapter, as Committee Head of different committees and also conducted training sessions and workshops for the benefit of chapter members. He played active role in organizing major events like HSSE Professional Development Conferences and GCC HSE Excellence award programs.

Jignesh Shah, is a graduate in Environmental Engineering, Lead auditor (IEMA) for Environmental Management System, Certified Internal auditor for Integrated Management System. During his professional career he worked with Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals sector, Petrochemicals & Refinery sector and presently working with Oil and Gas upstream sector. He has more than 25



years of professional experience and worked in several leading private sector companies in India prior to join Kuwait Oil Company. Fadhel Al Ali, Chairman ASSE Kuwait Chapter along with Executive Committee members presented this prestigious SPY Award to Jignesh Shah and appreciated his diligent efforts and outstanding contribution to the ASSE Kuwait chapter in promoting HSE practices in Kuwait region.

Jignesh Shah thanked the ASSE Kuwait Chapter Chairman, Advisory & Executive Committees for the honor, besides thanking the Management of Kuwait Oil Company, Kuwait where he is employed, for providing support in delivering various initiatives. He dedicated this award to HSE professionals and volunteers who supported him directly or indirectly during his professional as well as volunteer journey. He stated that this award is certainly a great encouragement for him and motivation for fellow HSE professionals.

Fadhel Al-Ali, Chairman and Chapter Executive Committee takes this opportunity in congratulating Jignesh Shah for his achievement. ASSE Kuwait Chapter wishes him the successful journey through-out his life in promoting safety, health and environment practices in the region.

Special Ramadan offers at Inn & Go Kuwait plaza hotel



Experience treasured and truly unique time during the Holy Month of Ramadan at Inn & Go Kuwait plaza hotel. Al Dallah Restaurant will provide the ideal service and relaxed environment for families and groups as they break the fast and share quality time with each other. Savor the delicious Iftar buffet with a mix of Ramadan specialties for the price of 9.9Kd and ghabka for 6.00Kd and prepaid coupons for groups and companies for 5.00Kd only for more info please call 22436686.



ICSK Khaitan invests in new students' council



The behavior once molded keeps chasing the person from womb to tomb. The leadership and governing skills are to be instilled in students, at a younger age, since they are the leaders of future. With great confidence, ICSK Khaitan invested the badges of power upon newly elected school Senate at the Investiture Ceremony held on Monday, 14th May 2018, in the exquisite presence of great personnel and parents. The investiture ceremony signifies the reliance and confidence that the school consigns in the newly elected senate members.

The ceremony commenced with the welcoming of the Chief Guest, Major Eng Ali Hussain Ashour, by the newly elected Senate in a solemn and traditional way. The flags symbolizing the pride and authority were handed over to the Senate and the House Captains by the chief guest. The events of the day started with the Islamic Prayer followed by the National Anthems of India and Kuwait. The lighting of the lamp instilled everyone with new vigor as the flames symbolize the virtue and holiness.

Major Eng Ali Hussain Ashour enthusiastically bestowed the School Senate, House Captains and Assistant Captains with badges of office amidst the incessant applause of the audience including parents and students as the school faithfully vested the governing sector in the hands of new senate. The Vice Principal, Mr Ravi

Ayanoli, administered the oath for the school senate to uphold the school motto of loyalty, truth and honor in high esteem. The distinguished guest Eng. Mohandas addressed the young minds and urged them to be innovative. He expressed his happiness over the achievements of the students and wished them 'Good Luck'.

While addressing the students, the Chief Guest, Major Eng. Ali Hussain Ashour inspired the students by sharing his own experiences of disciplinary habits and what makes one successful in life. As a proud member of Police Force and the Kuwait Coast Guard, (KCG) our chief guest began his speech by shedding light on the roles, responsibilities and importance of the operational and technical efforts conducted at the Kuwaiti Coast Guard to protect Kuwaiti territorial waters against human and manmade threats. Major Engineer Ashour highlighted the engineering roles of the Kuwaiti Coast Guard and the varying technical aspects of the various boats, vessels and tools incorporated at KCG to enhance policing efforts.

Major Ashour went on to thank the ICSK student community, administration and staff in taking extensive efforts in organizing such an eventful Investiture Ceremony and also emphasized the vitality and need of following one's passion to achieve success in life. He encouraged them to make constant efforts in life invariably to the situations to



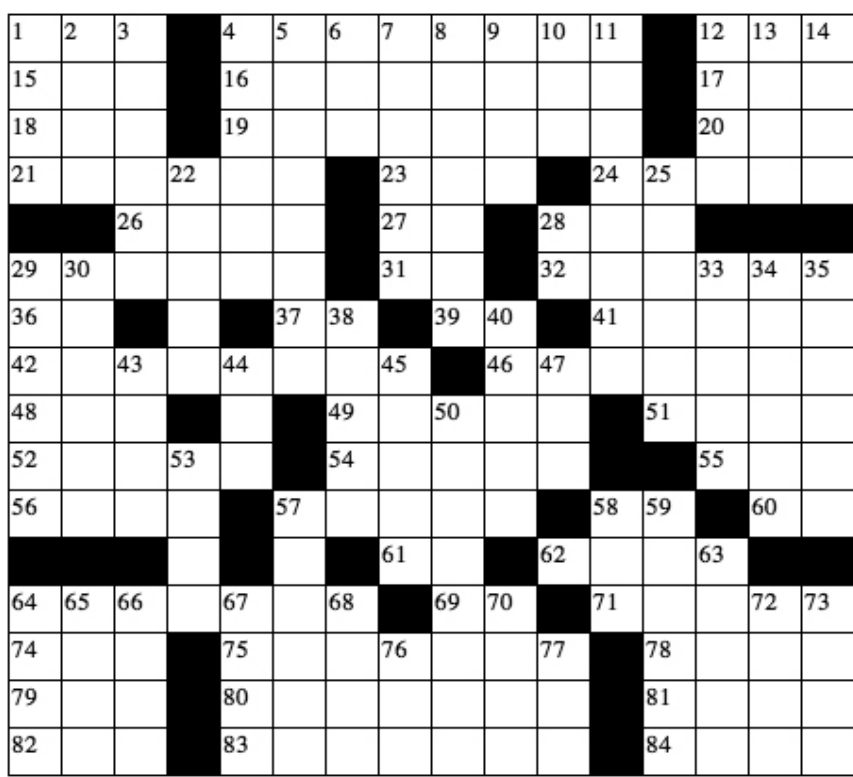
reach to the goal and find own recipe of success. The investing of office bearers of the four Houses, namely, Achievers, Victors, Winners and Leaders were performed by respective House Mentors. A motivational song sung by the school choir and scintillating dance performance served a delicious feast for eyes and ears. Igniting the young minds to execute their responsibilities with renewed vigor, the school president, Ayman Naeem closed the curtain of the investiture ceremony by proposing the vote of thanks.

TIES announcement

You are cordially invited to our second session of the Basics of Islam course this Thursday, May 24th, at 9:30 pm. In this session, we will discuss the testimony of faith, its significance, what it entails, and the wisdom behind believing in the unseen. We will also discuss the articles of faith in Islam, the significance of believing in only one God (Allah), the three types of knowledge, according to Imam Al-Ghazali, and the reasons why the knowledge about Allah (SWT) is superior to any other type of knowledge. Finally, we will examine, in detail, Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) advice to Ibn Abbas regarding the realization that everything is preordained by Allah (SWT) and what it entails. If you are curious about Islam or want to hone your skills in explaining its main concepts, this course will equip you with clear and concise information about Islam as well as techniques for effective dialogue.

Stars

CROSSWORD 1916



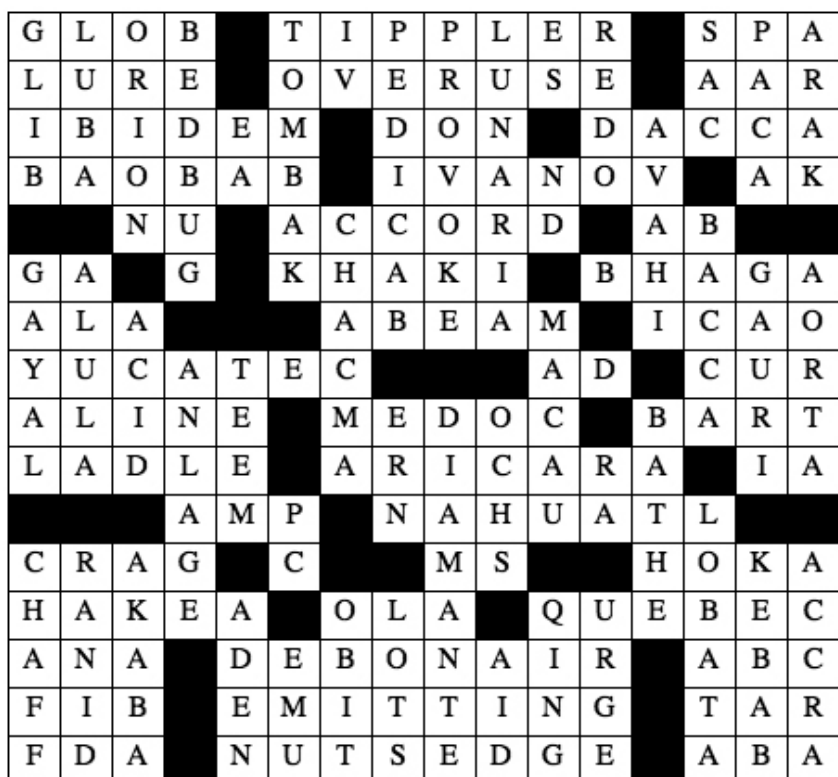
ACROSS

1. The unit of frequency.
4. (zoology) Lacking a tail or taillike appendage.
12. Piece of solid food for dipping in a liquid.
15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
16. Ornamental objects of no great value.
17. Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
18. To make a mistake or be incorrect.
19. Third month of the Revolutionary calendar (November and December).
20. God of the earth.
21. (anatomy) Of or relating to the fauces.
23. (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
24. Type genus of the Phocidae.
26. The Jewish rite of circumcision performed on a male child on the eighth day of his life.
27. A state in New England.
29. Become imbued.
31. A state in east central United States.
32. Port city of Denmark in eastern Jutland.
36. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
37. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
39. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
41. An island republic on Nauru Island.
42. A family of birds of the suborder Oscines.
46. A ballplayer who is batting.
48. An informal term for a father.
49. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
51. Any of various young herrings (other than brislings) canned as sardines in Norway.
52. Jordan's port.
54. A city in northwestern Turkey.
55. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
56. Fallow deer.
60. A hard brittle blue-white multivalent metallic element.
61. A Loloish language.
62. A fraudulent business scheme.
64. Indonesian statesman who obtained the independence of Indonesia from the Netherlands in 1949 and served as president until ousted by Suharto in a coup d'etat (1901-1970).
69. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
71. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
74. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
75. (used especially of glances) Directed to one side with or as if with doubt or suspicion or envy.
78. Toward the mouth or oral region.
79. An advanced law degree.
80. A man who serves as a sailor.
81. Portuguese explorer who in 1488 was the first European to get round the Cape of Good Hope (thus establishing a sea route from the Atlantic to Asia) (1450-1500).
82. Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
83. A deciduous tree of the family Ulmaceae that grows in the southeastern United States.
84. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.

DOWN

1. A musical notation written on a staff indicating the pitch of the notes following it.
2. (obstetrics) The number of live-born children a woman has delivered.
3. Protective garment worn by surgeons during operations.
4. A vaguely specified concern.
5. A town in southeastern New Mexico on the Pecos River near the Mexican border.
6. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
7. A member of the Finno-Ugric-speaking people living in eastern European Russia.
8. Method or manner of conduct in relation to others.
9. Fleshy and usually brightly colored cover of some seeds that develops from the ovule stalk and partially or entirely envelopes the seed.
10. Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
11. Five-toed pachyderm.
12. Powdery starch from certain sago palms.
13. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
14. Having nine hinged bands of bony plates.
22. United States physician who specialized in diseases of the intestines.
25. Cause to suffer.
28. The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
30. United States writer of poems and plays about racial conflict (born in 1934).
33. Containing or characterized by a great deal of water vapor.
34. A family of Ural-Altaic languages.
35. Break apart or in two, using violence.
38. United States film actress (born in Sweden) known for her reclusiveness (1905-1990).
40. Lower in esteem.
43. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
44. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
45. At or near the beginning of a period of time or course of events or before the usual or expected time.
47. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
50. Cut into long thin strips.
53. A small cake leavened with yeast.
57. Used at the dining table.
58. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
59. An Asian temple.
63. A dark region of considerable extent on the surface of the moon.
65. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
66. God of love and erotic desire.
67. An inclined surface or roadway that moves traffic from one level to another.
68. Long green edible beaked pods of the okra plant.
70. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
72. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
73. An edge tool used to cut and shape wood.
76. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
77. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Stability in life hits home and you commit to creating this type of environment domestically and at work. You're more interested in substantial things, no frivolous or unneeded efforts or baggage is tolerated at this time. Real estate or other financial properties are prevalent in the area of investments; you might just decide to have a new residence! While you enjoy certain luxuries, you're very happy to forego these in the name of savings. Be careful not to deny yourself too much, as you could suffer consequences you don't want such as burnout or neglect of other important duties or issues. Knowing how someone thinks could help when you're put in a position to give them some unhappy news. The stars are aligned for progress and accomplishment, this is in the material world, but also in the spiritual aspects.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

The finer things in life appeal to you strongly and you set about surrounding yourself with these. Rewards are deserved, as you've helped so many people you can't count them; karma pays off for you now! Bringing your finances together is good but remember not to put all your eggs in one basket as was done in the past; growth and learning are hallmarks of this cycle. Doing something new introduces you to an interesting way of thinking and this makes a difference in how you deal with life in general. Taking time to enjoy what you've earned seems necessary now, as you could feel as though you're burning out! A visit to a chiropractor or massage therapist recharges your tired mind and body. Motivations interest you, especially your own, and you determine to figure yourself out once and for all.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You clear the way for a serious domestic effort that could take some time but proves to be well worth it! Communicating and teaching are highlighted now and could indicate that you take a class or workshop to further your knowledge and understanding of something you create. A bitter person could try to cause some problems, but you're able to avoid this by the hardest. New styles interest you in clothing, furnishings and shoes; this could also touch other areas. What happens now determines new directions you take in the future; pay close attention! You will understand that what you do isn't who you are, still, accomplishments are extremely important to you during this phase and you work very hard to have them. Different food, places, people all of these and more scratch the itch you have for variety.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Whatever it takes to get ahead is what you're prepared to do; you could feel that you're under pressure to perform, or perhaps this is regarding a bill that's come due. Being downhearted lasts only a short while; keep your chin up! Your behavior and manners help to shoot you straight to the top, as people have a desire to spend time or work with you. Artistic interests are strong now as you consider either investing in art or creating some of your own. Fine literature, or what you consider fine, gets you through many tedious hours as you await something. Stretching yourself too thin could bring illness; pay attention to what your body's telling you. You may feel unappreciated or disrespected but this could just be the energies you're dealing with; in truth, you're widely admired by a lot of people.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your competitive edge is prominent and you use it all the way to victory when you figure out how to beat someone at their own game. A visit to a museum takes you to places you couldn't have otherwise gone; moments of culture seem to soothe your ruffled nerves. You spend more time than usual with a child or sweetheart getting prepared for a future event. Someone a family member or friend moves into your home for a short time; this is beneficial for both of you. Time and money are saved when you discover a shortcut! You feel a need to physically work off stress and this means exercise of some sort. Lots of movement forecast. You want to be in control of a certain situation but feel forbidden to proceed; if you truly want this, it's yours and you must take responsibility for this and other of your choices.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Using less effort proves not only beneficial mentally and physically, but also profitable monetarily and that's the name of the game. While your ambitions are good and strong, with gain comes responsibility that can sometimes feel like a trap. You become a "social butterfly" when part of your job includes this as a duty; if not for work, your mind and spirit need to mingle with others for growth and enlightenment. Maintaining a moderate, forward moving rhythm helps you cover more ground than a frenzied, hectic pace has; this is a hard lesson you're learning, but you're learning well and applying it! A neighbor might need your help when receiving bad news; you're a loyal, true-blue neighbor and friend. Someone asks you to teach them about something important in life and you gladly oblige.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

When you start something over from scratch, the outcome is better than you expect; the main reward is making this happen, the money's nice too! You may have to trade one important position or belonging for something you feel you need. Emotional affairs could be tricky to deal with now as a passionate difference of opinions could arise, remember that love truly does conquer all. You admire the work of a competitor and you aren't afraid to say so! Having a sense of balance is important to you and this cycle supports stability and progress. Meetings, gatherings and other types of social interaction are likely to be prominent; your insistence on being organized makes things a lot easier. You recognize a kindred spirit in a new acquaintance which begins long-lasting companionship that brings joy.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Giving and taking are heavily forecast during this time, and you enjoy both! Staying in touch with certain family members or friends creates a stronger bond that comforts you. Refusing to burn bridges in the past is a great gift in the present. Joining with others to make something happen is more of a pleasure than a chore, though this isn't an easy project. Responsibilities increase with the addition of projects or customers; now's the time to make your move in the workplace while confidence levels are high. You could give someone the cold shoulder for something you think they did; "think" is the key word, as you could be mistaken! When you strike it lucky, don't forget where you came from or who helped you get there. A new purchase makes you happier than you thought it would.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You tend to look more closely at new age approaches to spiritual and political topics; learning doesn't mean you believe everything you read or see! A quickening of the energy that surrounds you is great fuel for your ambitious fires! Making new strides and meeting new goals is highly supported by the current phase you're in and you take full advantage of this. Being involved with some type of advertising, television or radio is forecast; this plays an important part of your future direction! Everything's new when you make a clean break away from a troublesome situation; paying attention to and taking care of your needs is prominent now. Doing things your own way works better today, no matter what anyone else says or thinks. You could relieve someone of a tedious chore.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Wanting something more in the area of romance is common during this particular time. A new relationship could be on the horizon or an old one heats up; either way, romance is more than likely it's probable! Get your dancing shoes on, new fun and activity brings you out of your ingrained work-mode and you're ready. Someone knocks themselves off their pedestal with you by saying something hurtful and inappropriate. You hear more from your psychic abilities right now and you actually slow down and listen; this is a spiritually important time frame just now. Your vivid imagination takes you to a new place in business as it could lead you to a new invention or creation of some sort. You aren't interested in illusion or daydreaming as it's reality you'd prefer dealing with to get ahead, not fall back.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Noticeable changes in your thinking process are taking place; this is due to a memorable occurrence that you won't soon forget. You're in the mood to create new beginnings with a project that just won't come to an end; starting from scratch just might be the answer! Someone with very distinct charisma enters the picture; this is someone you really can't resist. You may feel lucky and consider making a semi-risky investment or maybe investing time and money in a new industry. In the beginning a new undertaking may seem small but this becomes a good bit larger. You take on a new responsibility that overwhelms you for a time, but this becomes something you can handle. Being in the right place at the right time brings more than good luck, it brings a priceless change you've wished for.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You grow closer to loved ones when something an event or meeting brings you together. A sense of need, of wanting or not being fulfilled could be strong, but this is fleeting, no worries! A gamble pays dividends that assist several people. Some ambitions are realized that you've worked toward for a very long time. An upbeat energy is prevalent in your work and home environments; you may be looking forward to a family vacation that brings healing. Your thoughts wander from time to time throughout the day, distracted by something from the past. Doing an anonymous favor for someone brings satisfaction as you've been concerned about this person. A hobby is focused upon now, as though there's a workshop or convention occurring. Open mind, gained knowledge blended with fun for you.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Musical Instruments 2

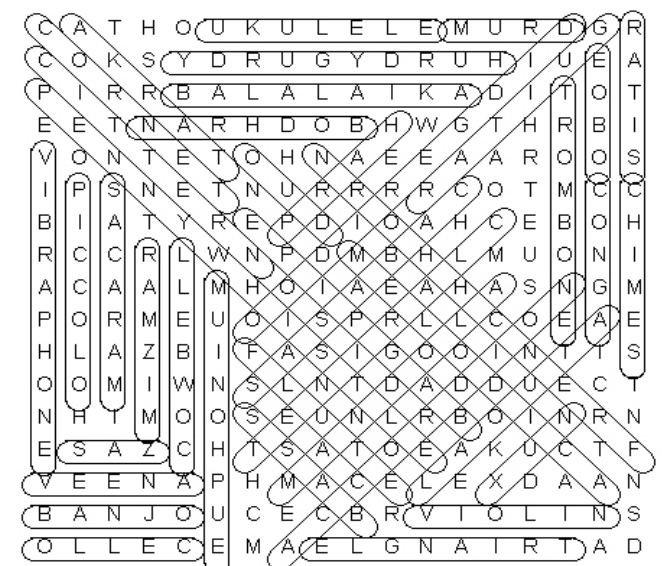
Find and circle all of the musical instruments that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a G. K. Chesterton quotation.



- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| BASSOON | FIFE | MARIMBAS | SHOFAR |
| BONGOS | FLUGELHORN | MELODEON | SLIDE WHISTLE |
| BOUZOUKI | GONG | MOCENO | STRUMSTICK |
| BUGLE | HARMONICA | NEFER | TAMBOURINE |
| CASTANETS | HARMONIUM | OCARINA | TAMBURA |
| CONCERTINA | HUNTING HORN | PIANO | TIN WHISTLE |
| CONCH HORN | JEW'S HARP | REBEC | TRUMPET |
| CUMBUS | KEYBOARD | RECORDER | TUBA |
| CYMBAL | LUTE | SAROD | VIOLA |
| DULCIMER | MANDOLIN | SAXOPHONE | XYLOPHONE |

Yesterday's Solution

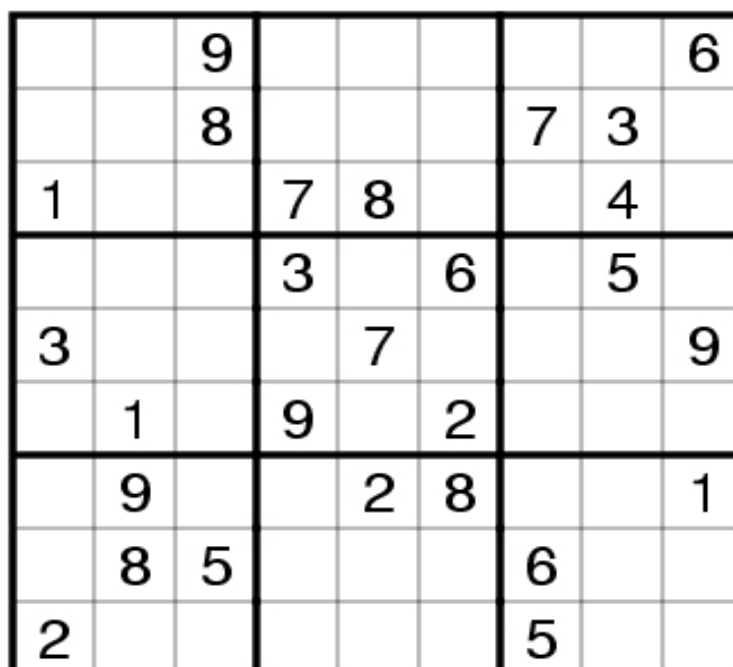
Musical Instruments 1



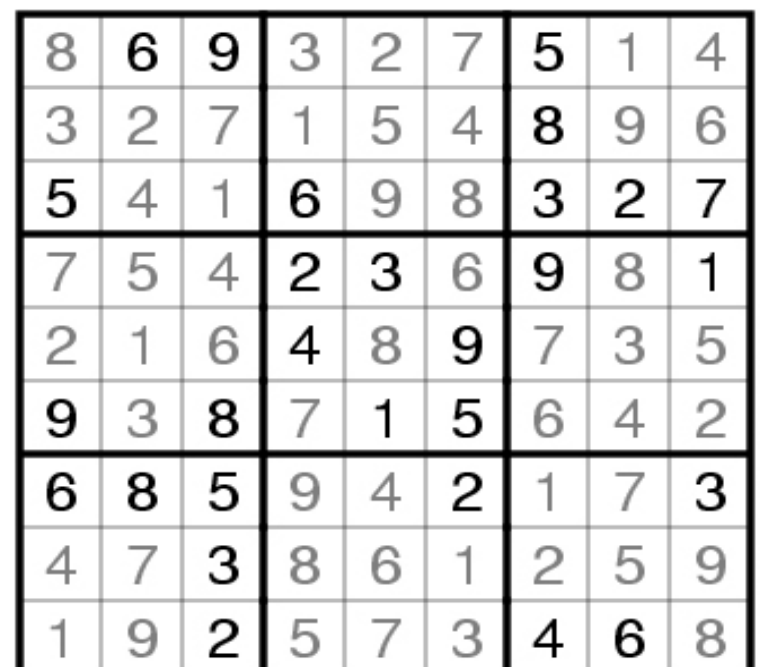
- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| ACCORDION | CONGA | HURDY-GURDY | SAZ |
| BAGPIPE | CORNET | LAOUTA | SITAR |
| BALALAICA | COW BELL | MANDOLA | TARKA |
| BANJO | DIDGERIDOO | MARACAS | TRIANGLE |
| BASS | DRUM | MELODICA | TROMBONE |
| BODHRAN | EUPHONIUM | MIZMAR | UKULELE |
| CABASAS | FLUTE | OBOE | VEENA |
| CELLO | FRENCH HORN | OUF | VIBRAPHONE |
| CHIMES | GIUITAR | PENNYWHISTLE | VIOLIN |
| CITTERN | HARP | PICCOLO | XUN |
| CLARINET | | | |

Hidden sentence: THOSE WHO HEAR NOT THE MUSIC THINK THE DANCERS MAD

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018



A picture shows people walking at the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi as Muslims start the holy fasting month of Ramadan. Islam's holy month of Ramadan is celebrated by Muslims worldwide during which they abstain from food, sex and smoking from dawn to dusk. — AFP

RUSSIA'S 'CIRCUS FOR DELINQUENTS' COMES OF AGE

The big tent in a Saint Petersburg park is not just a circus but a space for disabled and disadvantaged children, often shunned by Russian society, to express themselves. The Upsala Circus "for delinquents" has also just won a top theatre prize, despite hostility from some state authorities. "All children and especially children at risk need something interesting, something 'cool' to give them energy and a desire to change their life," said Larisa Afanasyeva, the founder and artistic director of Upsala.

She started the circus almost two decades ago to offer vulnerable young people a chance to develop their talents, in a country with only basic provision for orphans or the disabled. Around 70 children who are from poor families, orphans or disabled currently come to the circus company's tent in north Saint Petersburg to prepare shows of mostly acrobatics, some 45 each year. A performance by children with Down Syndrome last month won a prize at the 'Golden Mask' awards which usually acknowledge the glitzy high-end of Moscow theatre.

The company has come a long way since Afanasyeva set it up in 2000 along with a German student, Astrid Shorn. Back then the two young women had nothing but their drive to help some of the most vulnerable in Russian society. Upsala Circus had no proper rehearsal space so the troupe got together in the parks and squares of Russia's second city. Finally having a big top was a "dream come true", making a huge difference for the young performers, said Afanasyeva.

Upsala had managed to buy the tent, which

incorporates a main arena and a rehearsal space, five years ago thanks to private sponsors. The circus receives no state funds. The walls are decorated with humorous graffiti, with one slogan reading: "If you don't behave yourself, we'll send you to join the circus".

'Freedom is scary'

"I met Larisa and Astrid when they were monocycling around the embankment" in Saint Petersburg, recalled Nikolai Grudino, now aged 25, of his first encounter with the circus founders as a 10-year-old. "It was a very hard time for my family and I preferred to spend my time out of the house. "But after I met Larisa, I realized it was more interesting to be in the circus than to hang about in the street," he said, adding that the circus had turned him from a "delinquent" into an artist.

But despite its success, Afanasyeva has the impression the project is "not moving forward", largely because of hostility from some who run state services such as orphanages. "It was easier when we were starting out in the early 2000s. Back then everything was more open. Now there are too many rules, too many things you can't do," she told AFP. Orphanages are keen for their charges to take part in more wholesome or "patriotic" activities, she said. "We teach the children to be free and that's a scary prospect. "(The authorities) just want the children to stay out of trouble, but we are talking about freedom and art." — AFP



Teenagers from the social risk groups as they take part in the training at the Upsala Circus in Saint Petersburg. — AFP photos

Han Solo's 'Return of the Jedi' blaster up for auction



Star Wars' Han Solo's BlasTech DL-44 blaster (estimated value \$300,000 - 500,000) is exhibited by Julien's Auctions at Planet Hollywood, in New York. — AFP photos

In the wildly popular "Star Wars" films, Han Solo once told a lightsaber-wielding Luke Skywalker: "Hokey religions and ancient weapons are no match for a good blaster at your side, kid." Now, fans of the space saga can own one of the blaster pistol props Harrison Ford used in his iconic role as Solo in "Return of the Jedi" — an item expected to sell for between \$300,000 and \$500,000 next month at auction in Las Vegas.

The faux weapon, mainly made of wood, was put on display in New York on Monday by Julien's Auctions — after more than 30 years tucked away in the belongings of James Schoppe, the art director for "Return of the Jedi" (1983). Martin Nolan, the auction house's executive director, said Schoppe, an Oscar nominee for his work on the film, finally decided to part with Solo's gun and about 40 other 'Jedi' items, including an Ewok axe and plans for Jabba the Hutt's ship.

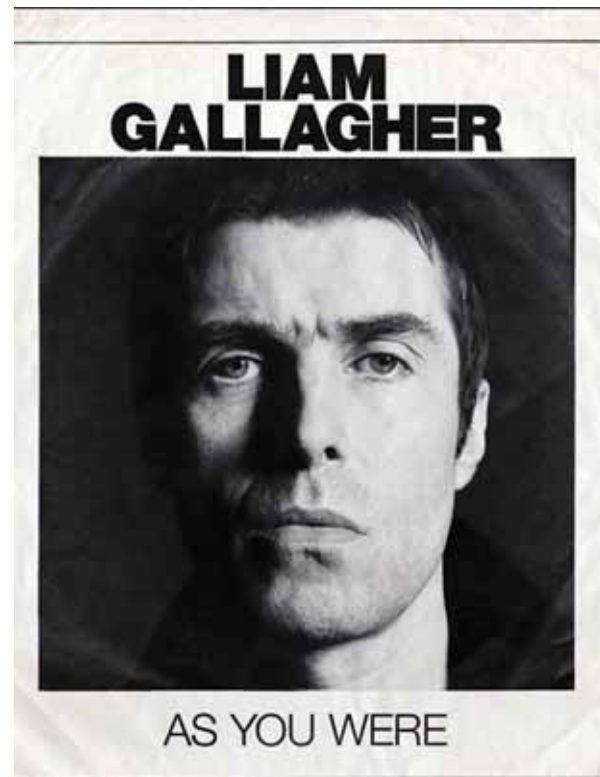
The price for Solo's blaster "could go much higher" at the auction, set for June 23 in Las Vegas, Nolan said. The announcement of the auction coincides with the release this week of "Solo: A Star Wars Story" — a standalone film that tells the story of a young Han Solo, this time played by Alden Ehrenreich. Last year, an R2-D2 droid used in the making of several "Star Wars" films sold for \$2.76 million at auction in Los Angeles. Skywalker's lightsaber from the first two movies fetched \$450,000. — AFP

Lifestyle | Gossip

Sparks enjoy music-making more now than in 70s

Sparks have more fun "musically" now than they did in their heyday. The pop rock duo - comprised of brothers Ron and Russell Mael - returned to the UK top 10 last year with their 23rd album, 'Hippopotamus', which entered the chart at number seven. Keyboard player Ron says that on reflection the 'This Town Ain't Big Enough For the Both Of Us' hitmakers prefer the music they are making now than in the 70s. In an interview with The Times newspaper, he admitted: "I can't say it wasn't fun in the 70s having screaming people in the audience. "Musically, though, it is more fun now. The fact we are still here, it's beyond surreal." The pair will head back into the studio after they complete their current UK tour, which concludes at Bournemouth's International Centre on May 28, to work on their 24th record, and Russell admits it will be hard work topping their last album. He said: "When you have done something that was really well received, it's a challenge to follow it up." However, Ron insists that they no longer mark their success on chart positions. Joking about not having to return to his former employment as a record label

delivery boy for a liquor company in a while, he said: "Well, I haven't been a delivery boy for quite a long time. "And in some ways the situation is quite liberating. "Because when the do-or-die about something being a hit single is gone then it isn't chart weekend that will decide whether your career is happening or not." Before releasing their album, 'No. 1 in Heaven', in 1979 in collaboration with disco producer, Giorgio Moroder - who is renowned for his work for the likes of Kylie Minogue, Donna Summer and Britney Spears - which saw them head in a synth-pop direction, Sparks came close to giving up on music. Their record prior to that in 1977, 'Introducing Sparks', was a commercial failure and panned by critics, however, they don't let stuff like that worry them now. Ron said: "We had never had that sort of success, admiration, adulation. "So when that cools off a bit you think, 'is that it? Is that us over?' "Now we don't worry about little nicks that happen along the way. "We feel we can fight through them, but at the start you don't know what the story is going to be."



Gallagher's As You Were to be released as picture disc

Liam Gallagher's 'As You Were' is being released as a picture disc for the first time. The former Oasis star's debut solo LP was 2017's top selling vinyl album and as part of HMV's Vinyl Week - which runs from June 8 to June 17 - fans of the 'Wall of Glass' hitmaker can get their hands on a special edition stunning black and gold splatter vinyl. Also receiving limited releases is the Proclaimers' 'Sunshine On Leith' on green vinyl and Siouxsie & The Banshees' iconic 1981 release, 'Juju', will be pressed on gold vinyl. 2018 is the 70th anniversary of the 12" 33 1/3 vinyl LP format and with sales reaching figures not seen since the 80s, HMV has unveiled the first set of its exclusive pressings which will be available for customers to buy in store on June 16, today further exclusive vinyl announcements will be confirmed and on May 31, with a special 70th anniversary announcement coming on June 15. Genaro Castaldo of the UK record labels association, the BPI, commented: "Drawing on its rich music heritage, HMV has played its full part in helping to bring the format back into mainstream popular culture - giving it significant profile in store as well as major promotion through hmv Vinyl Week, which has become an important event in the music industry calendar. With June 2018 marking the 70th anniversary of the album on vinyl LP format, this year's hmv Vinyl Week should prove an extra special one." From June 8, music fans will be able to buy their favourite records at reduced prices at HMV's 120 stores across the UK.

Lipa hasn't recorded Bond theme

Dua Lipa hasn't recorded the next James Bond theme tune - but she'd love to. The 'One Kiss' hitmaker has responded to rumors that she has penned a song for the next movie in the blockbuster franchise, which returns with Daniel Craig starring as the titular suave British spy next year, and while she insists she hasn't been asked to do it yet, she doesn't want to "jinx" her chances. Asked about the speculation, Dua told Billboard.com: "I don't know. I would love to do it, but I'm not recording it ... so far... I don't want to jinx it. I would love to do it." Earlier this year, it was reported that Sam Smith was being lined up to record another song for the film. The chart-topping singer won the Academy Award for Best Original Song with 'Writing's on the Wall', which featured in the 2015 Bond movie 'Spectre', and studio bosses were believed to be hoping to woo him into returning for Daniel's final appearance as the iconic British agent. A source said at the time: "Sam was seen as a huge success by the Bond team also a fantastic person to work with. "They feel that having Sam back work again, and put them in a great position to make waves again." Fellow Brit Adele recorded the theme tune to 2012's 'Skyfall'. But while the track earned the 30-year-old star an Oscar and a Grammy Award, Adele previously insisted she had no plans to pen another Bond theme. She explained: "I would never do it again because it went so well and I would never want to jinx it. "After 21 I was like, why did I want to ruin things? Then I heard it was [the 23rd Bond film] and I was 23, and it felt a little like fate." Ed Sheeran also revealed this year that he wrote a Bond theme three years ago "just in case". The 'Castle on the Hill' hitmaker said he hadn't been approached to write a song for one of the movies, but if bosses of the spy saga do ever knock at his door for help on the soundtrack, he's all ready to go. He said: "With Bond, I've had a theme tune written for about three years, just in case!" While the 'Perfect' singer reassured fans his Bond theme is "good", he didn't want to give away any details about the song, including the title. He said: "I'm not going to say 'cause someone might steal it."



Muse drummer gets 'tribal' as band tease album progress

Muse drummer Dom Howard has been recording "tribal" drums. The British rockers appear to be hard at work on their eighth studio album after they gave fans a glimpse of what to expect by sharing a slow-motion clip of the sticksman banging congas on Instagram on yesterday. Frontman Matt Bellamy captioned the picture: "Dom goes tribal." The band teased fans about their plans for 2018, which includes playing a handful of shows, and working on the long-awaited follow-up to 2015's 'Drones', last month. Speaking in a video posted on the band's Twitter account, the 'Plug In Baby' hitmakers said: "So our plans for 2018 is to make a few songs, probably a new album as well, put out a couple of singles, and we'll do like five or six shows... "Some big festivals in the US that we've never done before. We're excited to play Bonnaroo for the first time, BottleRock in Nappa Valley and Carolina Rebellion." The British stars dropped the lead single 'Thought Contagion' and surprise track 'Dig Down' earlier this year. Matt previously said the group are only performing a limited number of gigs this year because they're concentrating on their album.



He shared: "That's our goal, that's our intention, that's what we're born to do ... get out there and blow minds. That's it. That's what we do. "We're not touring yet for a while, we're only doing like four shows this year to keep ourselves energized whilst making the album, but they're not in the UK unfortunately, they're in other places. "Next year we're gonna come to the UK. We've got some cool, crazy ideas." Meanwhile, the musician said they've been experimenting with some "cutting edge" technology to pull off an impressive production for

their next tour. He said: "We're going to come up with something that no one's ever seen before. We're always interested in the latest technology and what's cutting edge, so we're always thinking of the new thing that nobody's ever used before in a concert. "And we found something and we're going to use that." Muse's handful of concerts kick off on May 25 at BottleRock festival in California, and conclude at Rock In Rio in Lisbon, Portugal on June 23.

Take That went 'undercover' to take a peek at Backstreet Boys' residency

Take That went "undercover" to watch stateside rivals Backstreet Boys at their Las Vegas residency. The 'I Want It That Way' hitmakers - comprised of Nick Carter, Kevin Richardson, AJ McLean, Brian Littrell and Howie Dorough - have been performing at The AXIS Theater at the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino as part of the 'Backstreet Boys: Larger Than Life' show since March, and they received a surprise visit from Gary Barlow and co, who were keen to talk about the new music the band are working on. Kevin told The Sun newspaper: "Take That were undercover. "We hung out - it was nice. "they told us they're in the studio, recording. "We were just sharing our stories." Take That are currently working on songs for their 'Greatest Hits Tour' and album, which is due to be released in 2019. As for the US band, they recently released their first single since 2013, 'Don't Go Breaking My Heart'. The 'Incomplete' hitmakers have just inked a new deal with RCA Records, and will release their ninth studio album later this year. Howie recently opened up about aiming to push forward and wanting to make new songs which stand the test of time like their back catalogue, which includes the hit songs 'I Want It That Way', 'Show Me The Meaning of Being Lonely' and 'Everybody'. He said: "I think it would be very easy for us to turn ourselves into a nostalgic band. "Our biggest hits are what the majority of the fans want to hear when they come to our show because of the memories attached to them, but we always try never to settle. "We want to make a concert that people want to see, pushing ourselves physically so the new songs in our concerts stand up alongside the favorites. We're not just living in the past."



GOLDIE TO PERFORM AT RED BULL MUSIC ODYSSEY ON RIVER THAMES

Goldie is among 50 acts performing on boats for Red Bull Music Odyssey on London's River Thames next month. The 52-year-old drum and bass legend - who was awarded an MBE for his services to music in 2016 - will perform whilst sailing through the British capital, passing some of the most iconic landmarks - including a Tower Bridge opening display - before docking in Greenwich, on The Roller vessel on June 30. There will be a total of six boats on the water at the same time and all performances will be broadcast live on Red Bull Radio. Chal Ravens will be hosting a curated live broadcast featuring highlights from across the 50 plus artists involved in the unique event. Also performing across the six boats are AJ Tracey, MS Banks, MoStack and reggae star Kranium. Each boat will be dedicated to a different genre of dance music from drum and bass to dancehall and have its own headline act, aptly named "the captain". The Forever Dancer will be headed up by Glasgow EDM star Denis Sulita. Goldie's boat will be headlined by drum and bass producer and DJ Kyrist, whilst British radio presenter Julie Adenuga is running The Transmission with AJ Tracey. Kamaal Williams and Moses Boyd will host the jazz invasion boat, The Boogie and US rapper Jubilee is part of The Wine Up party.



Horan nurses serious hangover



Niall Horan is nursing a serious hangover that he claims has lasted almost 24 hours. The Irish pop heartthrob took to Twitter on Monday to reveal he was feeling the effects of having one too many alcoholic beverages over the weekend. The One Direction star has been enjoying some downtime since finishing the European leg of his 'Flicker World Tour' on May 12. However, he can't wait to get back out on the road in Australia and New Zealand next week. In a series of tweets, he wrote: "Really enjoying the time off but excited to get back at it already. If ya haven't got a ticket yet, go get one and come see me ... It's bad when I'm still hungover at 10pm the next day. (sic)" The 'On The Loose' hitmaker jets out to New Zealand on June 1 for his concert at Spark Arena in Auckland. Meanwhile, the 24-year-old star recently shared how his next album - the follow-up to his debut solo LP 'Flicker' - won't be based on failed relationships. He said: "A lot of this album was driven from personal experiences and heartache and stuff like that. But I don't have that at the moment, so I think a lot more will just be going out and writing songs, and trying to write good songs, instead of being stuck on one particular concept. "The album kind of turned out to be a concept album because it was about one particular thing, so I do think that next time will be a little bit different." Niall - who is said to be dating Hailee Steinfeld - has admitted that he was inspired to ditch the love songs after hearing Sam Smith talk about how he can no longer write break-up ballads because he's in a happy relationship. The 'Slow Hands' singer explained: "I heard him saying in an interview he did recently that he feels weird singing these songs now that are on this album because he's not heartbroken anymore. He's singing about stuff that makes him sad, but he's not sad anymore, so he does find it funny. And that kind of resonated with me. Now I'm thinking I just want to write songs, and not write about something in particular."

Lifestyle | Gossip

Theron cast in Fox News movie

Charlize Theron has been cast as Megyn Kelly in an upcoming movie about Fox News. The 42-year-old actress has signed on for the project, which will focus on the women who worked for the broadcaster during late chairman Roger Ailes' tenure in charge. Ailes left the network in 2016 amid a sexual and workplace harassment scandal, and the movie will tell the story of those who were employed by Fox at the time. The movie has been penned by 'The Big Short'

scriptwriter Charles Randolph and Jay Roach, 60, will direct, having seen success at the helm of the likes of the 'Austin Powers' franchise and political comedy 'The Campaign'. Work started on the project before Ailes died a year ago, and the movie will boast an ensemble cast of characters portraying the chairman and those working for him at the time of the scandal. He left Fox News in 2016 - two years after the allegations were first made, accusations which he denied - and said he didn't want to be a distraction. In a

statement at the time, he said: "I will not allow my presence to become a distraction from the work that must be done every day to ensure that Fox News and Fox Business continue to lead our industry." No further casting has been announced as of yet, and there is no news on a release date.



Suotamo didn't feel pressure over iconic Star Wars scene

Joonas Suotamo didn't feel pressure while filming one of the most iconic scenes in 'Star Wars' history. The 31-year-old actor plays Chewbacca in 'Solo: A Star Wars Story', and he insisted he didn't let fans' expectations weigh him down when shooting the moment his character first met Han Solo - portrayed by Alden Ehrenreich, who has taken over the role from original trilogy star Harrison Ford. Speaking to Collider, he explained: "You sort of are detached from that. You try to look if you're doing the right job ... But then you're just trying to survive and make yourself energetic for the next one. "It's a constant battle to get the next good shot and the next good performance. So you're not really thinking that - but you know through doing the best job you can, you're also giving the fans the best scene they can have." Despite that, he said filming that scene was his most memorable moment - even if it didn't go smoothly at first. He added: "It's the scene where Han and Chewie meet each other, and I will never forget that. And it's not a completely positive thing, because it was a lot of being soaked, and ... I don't know if this is spoiling it for anyone, but let's just say it was a memorable scene and I'm glad we did it first." Suotamo also played Chewbacca in new trilogy installments 'The Force Awakens' and 'The Last Jedi', and he has opened up on the differences that directors J.J. Abrams, Rian Johnson and now Ron Howard have brought to the table. He said: "I can say that each and every one has had a very different approach to working, but each one has delivered on the quality. "It's more like these nuances - it's all part of what the script necessitates for the director to do. JJ was very fast on his feet, thinking, [he] could anything at the last minute because he has this kind of lightning speed mind. "Rian was very methodical I think, he had a very clear picture of what he wanted. Ron was sort of ... he had a sixth sense for everything, and he quickly knew what he wanted in any scene, and could say, 'OK let's move on, I've got what I needed.'"



The LEGO Movie sequel gets name

The second installment of 'The LEGO Movie' has been given a title. The sequel to the 2014 hit movie has been given an official name and will be called 'The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part'. It was revealed on the official LEGO Twitter account and the picture was captioned: "Prepare for the second part. @TheLEGOmovie #TheLEGOmovie2 (sic)" "The LEGO Movie" sequel was originally expected to hit cinemas in May 2018 but was delayed until 2019. The movie was initially expected to be directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller but 'The Mindy Project's Rob Schrab will now take over the reins. However, although they've stepped down as directors, Lord and Miller are reportedly still on board to act as producers and are also co-writing the forthcoming film's script. 'The Lego Movie 2' will follow on from 'The Lego Batman Movie', which features the voices of Will Arnett and Mariah Carey. Safekeepers for the Lego screen brand Dan Lin, Lord, Roy Lee and Miller will produce the 'The Lego Batman Movie', while 'The Lego Movie's animation supervisor Chris McKay has been brought on board to direct the spin-off. Skilled writer Seth Grahame-Smith has also penned the script for the movie. It has since been revealed that the sequel to 'The LEGO Movie' is being re-written by Raphael Bob-Waksberg to make changes to the script penned by Lord and Miller.

Huffman announces new crime drama project

Felicity Huffman is taking a break from movies to turn 'The Iron Will of Shoeshine Cats' book into a TV drama. The former 'Desperate Housewives' star has acquired the rights to Hesh Kestin's 2009 novel which is set in New York in 1963 and follows college student and womanizer Russell Newhouse he makes the acquaintance of notorious Jewish gangster Shoeshine Cats and finds himself thrust into the world of organized crime. Huffman, 55, was introduced to the tome by her brother and reading it herself knew she had to bring the story to the big screen. Speaking at the Women in Television Summit, she said: "My brother called me and said, 'I found this book, you have to make it.' I read it and I thought, 'I have to make it.'" After initially considering turning the story into a film, Huffman recruited Aaron Kaplan to join her in the project and the pair are now developing it as a series through Warner Bros Television. Speaking at the event, Huffman - who is married to actor William H. Macy - also challenged all the women in the room to create their own projects and become "girl bosses" in Hollywood. She said: "Create your own work. Write it. Direct it. I need more girl bosses. That's how we're going to change it."



Zachary Levi unveils Shazam! costume

Zachary Levi has unveiled his 'Shazam!' costume. The 37-year-old actor - who is best known for his role in the comedy series 'Chuck' - has been cast as the titular superhero in the upcoming DC Extended Universe movie which focuses on Billy Batson, a boy who can transform into an adult superhero by uttering the magic word "Shazam!". The name is an acronym of the ancient world gods and historical figures: Solomon, Hercules, Atlas, Zeus, Achilles and Mercury. Levi - who plays the adult hero to Asher Angel's youngster - has now logged in to his Instagram account to share an image of himself next to a promotional poster for the film which shows him in character. Posting the pic ahead of the start of the Licensing Expo in Las Vegas, he wrote: "This! This is what dreams are made of. Complete and total wish fulfillment, plus a beverage! All the squeezes. #LicensingShowLasVegas #SHAZAMmovie #FirstLook? [sic]" 'Shazam!' is being directed by 'Annabelle: Creation'



director David F. Sandberg and the cast also includes Grace Fulton, Jack Dylan Grazer and Mark Strong, who is playing the villain Doctor Sivana. Strong previously told BANG Showbiz that he was very excited to get the chance to battle Shazam and do lots of stunts for the role. He said: "I'm playing an evil man called Doctor Sivana, they are always the best characters to play, the most fun. I've been training like a mad man, I think I'm going to be doing lots of flying around and firing electricity out of my hands." The Shazam character was created by C.C. Beck and writer Bill Parker back in 1939 and first appeared in Whiz Comics #2 a year later, then known as Captain Marvel. 'Shazam!' is set for release in April 2019.

Berry joins cast of John Wick: Chapter 3

Halle Berry has joined the cast of 'John Wick: Chapter 3'. The 51-year-old actress has reportedly signed up to the forthcoming movie alongside Anjelica Huston, Asia Kate Dillon, Mark Dacascos, and Jason Mantzoukas, but details about their characters are being kept under wraps, according to Variety. Keanu Reeves will revive his role of the hitman in the Chad Stahelski-directed thriller, which is due out in 2019, and a new synopsis released earlier this year has given fans of the franchise an insight into what they can expect. The synopsis reads: "John Wick (Keanu Reeves) is on the run for two reasons ... he's being hunted for a global \$14 million dollar open contract on his life, and for breaking a central rule: taking a life on Continental Hotel grounds. "The victim was a member of the High

Table who ordered the open contract. John should have already been executed, except the Continental's manager, Winston, has given him a one-hour grace period before he's 'Excommunicado' - membership revoked, banned from all services and cut off from other members. "John uses the service industry to stay alive as he fights and kills his way out of New York City. (sic)" Meanwhile, Stahelski previously revealed his ambitions for the new film, saying it will be more "intricate" than the earlier installments. He said: "We want, not so much to go bigger on the third one, but to show you more of the intricacies of the world ... I feel like there are all these different subtleties that I skipped over in number two, that I'd like to go back to on [chapter three] and show you the inner workings of different parts of New York."



Serkis says Mowgli movie is closer to Kipling's vision

Andy Serkis says 'Mowgli' is different to previous 'Jungle Book' films because you get to see him try and "assimilate into the world of man". The 54-year-old star has directed the upcoming live action adventure, which is based on Rudyard Kipling's 1894 tome 'The Jungle Book' which is about Shere Khan the tiger's quest to kill "man-cub" Mowgli to rid him from the wild, where he has been raised by wolves and Bagheera the black panther, who discovered him abandoned as a baby. The story was famously made into a beloved animation in 1967 by Disney and then was recreated as a CGI extravaganza by Jon Favreau in 2016. Serkis accepts that comparisons will be made between the versions but says his interpretation is much closer to Kipling's original story and also focuses on more of Mowgli's journey. In an interview on 'This Morning', he said: "It's much closer to the tone of Rudyard Kipling's book and it takes into account the world that Kipling was living in. It's set in 19th century colonial India and it really has that feel and flavor. It's a live action movie so we shot on location. It took almost four years to make. We wanted to put some space between us and Jon Favreau's Disney film, I must say though they are completely different movies you can't really compare the two. "For instance, we built jungle sets at Leavesden Studios where 'Harry Potter' was filmed and then we went to South Africa and created - and this is the biggest difference between this and the other movie - an entire village in South Africa, south

of Durban. In this film we see Mowgli try and assimilate himself into the world of man in the Indian village." The film has an all-star cast who have provided the motion capture, including Christian Bale as Bagheera, Cate Blanchett as Kaa the snake and Benedict Cumberbatch as Shere Khan. Serkis - who created The Imaginarium Studios production company which specializes in motion capture technology - admits morphing the actors likenesses with the animals they provided a wealth of unique challenges. The actor - who plays Baloo the bear - said: "The idea of creating believable talking animals is something that I've been using motion capture technology to do, and the movie business has, for 15 to 20 years. One of the biggest challenges was to do it for different animals. When you think about apes to create a human performance and then translate it to an ape is actually quite difficult but when you're thinking about tigers, bears and panthers, you have to design the animals very, very cleverly. If you imagine of a picture of Christian Bale and a picture of a panther and then morphing his face gradually into a panther slowly at some point you find a sweet spot in the design when you see both the actor and the creature, that and then the perfecting of that with the animators in post-production creates a brilliant thing. They've done an extraordinary job and taken this type of animation to another level." Warner Bros Pictures' 'Mowgli' is scheduled for release this October. — Bang Showbiz



Top chef Batali under police probe as #MeToo spotlight returns

Allegations of sexual assault against US celebrity chef Mario Batali spotlight once again an industry known for its macho work environment as the #MeToo era claims yet another high-profile American scalp. New York police confirmed Monday they had opened an investigation into the 57-year-old icon of Italian-American cuisine after a series of disturbing claims were broadcast on CBS's "60 Minutes." An anonymous employee of one of Batali's 26 restaurants accused him of assault in 2005 at "The Spotted Pig," a celebrity haunt in Manhattan's Greenwich Village run by one of his friends, and in which he had invested.

The woman alleged that Batali drugged and sexually assaulted her while she was unconscious, waking up to find apparent s***n on her skirt. She said she went to a hospital, but decided not to file a police report, and her "rape kit" from the hospital was not preserved. Jamie Seet, another "Spotted Pig" employee, said she witnessed a similar incident in 2008 on the restaurant's security cameras and several employees intervened to prevent the assault.

"I think Mario Batali's a monster. He has been lauded as this incredible chef and this leader. But behind the scenes he's hurtful and he does not respect women," Trish Nelson, a former "Spotted Pig" waitress told 60 Minutes. "We

called him the Red Menace," she added. Batali was previously accused of sexual misconduct and harassment last December, leading the restaurant group he co-founded, B&B Hospitality, removing him from operations, and television channel ABC axing him from his cooking show.

He denies the latest and more serious allegations of assault to CBS. But B&B Hospitality called them "chilling and deeply disturbing" and said it was negotiating Batali's divestment from the company, the terms of which it hoped to be set by July 1. According to Nelson, harassment is "pervasive throughout" the industry, known for its hierarchical dynamic.

'Brutal, oppressive business'

"Doing this over 20 years there isn't one place that I haven't had this kind of an experience," she told CBS. A flood of allegations leading to the downfall of Hollywood movie mogul Harvey Weinstein last October have spawned a public reckoning with sexual misconduct, rocking industries from politics to music to restaurants to finance. A number of chefs have been publicly accused-but none as famous as Batali.

Raised in Seattle, he apprenticed with London chef Marco Pierre White and trained in Italy before co-founding a culinary and restaurant empire that spanned New



File photo shows Chef Mario Batali at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival, New York.

York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Singapore.

The author of 11 cookbooks and the winner of a clutch of awards, he starred in cooking show "The Chew" and is known for a gregarious personality and informal style of dress consisting of shorts, socks and sandals. One of the first chefs hit by the #MeToo movement was John Besh, a famous New Orleans restaurateur, accused last October of harassing a dozen women. In mid-May, Washington-based celebrity chef Mike Isabella-the star of "Top Chef

who owned 11 restaurants in the capital-was sued for sexually harassing a former employee, an accusation he denied.

On the other side of the aisle campaigning against harassment in the restaurant industry, is former chef and food critic Anthony Bourdain-whose partner is Asia Argento, an Italian actress at the forefront of the #MeToo movement. "I came out of a brutal, oppressive business that was historically unfriendly to women... I knew a lot of women, it turned out, who had stories about their experience, about people I knew, who did not feel I was the sort of person they could confide in," said Bourdain in a January interview with The Daily Show.

It's no secret that the restaurant industry remains male dominated. In 2017, female chefs made up less than five percent of the world's Michelin star recipients, and only two were head chefs at the World's 50 Best Restaurants. But change might be on the horizon. Michael Ellis, international director of the Michelin guide, says more and more women are entering culinary schools-and it won't be long before more women end up running kitchens. — AFP



Kazakh actress Samal Yeslyamova poses with her trophy during a photocall after she won the Best Actress Prize for her part in "Ayka (My Little One)" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Kazakhstan hopes actress's Cannes win will inspire local talent

After Kazakhstan's Samal Yeslyamova scooped a surprise award for best actress at the Cannes film festival, many of her compatriots found themselves typing her name into search engines. Yeslyamova-who won the prize for her portrayal of a Central Asian single mother struggling for survival in Russia in the film "Ayka"-is not a complete unknown in the country. But nor was she a household name until now. "It's a cause for great celebration, but also regret," said Ermek Tursunov, a film director who lives in Kazakhstan's largest city Almaty. "The lead actress in this film was an ethnic Kazakh girl from northern Kazakhstan, the director an ethnic Russian from southern Kazakhstan," he told AFP. "But it was not a Kazakh film. It was a Russian film."

While a small, private Kazakh studio was among those that participated in the making of the film, funding came from the Russian culture ministry as well as the Council of Europe and the Polish film institute. Although oil-rich Kazakhstan had a proud filmmaking tradition during Soviet times, it is better known these days for its portrayal in Sacha Baron Cohen's off-color mockumentary "Borat".

Kazakhstan's Tarantino and Thurman?

The relationship between Yeslyamova, 33, and director Sergey Dvortsevoy, 55, has been likened by at least one Kazakh website to the partnership between Hollywood duo Quentin Tarantino and Uma Thurman. Dvortsevoy hails from the southern town of Shymkent, which has stronger cultural links to Uzbekistan than to its northern neighbor Russia. Yeslyamova, whose achievement is unprecedented in Kazakhstan, comes from a village near the Russian border and went to college in Petropavlovsk, a town where ethnic Slavs still form the majority population.

The pair met during casting for "Tulpan"-a film set in the Kazakh countryside and filmed in scorching conditions which entered Cannes in 2008 and won the "Un Certain Regard" category, reserved for emerging directors or unexpected or marginal themes. As they flew into the capital Astana yesterday, Yeslyamova and Dvortsevoy were met by long-reigning autocrat Nursultan Nazarbayev and a youthful crowd that serenaded her with a national ballad.

Spark of inspiration

While both private and state-owned studios in Kazakhstan have vastly increased their output in recent years, critics say that quality has not always followed on from quantity. In recent years, the most prominent titles have been nation-building epics, with big-budget picture "Nomad" featuring American actor Jason Scott Lee proving a relative flop in 2007, drawing criticism for wasting money.

Another noted film was "The Sky of My Childhood" (2011) which looked at the early years of Nazarbayev's reign and the country's Soviet past. There have also been a string of comedies in both Kazakh and Russian, aimed at the domestic market. In a country of 17 million with a large rural population, that market is relatively small. Ainur Isayeva, spokeswoman for Kazakhfilm, said Kazakhstan was "incredibly happy" Yeslyamova took the best actress gong and hoped her success at Cannes would "provide a spark" for other local filmmakers and actors. Kazakhfilm, the state-owned studio which still produces most of the country's films, was represented at Cannes by Adilkhan Yerzhanov's "The Gentle Indifference of the World" which it co-produced with a private studio in Paris. — AFP

HOVERING KIDS GO POLITICAL IN HONG KONG FESTIVAL PARADE

Children dressed as ancient gods, celebrities and political leaders were paraded high above crowds on the Hong Kong island of Cheung Chau yesterday in a traditional celebration of Buddha's birthday. The annual "Piu Sik" or "Floating Colors" march sees young residents held up on towering metal poles and greeted by cheers and applause as they are carried through the winding streets of the outlying island, which is still predominantly a fishing community. The parade is part of Cheung Chau's famous five-day "bun festival" which culminated last night in a precipitous scramble up a tower made from imitation steamed buns, a favorite snack on the island.

Statues of deities were originally carried through the streets as part of the festival parade. But 70 years ago they were replaced by children, inspired by similar celebrations in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou. In the past two decades the march has also evolved into a form of political satire. Children from a parade group headed by local resident Wong Sing-chau dressed as the city's finance secretary and democratic lawmakers to reflect current controversies.

A four-year-old girl from Wong's group posed as the landlady from popular Hong Kong movie "Kung Fu

Hustle", complete with pink pyjamas and hair rollers, in what he said was a nod to the city's sprawling housing costs. "I want to speak for the people through satire," Wong told AFP. "Everyone suffers from high rent and unaffordable housing now." A mini-version of city leader Carrie Lam in pink cheongsam and pearls also joined the parade, alongside children dressed as local sports stars including bespectacled Hong Kong snooker player Ng On-yeo and champion cyclist Sarah Lee.

The ability to withstand the blazing sun for hours during the parade was one of the requirements for being selected, said Wong. Temperatures reached 34 degrees Celsius (93 degrees Fahrenheit) yesterday, the hottest parade day in 71 years, with children trying to keep cool using fans and umbrellas. For five-year-old Hayden Kwok, it was a taste of fame. "Many people will say hello to me. I can see myself on TV," he told AFP before the event, during which he was dressed as pro-democracy lawmaker Ted Hui. Hayden's father Kwok Yu-tin said he wanted his children to inherit tradition through participation. "Participation gives them a better understanding of what the tradition is and they can feel the atmosphere for themselves," he said. — AFP



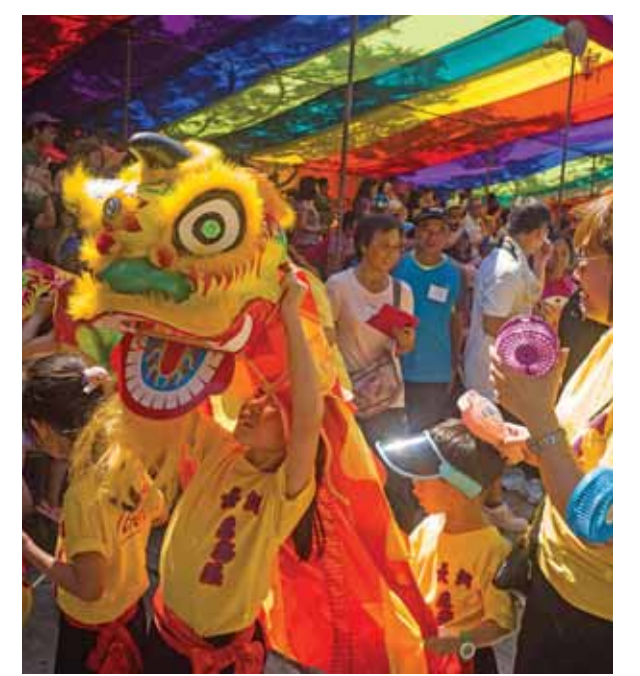
Hailey Miu, 4 years old, and her father soothe an itch on her scalp during preparations for her makeup and hair for her character as a landlady from Stephen Chow's movie "Kung Fu Hustle" that she will portray during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival parade.



Hazel Kwok (center), 4 years old, stands on a float while portraying her character of former lawmaker Emily Lau during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival parade in Hong Kong. — AFP photos



Hailey Miu (center), 4 years old, stands on a float while portraying a landlady from Stephen Chow's movie "Kung Fu Hustle".



Visitors (back) watch as performers take part in the annual Cheung Chau bun festival parade in Hong Kong.

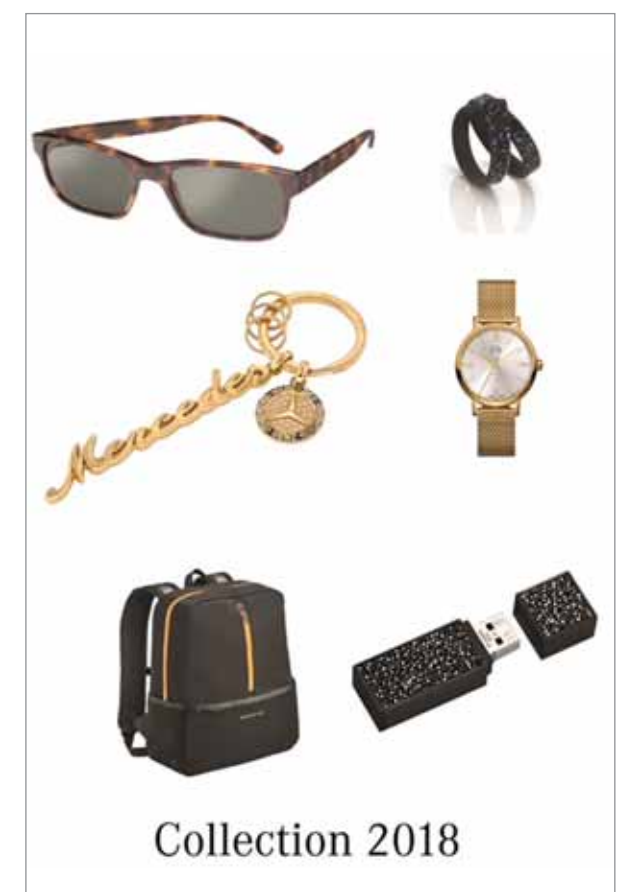
Stunning accessories from Mercedes-Benz 2018 collection catalogue are now available in Kuwait

The new Mercedes-Benz 2018 collection catalogue is now available at the boutique and accessory locations of A.R. Al-Bisher and Z. Al-Kazemi Co - the Authorised General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait. The new Collection features more than 500 high-quality products from the categories sport, watches, fashion, accessories, Black Edition, travel, key rings, gift ideas, AMG and Maybach. Among the new items added to this year's Collection are the new Lite-Box case series by Samsonite, fashionable chronograph watches and distinguished Swarovski jewellery.

The Mercedes-Benz 2018 Motorsports collection presents a new season with the latest stylish PUMA lifestyle products, exquisite replica products of the race drives and new fanwear products. In the Mercedes-AMG Collection, customers can look forward to many new accessories and clothing items inspired by the latest AMG vehicles including motorsport gilets for men and women, high-quality sunglasses, various keychains and new kids products.

The new design for the catalogue is as stylish as the collection: with its high-class photography it has an ultra-modern look - yet is pared down to its essentials and now has interesting information on how the products came to be developed, the materials used and details about the prestigious collaboration partners. It also presents the items by brand and division, making the browsing experience easier, more intuitive and efficient.

From vehicles to accessories, Mercedes-Benz maintains uncompromising quality across its full range of products. The items in the 2018 collection catalogue are crafted to effortlessly complement customers taste for nothing but the best, following the same impeccable standards as everything else that carries the star of excellence. Customers can visit the main boutique and accessory corner in Shuwaikh service centre from Saturday till Thursday from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm during the Holy Month of Ramadan.



Collection 2018

Classifieds

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Kuwait Times
Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



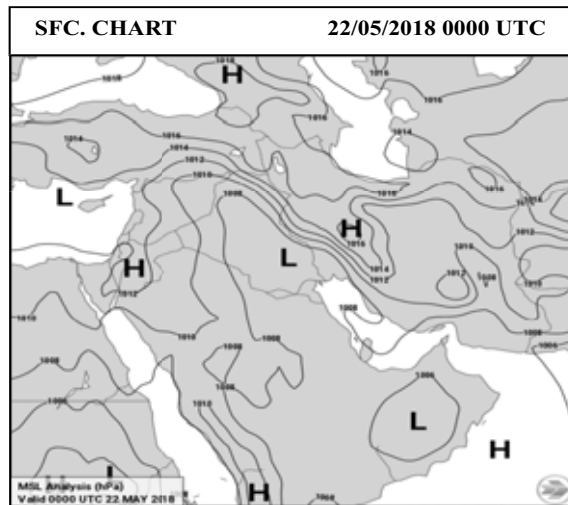
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot with light to moderate variable wind to south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 32 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate south easterly wind to variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings
-----------------	---------------------

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	40 °C	30 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	43 °C	24 °C
ABDALY	43 °C	27 °C
BUBYAN	00 °C	0- °C
JAHRA	44 °C	29 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	37 °C	26 °C
SALMIYAH	36 °C	28 °C
AHMADI	36 °C	29 °C
NUWASIB	43 °C	24 °C
WAFRA	43 °C	24 °C
SALMY	41 °C	25 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	05/23	Hot	43 °C	24 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 35 km/h
Thursday	05/24	Hot	45 °C	26 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 40 km/h
Friday	05/25	Hot	41 °C	25 °C	SE-NW	12 - 40 km/h
Saturday	05/26	Hot	42 °C	23 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:21
Sunrise	04:52
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:37
Isha	20:06

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	41 °C
MIN. Temp.	24 °C
MAX. RH	34 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	SE 36 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

EMERGENCY
112

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

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

YIELD 4 FINANCE

A complete International Trade Finance Solutions Company offers the following products:

- LETTERS OF CREDIT AT SIGHT
- STANDBY LETTERS OF CREDIT
- USANCE LETTERS OF CREDIT
- BANK GUARANTEE
- PERFORMANCE BOND
- ADVANCE PAYMENT GUARANTEE
- PROOF OF FUND (POF) MESSAGES
- READY WILLING AND ABLE (RWA) MESSAGES

From International Banks and Financial Institutions across the world.

SANJEEV CHADHA +971527158218 / sanjeev@yield4finance.com
+971588607792 crishelle@yield4finance.com
MOHIT CHADHA +971502066402 mohit@yield4finance.com
VIPUL CHADHA +919888672938 vipul@yield4finance.com

Website: www.yield4finance.com



NOTICE

May 14, 2018



Mr. Mohshin Salim Bhamla, son of Mr. Bhamla Salim Ismail, resident of AT PO Mandir, Bhamla Faliu, Tal Jalalpore, Dist Navsari, Gujarat 396472 and **Ms. Naushin Asif Iqbal Malek**, daughter of Mr. Asif Iqbal Mohmed Malek, resident of A-151, New Anandnagar, Bharuch 392001, Gujarat both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (attachecons@indembkwat.org), welfaresection@indembkwat.org / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965-2253125).

Sanjeev Saklani
Sanjeev Saklani
Attaché (Consular) and
Marriage Officer.
Embassy of India, Kuwait.

Ph: 00965-22550171
00965-2253125
Fax: 00965-22573910
Email: attachecons@indembkwat.org
welfaresection@indembkwat.org



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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 23/5/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 23/5/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	WANA	975	Baku	13:50
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
KAC	102	London	00:50	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	FEG	442	Asyut	14:50
JZR	267	Beirut	01:25	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KNE	538	Jeddah	15:25
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JZR	1539	Cairo	03:40	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	KNE	536	Jeddah	17:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	WAN	135	Doha	18:40
WAN	342	Sohag	07:30	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	JZR	552D	Alexandria	20:05
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	WAN	117	Bahrain	20:20
IRC	6552	ABD	08:50	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	543	Cairo	21:20
JZR	703	Taif	11:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
KIS	6032	Mashhad	12:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
WAN	134	Doha	12:20	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	KAC	1781	Jeddah	22:40
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	JZR	604	Ahmedabad	22:40
FEG	341	Sohag	13:50	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
				KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				WAN	337	Alexandria	23:40
				SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45



LAGOS: The players of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries football club raise their hands to pray before a continental match at Agege Stadium in Lagos. — AFP

The miraculous rise of Mountain Top FC

LAGOS: One of Nigeria's biggest evangelical churches was on to a winner when it set up a football club-backed by millions of dollars and the power of prayer. Just over a decade later, Mountain Top FC or MFM FC are now in the Nigerian Professional Football League and among the best sides in the country. At the Agege Stadium in Lagos, the ritual is the same before every match: players in their all-purple strip gather round a pastor in the dressing room to be blessed.

Then, trance-like on their knees and with hands turned upwards to the sky, they give themselves up to God to ensure victory. "It's a faith-based team, we don't seek power from anywhere apart from prayers," coach Geoffrey Aghogi said—and he made no secret of their ambitions. "We want this team to be the Real Madrid of Nigeria, the Chelsea of (Africa)!" MFM FC has had a meteoric rise since it was set up in 2007 by the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (MFM).

The church's founder, football fan Daniel Kolawole Olukoya, scoured the streets of poor areas in Lagos, Nigeria's teeming megacity of 20 million people, on the hunt for talent. Driving him on was a vision from God to guide young people away from what he said were "the vices of this world". "I hate it when the youths get involved in crime and drugs... just because

they have too much time to waste," he explained. The team rose quickly through the leagues and in 2014 won the Church World Cup in India, the same year they joined the top flight. Last season, they finished second in Nigeria and qualified for the African Champions League.

Footballing evangelists

Charity isn't the only aim of the church, which was founded in 1989 and now has hundreds of branches and millions of followers around the world. "Part of the idea is evangelism," said Olukoya, a smartly dressed 60-year-old whose every appearance is hailed by followers at his church that dominates the Yaba area of Lagos. "Most of the footballers were not Christians. Some of them were Muslims. But they joined us to become serious," he added.

Christianity and football have a long association in Nigeria and many other African countries, where it was introduced by Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries in the 19th century. "In its education mission, the church has always been very important in spreading football in schools," said David Goldblatt, author of "The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football".

The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries, like

other African churches who used football as a way to spread the Word, made a "smart move", he added. "If you want to speak to the youth of Africa, where else would you go?" But unlike many churches who talk a good game, MFM "has really done it. They done great and it's a miracle", he added. Players themselves aren't short of praise for their benefactor. The "Olukoya Boys" are fed and housed and earn up to \$2,500 a month—a small fortune in a country where many live on less than \$2 a day and the minimum wage is 18,000 naira (\$50.42) a month. Plus they're paid on time, which is often not the case elsewhere.

Chronic neglect

In return, MFM imposes strict rules on daily life: no alcohol, no drugs, no tattoos, no jewelry. The practice of what it calls "aggressive prayer"—"Amen!" and "Praise the Lord!"—is encouraged as much on the pitch as they are at church. "We try to be good ambassadors for the church and the country," said Jonathan Zikiye, a 26-year-old defender. The club doesn't have a sponsor to pay for salaries, kit or overseas trips. Instead, the church finances everything with what Olukoya calls his "modest means".

But in a country of 180 million people, where nearly

20 percent belong to a Pentecostal or Evangelical church, there's no shortage of cash. Donations come from collection plates and tithes, the equivalent of 10 percent of salary that church members are encouraged to pay every month. MFM FC's rise has been in stark contrast to other clubs in the Nigerian Professional Football League. Seventeen of the 20 sides are owned by state governments and sporting infrastructure has suffered from chronic neglect in recent years. "Teams have no stadium to train at, no home ground, or they're in a very bad state," said Austin Okon-Akpan, head of sport at Nigeria's private Channels Television.

Even defending champions Plateau United were forced to play matches in the African Champions League away from home because their stadium was not up to scratch. Lack of transparency in how clubs are run has put off sponsors from investing despite the obvious talent in Nigerian football, affecting results internationally. As a result, players and public alike only have eyes for Europe, especially the English Premier League. "There's no way I can play in another club of the league," said Emmanuel Chukwuka Onuwa, a promising 21-year-old midfielder. "After five seasons with MFM, if I have to leave, I want to go abroad." — AFP

Palestinians call for snap ICC probe into 'Israeli war crimes'

THE HAGUE: The Palestinian foreign minister yesterday called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) "to open an immediate investigation" into allegations of war crimes and apartheid against the Palestinian people. Amid rising tensions with Israel, Palestinian foreign minister Riyad Al-Maliki met for an hour with the ICC's chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda at the tribunal in The Hague, "to refer the situation in Palestine" to her office.

It was an "important and historic step" for the

Palestinian people "who have suffered for generations the consequences of crimes committed with impunity by Israeli officials," he told reporters afterwards. The ICC launched a preliminary probe into allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Israel and the Palestinian territories in 2015. And despite a visit to the region, it has yet to move to the next stage and open a full-blown investigation which could possibly lead to charges being brought.

Maliki said there was "insurmountable" evidence of crimes, adding that those "responsible ... must be held accountable for their actions without further delay". The meeting at the ICC comes after more than 60 Palestinians protesting the US decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to the disputed city of Jerusalem were killed by Israeli fire last week. Maliki said the Palestinian move was "due to the intensification of the rate and the severity of

the crimes against our people" including the targeting of "unarmed protesters in the Gaza Strip".

The Palestinian referral highlighted the issue of settlements, which the delegation termed in a statement "the single most dangerous threat to Palestinian lives and livelihoods". "Israel maintains, expands and protects the settlement regime by committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of apartheid against the Palestinian people," the statement added. Amid much controversy, the Palestinian Authority joined the ICC in January 2015 signing up to the Rome Statute which underpins the world's only permanent war crimes court.

Israel is not a member of the ICC however, and the Israeli foreign ministry yesterday said it "takes a severe view" of the referral, which it called "a cynical step without legal validity". "The ICC lacks jurisdiction over the Israeli-Palestinian issue, since Israel is not a member of

the court and because the Palestinian Authority is not a state," the Israeli ministry added in a statement. It called on Bensouda "not to yield to Palestinian pressure" and to deny "Palestinian efforts to politicize the court".

But rights groups urged the prosecutor to push forward with opening what would be a complicated full-blown investigation. "The recent killings in Gaza only underscore the importance of the ICC prosecutor acting to address the pervasive climate of impunity in Palestine," said Richard Dicker, director of the International Justice Program at Human Rights Watch. Bensouda vowed last week that she was watching the unrest in Gaza closely and would "take any action warranted" to prosecute crimes. "The violence must stop," she said, urging "all those concerned to refrain from further escalating this situation and the Israel Defense Forces to avoid excessive use of force." — AFP

Kuwait urged to cancel the...

Continued from Page 1

The report monitored a number of positive decisions issued during the reporting period. The decisions focused on exempting the violators of the residency law who want to get rid of fines and security procedures and exempting those who want to stay in the country from investigation by only paying their fines to settle their situation. That is in addition to creating a new automated system in the Department of Labor Relations, to specially receive the workers' complaints electronically and inform the worker and the employer of the complaints against them with the purpose of preventing malicious reports.

It also revolves around the mechanism of labor inspection, labor care, occupational safety, conditions for the transfer of migrant workers in the government sector to work in the civil sector, adoption by the Civil Service Council of controls for the use of migratory workers' expertise for the first time in jobs of doctors, pharmacists, support medical services and nursing. That is in addition to a first-time ruling by the Kuwaiti judiciary in the case of human trafficking against a citizen. It was also monitored that the Domestic Labor Department has cancelled the licenses of 8 offices of domestic labor and stopped the activity of 6 other offices.

On the other hand, a number of decisions that encircle the migrant labor in the country have been monitored, including the imposition of fees on remittances and the discussion of the implementation of Cabinet Decision No 1028 of 2014 on the adjustment of national employment rates on private sector employers besides the application of the decision of Kuwaitizing the governmental jobs instead of migrant workers and the accompanying layoffs, calls for Kuwaitizing other sectors and racist speeches against workers in the government sector.

The report devoted a special section to discuss the opportunities that local laws provide which necessarily lead to excesses and restrictions on migrant workers, and often lead to the exclusion or trafficking of workers. It also provided various observations on the sponsorship system and Law No 6 of 2010 in addition to Domestic Labor Law No 68 of 2015 in Kuwait. Since the beginning of this year, Kuwait Society for Human Rights has established a special unit to monitor and follow up the issues of migrant workers' rights in Kuwait, which aims to highlight employment issues and issue periodic analytical reports.

The establishment of the unit is a part of the project "Support for the legal protection of migrant workers in Kuwait" which is implemented by the Society in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. And that is considered a second phase of the project "Together" to educate migrant workers on their rights in Kuwait, which was implemented by the Society in cooperation with the Netherlands embassy in Kuwait.

A slice of Ramadan...

Continued from Page 1

Some questions as food for thought - will I become less of a person if I smile at and pray for the less fortunate, the needy and those whose paychecks are not as heavy as mine? Will I be termed a weak person if I forgive those who have hurt me - be it strangers or loved ones? Will I lose my wealth if I practice some charity and give alms? Will I lose my health if I practice forbearance and tolerance with everyone around me - at home and at work? Practice does make perfect! Make it your resolution to subscribe to just one of these adjectives and you will reap benefits galore.

My experience has taught me that mercy begins by opening oneself to those with whom one might strongly

Saudi urged not to turn Iraq into...

Continued from Page 1

think-tank, while welcoming the Saudi commitment to mainly Shiite Iraq. "If Riyadh tries to do too much too soon, it could become mired in bureaucracy and corrup-

disagree. Mercy doesn't end there, of course. It may begin with small acts of understanding, but can lead to life-changing experiences of love, peace and tolerance. And this ode is for those sisters and brothers who have Shakespeare on their bookshelf: - The quality of mercy is not strained.- It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven. - Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest: It blesseth him that gives and him that takes. - Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice.'

Courtesy of the TIES Center: the TIES Center aims at empower Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

tion - or even provoke an Iranian reaction," it said.

The ICG advised the Saudi government to help strengthen the Iraqi state and focus on economic engagement. "Efforts should focus on reconstruction, job creation and trade, with an eye toward balancing investment across the country," it said. It also urged Riyadh to consider steps "publicly recognizing Shiite religious practice as a school of Islam" and "quieting anti-Shiite rhetoric from Saudi Arabia-based clerics". ICG said that Tehran for its part "should encourage Iraq's efforts to diversify its regional alliances". — AFP

Sports

Capitals blank Lightning to force NHL playoff showdown

Equalize their best-of-seven Eastern Conference Final series

WASHINGTON: Washington's T.J. Oshie scored two goals and Braden Holtby made 24 saves as the Capitals blanked the Tampa Bay Lightning 3-0 on Monday, equalizing their best-of-seven Eastern Conference Final series at three triumphs each.

Devante Smith-Pelly added another goal as the host Capitals, who lost three games in a row after taking a 2-0 series lead, pushed the playoff matchup to the limit. "We were sure that if we came in and did what we had to do we would win it," Oshie said.

"Game seven is going to be an all-out war and we wouldn't have it any other way." The winner-take-all showdown to determine a berth in the Stanley Cup Final will be played today at Tampa. When the championship series begins next Monday, either the Lightning or Capitals will face the Vegas Golden Knights, a first-year expansion team trying to defy hometown casino odds of 500-1 by taking the trophy in its inaugural campaign. Vegas beat Winnipeg in the Western Conference final.

Holtby made the fifth playoff shutout of his career, and his first in 84 starts, to keep the Capitals in contention for their first trip to the final since 1998 as they try to hoist the trophy for the first time as well. "We just

said you only get a certain amount of chances and we could do something special here," Smith-Pelly said. "We went out and put it all on the line and I would say that was a perfect game."

Washington's first goal was set up when Tampa Bay's Braydon Coburn was whistled for hooking Smith-Pelly with 6:11 remaining in the second quarter.

Making the most of the extra-man situation, the Capitals seized the lead when Oshie took a pass from Nicklas Backstrom and blasted a shot past Lightning goaltender Andrei Vasilevskiy. "Once we scored that first goal we didn't give up our physical side of the game," Oshie said. "We kept pounding at them and played physical and that wears you down."

Oshie raced for a loose puck in the crease behind the Tampa Bay goalie in the final seconds of the second period but Lightning defender Brayden Point was able to knock the puck to the corner and away from the unguarded net.

Smith-Pelly netted an insurance goal for the Capitals with 9:58 remaining in the third period. Chandler Stephenson outraced a Tampa Bay defender down the rink to avoid an icing call, then slid the puck behind the net to Jay Beagle, who flicked it back out front where



WASHINGTON: Tyler Johnson #9 and J.T. Miller #10 of the Tampa Bay Lightning fall to the ice against Lars Eller #20 and Jay Beagle #83 of the Washington Capitals in Game Six of the Eastern Conference Finals during the 2018 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Capital One Arena on Monday in Washington, DC. — AFP

onrushing Smith-Pelly smacked it into the left corner for a 2-0 Washington advantage. "It was speed and physicality," Smith-Pelly said of the deciding factors. "We tried to work hard through 60 minutes."

The Lightning removed Vasilevskiy for an extra attacker in the final minutes but Oshie scored into the empty goal with 50 seconds remaining to secure the victory. — AFP

“We went out and put it all

Great victory for Real Madrid in Serbian capital

ISTANBUL: Real Madrid has become the champion team of the exciting Turkish Airlines Euro League Final Four 2018, following a decisive victory of 85-80 over its rival Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul at Belgrade's Stark Arena. This win also stands for the 10th EuroLeague Championship of the Spanish representative.

The Final Four came head to head in Europe's highest-level basketball championship over the weekend at the Stark Arena, Serbia's largest indoor arena. And the new champion Real Madrid was crowned as the victor on Sunday 20th May in the final stage of the Turkish Airlines EuroLeague.

Friday night saw the first games of the Final Four. Reigning champions Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul and Zalgiris Kaunas played the initial semi-final game of this year's tournament at 18.00 (local time) followed by CSKA Moscow and Real Madrid at 21.00. Losing teams of these matches, Zalgiris Kaunas and CSKA Moscow then faced each other for the third place game within today at 17.00 with the Championship Game taking place between Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul and Real Madrid at 20.00.

While Zalgiris Kaunas won the third place game 77-79 against CSKA Moscow after today's first game, Real Madrid won a decisive victory of 85-80 over its rival Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul at the end of the Championship game at Belgrade's Stark Arena. The champion won the match after recorded the following results:

- First period: FB 17-21 RM
- Second Period: FB 40-38 RM
- Third Period: FB 55-63 RM
- Fourth Period: FB 80-85 RM

As the home hub of Turkish Airlines, in 2017 Final Four, Istanbul has twice played host to the championship and for the 2018 Final Four, Serbia's capital was well placed to welcome the best in basketball. The evening culminated in Real Madrid triumphantly lifting the coveted Turkish Airlines EuroLeague 2018 trophy cheered on by the crowds and broadcast by more than 32 broadcasters across more than 175 countries.

Mr. Ilker Ayci, Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee, commenting on the exciting final between Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul and Real Madrid: "Belgrade provided a spectacular backdrop for another thrilling Turkish Airlines



EuroLeague Final Four, here in the Serbian capital for the first time. As Turkish Airlines would like to thank Belgrad for the warm hospitality that showed in last three days. The Final Four competed in Europe's most prominent and highest-level basketball championship with clear sportsmanship and energy. Heartfelt congratulations to the last champion Real Madrid and its successful rival Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul who turned this final game into an exciting feast."

At the awards ceremony at the Palace of Serbia on 19 May, five of the biggest stars in the 2017-18 competition were announced: Nick Calathes of Panathinaikos Superfoods Athens, Nando De Colo of CSKA Moscow, Luka Doncic of Real Madrid, Tornike Shengelia of KIROLBET Baskonia Vitoria Gasteiz, and Jan Vesely of Fenerbahce Dogus Istanbul. In addition, the EuroLeague MVP, Luka Doncic of Real Madrid was awarded 1,000,000 Miles & Smiles Travel miles from the advantageous FFP of Turkish Airlines.

As being sponsored by Turkish Airlines, the only airline that flies to more countries and international destinations in the world, Final Four championship again offered sports lovers around another unique environment and experience. In the true spirit of Turkish Airlines, 'delightfully different' activities were performed by teams from Turkish Airlines and EuroLeague. This was also an opportunity to continue with initiatives carried out by OneTeam, EuroLeague's corporate social responsibility program which was created with the Turkish flag carrier airline's support in 2012.

The EuroLeague Basketball was established in 2000 as the most important basketball competition in Europe. 2010 saw Turkish Airlines become the official title sponsor of the championship as well as sponsor of the final round. Turkish Airlines' commitment to the game continues, and sponsorship of the EuroLeague Basketball will proceed to run for the two more years until 2020.

Noguera bets on his Pumas future with new pack

LONDON: Lucas Noguera Paz's decision to leave the Jaguares Super Rugby team and join Bath in the English Premiership might seem counter-productive considering the ban on foreign-based players representing Argentina.

A proud Puma since his debut as a 20-year-old in 2014, prop Noguera is no different from most Argentine rugby players whose dream is to wear the light blue and white hooped shirt of their country.

Noguera says he does want to add to his 43 caps but felt he needed a change in order to improve his game and be ready to give more to the Pumas later in his career.

"I had a place in the Jaguares and luckily in the Pumas too and I knew that playing abroad, whatever my form, the doors to the Pumas would be closed to me," Noguera told Reuters in an interview.

"I have no regrets, I knew the consequences, but I thought that if ever I had the chance of returning to the national team, if the doors opened for me I would want that and could give more to the team.

"It's a long term investment I'm sure will bear its fruit." A recall is not an immediate possibility, although the Argentine Rugby Union (UAR) is considering lifting the ban on overseas-based players nearer the 2019 World Cup.

Noguera, who moved to Bath in January, said he decided to quit the Jaguares because he had completed a cycle within a UAR programme which aims at nurturing a home-based Super Rugby franchise made up of 40 odd players as a feeder for the Pumas.

"I felt that to keep learning I had to take another path, seek another kind of rugby and learn how to become a part of another team," said Noguera, who is from the northwestern Argentine rugby stronghold of Tucuman.

"I'm at a stage where I'm building

my career. I'm 24, if I had left at 28 or 30, it wouldn't be entirely for sporting reasons."

Noguera, who is not far off completing a medical degree, is earning considerably more in England and able to continue his studies at local universities but said his decision to move was based solely on his desire to play English rugby.

"It's a more organised game and very physical with a lot of competition in the scrum. For my position, it's the kind of rugby that will help me grow," said the loosehead prop.

"If I went to another Super Rugby club I'd still play the same tournament and I'm not sure how much I could improve. "Without wanting to say one game is better than the other, they are different kinds of rugby, one is more dynamic but the other is a lot more physical.

"That means it can be slower but you fight for every ball ... there is constant rucking, the scrum is not just a platform to launch attacks, they are all contested.

"I'm not a heavy prop," added Noguera, who is 1.79 metres tall and weighs 108 kg. "So I thought that in England I could improve physically."

JAGUARES IMPROVING

The Jaguares, meanwhile, have made a significant breakthrough in their third season in Super Rugby, beating South Africa's Bulls 54-24 in Buenos Aires on Saturday to consolidate on a run of four wins in Australia and New Zealand.

Noguera said the hard work put in by the team in adapting to the demands of Super Rugby since they joined in 2016 was bearing fruit.

"It's an excellent tournament with the best teams in the world and I enjoyed it," he said. "It's a very dynamic tournament, shorter than the Premiership, not many results went our way but we managed to raise the standard of the team. — Reuters

Williams head to Monaco with more pain in prospect

LONDON: It has been 15 years since Williams last won in Monaco, with Juan Pablo Montoya in 2003 after team mate Ralf Schumacher started from pole position, but scoring even a point would be something this weekend.

Once a dominant team of champions, with nine constructors' crowns and 114 grand prix wins, Williams return to the principality as tail-enders-last overall and with just four points from five races.

While that is better than 2013, when Williams failed

to score in the opening nine races and ended the campaign with a mere five points, the slump has still been a shock to the system and there seems to be no quick fix. At Spain's Circuit de Catalunya the weekend before last, Russian rookie Sergey Sirotkin was last of those still running at the chequered flag while Canadian team mate Lance Stroll was 11th of 14.

Sirotkin has yet to open his account while all four points to date were produced by Stroll in one race in Azerbaijan last month. Processional Monaco offers little for the team that took Alan Jones, Keke Rosberg, Nelson Piquet, Nigel Mansell, Alain Prost, Damon Hill and Jacques Villeneuve to titles-to get too excited about.

"I think what we've seen is that the issues we have are better and worse at different circuits," said technical head Paddy Lowe after the race in Barcelona, a track he described as particularly unforgiving. "Monaco will be another thing altogether. I'm not

going to predict where that lands, we'll have to see."

NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Williams clambered back to finish third overall in 2014 and 2015, impressive for a privately-owned family team operating on a far smaller budget than the manufacturers, and have been fifth for the past two years.

But they have plenty to work on before they can start climbing back up the table again, with the Mercedes-powered car unbalanced and hard to handle. The lack of performance, despite having the best engines available, is also likely to have a commercial impact. Title sponsors Martini have already announced they are off at the end of the year.

"We all carry responsibility. The car isn't good enough, it's not what it should be," said Lowe in Barcelona. "There are some issues with it, which fortunately we think we understand and we're very busy

doing a lot of work to fix those issues.

"We're not writing off this season," he added. While Lowe was reluctant to give details, the car appears to be suffering an aerodynamic issue with the rear floor. Lowe said that the problems were apparent right from the start of testing in March, with the drivers—the sport's youngest and least experienced line-up—unable to drive it anywhere near the limit.

"You see the pace is really quite bad," said Lowe. "There are many things that are good about the car and they are unable to show themselves because the car is let down by one particular aspect," said the Briton.

"We have put in place...a recovery programme to bring back the performance, bring back the car to the level at which we intended to operate and that programme is timed up to the mid-season point. "We just lost our way in some critical areas which we now understand." — Reuters

Sports

Juan Soto three-run homer trigger Nationals to a 10-2 win over Padres

New York slugged five home runs to crush Texas

WASHINGTON: Nineteen-year-old Juan Soto, the youngest player in the major leagues since the 2012 season, hit a three-run homer in the first at-bat of his first big league start Monday night to trigger the Washington Nationals to a 10-2 win over the visiting San Diego Padres. Soto drove the first pitch he saw from left-handed Padres starter Robbie Erlin (1-3) into the seats in left-center to give the Nationals a 3-0 lead. His homer, which ignited a five-run second inning for Washington, was one of four the Nationals hit off Erlin and reliever Bryan Mitchell. Mark Reynolds hit solo home runs to lead off the third and seventh inning, respectively. Bryce Harper homered to lead off the fifth. The win snapped both the Padres' three-game winning streak and the Nationals' three-game losing streak.

YANKEES 10, RANGERS 5

Rookie Gleyber Torres recorded his first career multi-homer game as visiting New York slugged five home runs in crushing Texas. Torres homered twice off Bartolo Colon (2-2), whose major league debut occurred on April 4, 1997, when the second baseman was less than 4 months old. It also was the 12th multi-homer game by a Yankee this season and Torres' fifth and sixth homers since making his major league debut on April 22. The Yankees won for the 22nd time in 26 games by hitting at least four homers in a third straight game for the first time in team history. Neil Walker, Aaron Judge and Aaron Hicks provided the other blasts.

CARDINALS 6, ROYALS 0

Tyler O'Neill homered for the third straight game and Miles Mikolas hurled his first career shutout as host St. Louis blanked hapless Kansas City. In becoming the first Cardinal pitcher to start 6-0 since Allen Watson did it 25 years ago, Mikolas allowed only four hits and walked one while fanning nine. Mikolas, who threw 77 of his 109 pitches for strikes, has issued only six walks in 60 1/3 innings over nine starts. O'Neill, who cracked his first big league homer on Saturday and then walloped his second on Sunday, capped a four-run third inning with a towering three-run shot into the St. Louis bullpen in right-center field. The 388-foot blast scored Jose Martinez and Marcell

Ozuna, with Ozuna ending an 0-for-23 skid on an RBI single prior.

ROCKIES 2, DODGERS 1

Carlos Gonzalez's infield single in the eighth inning brought home the go-ahead run as visiting Colorado edged Los Angeles to move into sole possession of first place in the National League West. Gonzalez's slow bouncer up the middle was picked up by Dodgers second baseman Chase Utley, but the throw to first base was late and off line, allowing Tony Wolters to score from third base with two outs. The Rockies' victory came in the first meeting of the year between the division rivals. The Dodgers managed just three hits as they saw their four-game win streak come to an end at the start of a season-long 10-game, 11-day homestand. Reliever Pedro Baez (1-3) took the loss after pitching two-thirds of an inning.

PHILLIES 3, BRAVES 0

Nick Pivetta pitched seven shutout innings, Aaron Altherr and Nick Williams each homered and Philadelphia opened an important three-game series with a shutout victory over visiting Atlanta. Pivetta (4-2) gave up four hits, struck out seven and walked just one batter after throwing 107 pitches, 72 for strikes. Hector Neris earned the save after throwing a scoreless ninth, and Williams and Odubel Herrera each had two hits apiece for the Phillies. Braves starter Mike Foltynewicz (3-3) pitched six solid innings, allowing only one earned run and six hits while striking out five. The Braves managed just five hits—all singles—and no player had more than one.

Pivetta pitched seven SO innings



Williams and Odubel Herrera each had two hits apiece for the Phillies. Braves starter Mike Foltynewicz (3-3) pitched six solid innings, allowing only one earned run and six hits while striking out five. The Braves managed just five hits—all singles—and no player had more than one.

BREWERS 4, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Travis Shaw, Domingo Santana and Lorenzo Cain homered and right-hander Chase Anderson won in his return from the disabled list as host Milwaukee extended Arizona's slide. Shaw's two-run homer in the first inning gave the Brewers a lead they never lost, and Anderson (4-3) gave up three hits in six innings in his first start since May 6 after missing time with an illness. Jake Lamb homered and walked twice for the Diamondbacks, who have lost five in a row and 11 of 12. Arizona has scored 24 runs in the last 11 games—one run in five games and two in four others.



WASHINGTON: Juan Soto #22 and Bryce Harper #34 of the Washington Nationals celebrate after a 10-2 victory against the San Diego Padres at Nationals Park on Monday in Washington. — AFP

METS 2, MARLINS 0

Jason Vargas finally earned his first win with New York, twirling five solid innings and combining with five relievers on a five-hit shutout of visiting Miami. Vargas (1-3), who went 0-2 with a 12.19 ERA in two starts with the Mets in 2007 and entered Monday 0-3 with a 13.86 ERA in three starts this season, allowed two hits and one walk while striking out seven. He retired the first nine batters before Martin Prado singled leading off the fourth. The Marlins mounted their biggest threat in the sixth, when Paul Sewald and Jerry Blevins combined to load the bases with two outs. But AJ Ramos struck out pinch hitter Derek Dietrich and then worked a hitless seventh.

ORIOLES 3, WHITE SOX 2

Manny Machado, Mark Trumbo and Adam Jones hit home runs and left fielder Trey Mancini helped protect a narrow lead by throwing out two baserunners in the same inning, lifting Baltimore past host Chicago. Machado hit his 15th home run of the season in the fourth inning and Trumbo added his second in the fifth,

staking Baltimore to a 2-0 lead. The White Sox threatened to erase the deficit, and perhaps even go ahead, in the bottom of the fifth, only to be denied by Mancini. Adam Engel hit a one-out single, but was gunned down trying to stretch it into a double by Mancini. Yoan Moncada then walked and Yolmer Sanchez singled before Jose Abreu doubled to left field to get the White Sox within 2-1. Sanchez also tried to score on the play and was thrown out by Mancini, allowing the Orioles to retain the lead.

TWINS 4, TIGERS 2

Jose Berrios pitched eight strong innings, Logan Morrison drew a bases-loaded walk to bring in the go-ahead run and host Minnesota doubled up Detroit. Berrios (5-4) held the Tigers to two runs on three hits in eight innings while walking two and striking out nine. He didn't allow a hit after the third inning. Fernando Rodney collected his 10th save. Max Kepler had a two-run double to lead the Twins offense. Robbie Grossman scored a run and knocked in another. Nicholas Castellanos led the Tigers with a solo homer and run-scoring single. — Reuters

India flexes IPL muscle in hunt for more TV riches

NEW DELHI: The head of the multi-billion dollar Indian Premier League says the glitzy tournament is taking aim at football and basketball's heartlands as India strengthens its role as world cricket's financial powerhouse.

The high-octane Twenty20 extravaganza which reaches the climax of its 11th season this week is doing "wonderfully well", IPL chairman Rajeev Shukla told AFP as he set out the league's global ambitions.

Bolstered by a five-year \$2.55-billion broadcast deal signed last year with Rupert Murdoch's Star, the IPL is one of the wealthiest leagues in any sport, helping to consolidate further India's dominance of world cricket.

The South Asian giant contributes 70 percent of International Cricket Council's revenues. The IPL boss is now eyeing viewers and earnings at the level of global broadcast giants such as football's English Premier League (EPL) and America's National Basketball Association (NBA).

"We are not able to figure out where it (broadcast rights and sponsorship) will peak... but I think after the EPL, this is the most important league. It can match any league," said Shukla, a veteran politician and cricket administrator. The first step will be to expand the IPL market brand.

'A TOUCH OF BOLLYWOOD'

"In cities where we don't host matches, we organise fan parks where we invite people to watch the match on the big screen. So 20,000-30,000 people are coming to the fan parks," the IPL boss said.

"Now we are planning to take it overseas, to

places like Dubai, the UK and also America." There is some catching up to do. The IPL's 60 games over seven weeks earn about \$8.5 million per game in television revenues, just in India. According to industry figures, each EPL football match earns more than \$11 million in the UK, with millions more from foreign broadcast right.

An average EPL match is watched by more than 12 million people around the world. The 2017 IPL final drew almost 40 million viewers—in a country of 1.25 billion population, according to broadcasting surveys.

Neither can compete with the National Football League (NFL) in the United States which regularly tops 20 million viewers per match. What sets the IPL apart, however, is its rapid rise over the past decade, according to Aaron Smith, a professor of sports business at Loughborough University in Britain.

"The IPL works so well because it was devised as a complete marketing ecosystem," he said. Smith called it "the perfect storm of sporting entertainment with elements of the Champions League, professional wrestling, and a touch of Bollywood."

The IPL has acquired "unprecedented market reach" using star players, teams spread across India, and a slick television package, he added. Its chairman is confident the number of viewers will keep growing.

"The fan following and the viewers are increasing every year. In terms of revenue, it's also doing wonderfully well," Shukla said. The IPL was broadcast in Australia and New Zealand for the first time this year by Fox Sports, which-like Star—is a Murdoch-owned company. "Now we are showing IPL throughout the world," said Shukla.

NEED TO INNOVATE

India was a cricketing powerhouse even before the launch of the IPL and the glamour and riches of the tournament have boosted that even further. But not all are happy about it. An International Cricket Council report called the sport's reliance on Indian money a "weakness",

increase substantially despite dismal results on the field last year.

"Sri Lanka Cricket raised the wages of national players by 34 percent for the period of 2018/19, following strong results achieved during the concluded financial year," it said in a statement.

It did not give a breakdown of individual salaries, but they are known to be among the highest paid individuals in Sri Lanka. Last week, SLC announced a record annual profit of 2.12 billion rupees (\$14 million) for 2017, 33 times what it made the year before.

Revenues of six billion rupees were roughly



Indian Premier League (IPL) Chairman Rajeev Shukla

upsetting India's cricket authorities.

The South Asian nation's influence on world cricket was discussed during talks between the ICC and the Board of Control for Cricket in India last Thursday. The Indian cricket board's power was illustrated last year when it protested and got its share of ICC revenues increased from \$293 million to \$405 million.

But according to sports marketing expert Smith, the IPL's ability to sustain India's financial power will depend on whether "notoriously fickle audiences" stick with Twenty20. In comparison, Test cricket or the EPL or the NBA "command a level of loyalty and meaning unmatched by any other kind of product ever invented," said Smith.

"Their authenticity is sovereign so they do not have to worry about brand fatigue." "The IPL has to keep energising... audiences with new and novel options and innovations," he added. The IPL could "peak and fade over time," Smith warned, "but in the meantime, it is a marketing triumph that the chairman has good reason to boast about." — AFP

double 2016 figures. Official sources attributed the sharp profit rise to a packed 2017 calendar which featured home series against Bangladesh, India and Zimbabwe.

Broadcasting earnings from an India tour were thought to be a major contributor. The cash bonanza was the only good news from a woeful spell for Sri Lanka cricket, with the islanders enduring their worst year on the pitch since winning the World Cup in 1996.

They suffered a series defeat against India, lost a home one-day series to bottom ranked Zimbabwe and crashed out of the Champions Trophy early. — AFP

Yuvraj struggles on as the magic wanes

NEW DELHI: Few things are more painful than watching an ageing athlete falter as they try to summon up the old magic and Yuvraj Singh's fans have endured a shared agony over the course of this year's Indian Premier League (IPL).

When India belatedly embraced Twenty20 cricket 12 years ago, Yuvraj's rise to greatness in the limited-overs format appeared just a matter of time.

After all, few could hit the cricket ball as cleanly and as far as the southpaw did. And although Kevin Pietersen once ridiculed him as a "pie-chucker", Yuvraj's brand of left-arm spin was more than handy.

When not doing either, Yuvraj torched the turf in the point region with an infectious zeal, a rare quality in an Indian squad not then known for their agility. He was a key cog in India's World Twenty20 triumph in South Africa in 2007 and was adjudged player-of-the-tournament in the team's victorious 50-over World Cup triumph four years later.

He was unable to replicate that form in the IPL, though, and his stints with Kings XI Punjab, Pune Warriors, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Daredevils have been underwhelming.

Back at the team where he started his IPL career, Yuvraj has endured a particularly torrid tournament this year - alternating between warming the bench and being shuffled around the batting order at Punjab.

"He is a legend in Indian cricket," Punjab head coach Brad Hodge said on Saturday. "But we all know sooner or later good things, good times always have to come to an end. But when that is (for Yuvraj), I am not the person to answer."

Time seemed to have robbed Yuvraj of his touch and the 36-year-old has scratched around for 65 runs from six innings, while going wicketless with the ball. The spectacular flourish that became his trademark has been replaced by tentative jabs at the ball, or fatal pre-determined shots.

For someone who wielded a willow that appeared to have sweet-spots wherever the ball made contact, Yuvraj struggled to find the middle of the bat against modest bowlers in less demanding circumstances.

His laboured batting was reminiscent of his struggle in the final of the 2014 World Twenty20 against Sri Lanka which, many believe, cost India the title. Yuvraj was not even picked for Sunday's final group match against Chennai Super Kings, which Punjab lost to finish seventh in the eight-team league.

His repeated failures to roll back the years have evoked mixed emotions in cricket-mad India. On social media, his detractors mock his paunch, while his fans and conspiracy theorists claimed he never had the backing of Punjab skipper Ravichandran Ashwin.

Others still found it just too painful to watch the struggle of a batsman who smashed six sixes in a Stuart Broad over in the 2007 World Twenty20, and pleaded with him to hang up his bat.

The all-rounder, who played the last of his 304 one-day internationals last year, thinks he might just have another year in him. "I've been playing international cricket since 2000. It has been almost 17-18 years on and off. So, I will definitely take a call after 2019," he said last month. — Reuters

S Lanka hikes cricket wages by 34 percent

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's cricket board yesterday increased wages for national players by more than a third after making record profits in 2017. A total of 33 players under contract to Sri Lanka Cricket will also see match fees

Sports

Pellegrini targets attacking revolution at West Ham

Pellegrini led City to the Premier League title in 2014

LONDON: Manuel Pellegrini has promised to unleash an attacking revolution at West Ham after the Chilean was named as the Premier League club's new manager yesterday. Former Manchester City boss Pellegrini left his role with Hebei China Fortune over the weekend and flew to London to seal his return to the English top-flight on a three-year contract.

The Hammers opted not to keep David Moyes after his short-term contract ended following the final game of a Premier League season which saw West Ham pull away from the relegation zone and finish 13th under the Scot.

Pellegrini led City to the Premier League title in 2014, reached the Champions League semi-finals in 2016 and also won two League Cups during his three-year spell in Manchester. Winning the title with West Ham might be a bridge too far, but the 64-year-old has set his sights on producing an entertaining team capable of exciting fans frustrated by their club's struggles in recent years.

"I think that West Ham had a difficult season last season and I hope that next season we are going to play football that will delight the fans," Pellegrini said. "I always play attacking football and we must try to reach important targets in the season."

Angry about West Ham's move from their historic Upton Park stadium to the London Stadium two years ago, supporters launched furious protests against co-owners David

Gold and David Sullivan during a home defeat against Burnley, invading the pitch and throwing missiles at the directors' box.

Pellegrini hopes he can unify the club by signing players who can implement his preferred brand of football. "I think West Ham has a very good team. I know all of the players and I saw most of the games that they played last season," Pellegrini said.

"So I am sure that, with the players we have in this moment in the squad, and bring-

in all competitions in the 2013-14 season-as crucial to his chances of ushering in a new era of success at the London Stadium.

"He is one of the world's most respected football coaches and we look forward to working with him," Sullivan said. "It was important that we appointed someone with knowledge and experience of the Premier League, who already has an understanding-not only of the teams and players we face-but of West Ham United and our ambitions.

"Manuel brings a reputation for attacking football and getting the best out of his players. We believe he will attract new talent to the London Stadium as well as improving the current squad."

Pellegrini coached at Villarreal, Real Madrid and Malaga in Spain. In his lone season at Madrid in 2009-10, Pellegrini failed to win a trophy and was sacked to make way for Jose Mourinho's arrival after finishing second to Barcelona in La Liga.

Pellegrini was in charge when Real signed Cristiano Ronaldo, Karim Benzema and Xabi Alonso, but he blamed the club's obsession with superstars for stopping him building a cohesive team. He left City in June 2016, to be succeeded by Pep Guardiola, but was soon back in work at Hebei. Despite being under contract through to the end of 2018 and with a reported release clause of \$7 million, Hebei confirmed on Saturday that Pellegrini had left his role. — AFP

“I think West Ham has a very good team”

ing maybe another four or five players in, we are going to have a strong team. "I am excited about this project. I know that this league is very good and it's not easy to do it. "But I think that working all together with the owners, the technical staff and the fans, we have an important power and can think about reaching important targets for the season."

Sullivan hailed Pellegrini's track record with City-where his team scored 151 goals



SWANSEA: File photo taken on May 15, 2016 Manchester City's Chilean manager Manuel Pellegrini waves to supporters after the English Premier League football match between Swansea City and Manchester City at The Liberty Stadium. Pellegrini has signed a three-year contract to become West Ham's new manager, a statement said yesterday. — AFP

KIB sponsors Al-Roudan's Ramadan indoor soccer tourney

KUWAIT: Following the success of previous years, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced its sponsorship of the 2018 Late Abdullah Mishari Al-Roudan's Ramadan Indoor Football Tournament. In addition to sponsoring this year's event, the Bank will also participate in this annual Ramadan tournament with a team of highly-skilled, professional football players who will compete for the title as the tournament's champions.

KIB's sponsorship of this tournament comes as part of the event's immense popularity and fan base all over the country. Accordingly, the tournament is one of the most highly anticipated events taking place in the sports community every year, as football is considered one of the most beloved sports amongst youth across the nation and the globe.

On his part, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "Our sponsorship of this thrilling tournament has definitely earned its place amongst our series of Ramadan activities and initiatives. This year, we are not only participating in the tournament, as our support has now extended further to sponsoring the event. Of course, this falls in line with our role as active players in the community. As a national institution, KIB continues to support youth participation in sports activities, establishing itself through its encompassing social responsibility program and its new strategic direction as a true 'Bank for Life' in many aspects."



Najia also added that the KIB team is now in the lead following its victory over the National Guard football team. During its first match, the KIB football team demonstrated remarkable sportsmanship which was enjoyed by the large crowd of fans. The Bank is currently preparing for its next match which will be played against Hamada Club.

KIB remains dedicated to participating in this tournament with its own football team. Over the years, KIB's football team has managed to time and time again achieve great results and reach the finals: all of which was made possible through its belief in fair, honest

competition between players, thereby encouraging enthusiasm, athleticism, and promoting a sense of team spirit. Additionally, the tournament is a great opportunity for employees to improve their physical fitness, as they are required to follow a strict healthy lifestyle and diet, boosting their efficiency and productivity.

It is worth noting that KIB has always sought to actively support national activities and participate in sports-related initiatives that serve youth and diverse segments of the local community. The Bank's new strategic direction establishes it as a partner in every aspect of a person's life.

glamorous team for the continent's biggest prize. "They were a good side in '81 but they weren't what they are now," McDermott said. "We weren't afraid of them, the opposite in fact. We'd been in the final a few times, knew what it was about. They were the inexperienced ones."

Liverpool's victory meant the European Cup sat in an English trophy cabinet for a fifth year in a row, just as it will be a fifth consecutive success for Spain if Real triumph on Saturday.

'LONGEST WEEK OF YOUR LIFE'

Liverpool had finished fifth in the league too, after ending with a 1-0 win over 12th-placed Manchester City, and there were eight days to wait before the final. "The build-up is unbelievable but it's frustrating as hell," McDermott said. "One year we even went to Israel for a holiday because as the players will be finding out now, it's the longest week of your life." Some tickets for the match in Kiev are selling for more than 10,000 pounds each, with Real Madrid and Liverpool fans allocated just over 33,000 of the 63,000 capacity.

Tickets in 1981 cost 90 francs, the equivalent of around 10 pounds today, but they were just as hard to come by. "I remember fans coming up to me in the street in Liverpool and they'd ask in their Scouse accent, 'have you got any spares?'" McDermott said. "A couple of the younger lads thought they were asking for Spurs and had the wrong team. It's all you'd hear for days."

Liverpool's players flew to France on Aer Lingus, the team's lucky airline, with family, friends and journalists packed into the back. Bob Paisley, the coach, sat at the front. "He wasn't much of a talker-just go out and enjoy



Terry McDermott

it' he'd say," McDermott recalled, putting on his best Durham accent. "And we did, three times."

So what advice would Paisley have given for facing a player like Ronaldo? "Oh he wouldn't have worried much about him," McDermott said. "He would have talked about his weaknesses - 'he never cuts inside, never uses his left foot', that sort of thing. But most of all he'd just make you believe you could do it."

Iran primed for attempt to break group stage hoodoo

HONG KONG: The stability and pragmatism of Carlos Queiroz's seven-year reign has firmly established Iran's as Asia's number one team, but the nation will go to the World Cup hoping to advance for the first time to the knockout phase.

Queiroz's side face a daunting task after being drawn to take on Morocco, Spain and Portugal. However, Team Melli represent the Asian Football Confederation's best hope of a successful 2018 finals.

Iran will be appearing at the World Cup for a fifth time and on each of their four previous visits-in 1978, 1998, 2006 and 2014 - they were unable to advance beyond the group phase. But Queiroz, who took charge in April 2011, has long targeted a run that would see the country progress for the first time and has worked hard to encourage the authorities in Iran to give him the tools required to achieve that goal.

Queiroz's main concern has been the disparity in the fitness between those in his squad playing in Iran and those featuring overseas, with the country's foreign-based players key to hopes of success. Principal among the weapons at Queiroz's disposal is Rubin Kazan striker

Sardar Azmoun, a forward in the mould of Iranian great Ali Daei whose goals were instrumental in Iran becoming the first Asian nation to qualify for the finals.

Azmoun is backed up by the pace and trickery of Alireza Jahanbakhsh, who goes to Russia off the back of an impressive season for AZ Alkmaar in the Eredivisie, while Qatar-based striker Mehdi Taremi adds another dimension to the attack.

Iran qualified for the World Cup having conceded only twice in the final phase and both of those goals came against Syria after their spot in the finals had already been secured.

That 2-2 draw at the Azadi Stadium marked the first time Queiroz's team had allowed the opposition to score in a competitive game since a 3-1 win over Turkmenistan in November 2015, a run stretching back 13 matches and almost 22 months.

Iran will need players such as central defender Morteza Pournajafi and highly-rated defensive midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi to be at the top of their game if they are to achieve their dream. — Reuters

'KLOPP'S DIFFERENT'

Perhaps Jurgen Klopp will be saying something similar to Trent Alexander-Arnold in Kiev on Saturday evening, although restraint is not quite the German's style. "They're two great managers but this boy now is a bit different," McDermott said. "He's inspirational, the way he kicks every ball, makes every tackle. Paisley used to sit in the stand and watch with the chairman." Paisley was disgruntled before kick-off, as a sponsoring mix-up meant UEFA officials came into Liverpool's changing room and told the players to cover up the Umbro badge on their kits.

"There we were, moments before the biggest game in football, sticking elastoplasts on each other's shirts," McDermott said. "A few of the lads said, 'I'm not doing that' - but they said we wouldn't be allowed to play. A few of us took them off on the pitch."

Kennedy's goal, an angled shot rifled into the far corner, settled a scruffy match, but that did nothing to dampen Liverpool's celebrations, which began in Paris' Moulin Rouge and ended in St George's Square in Liverpool. "We had a lot of beers and some of the lads went to the Moulin Rouge, most of them didn't get back until six or seven in the morning," McDermott said. "We got off the plane and there were coaches on the tarmac waiting to take us to St George's Square where all the fans were waiting. "I've never seen anything like it and I never will again." Except, 37 years later, he hopes Liverpool's current crop can pull off a repeat.

"I don't care about Real Madrid, I'm convinced if Liverpool play well, they'll win," McDermott said. "It's there for the winning in my opinion. It's their turn." —AFP

McDermott urges Liverpool to draw on spirit of '81

MADRID: When Liverpool last beat Real Madrid to win the European Cup, Terry McDermott was the tournament's top scorer and neither Cristiano Ronaldo nor Mohamed Salah were even born. The 1981 final at the Parc des Princes in Paris, decided by Alan Kennedy's late goal, earned Liverpool a third European crown in five seasons, at around the midway point of the club's most dominant era. McDermott played in all three finals, scoring the winner in the first, against Borussia Monchengladbach in 1977, and finishing the last as the joint highest scorer in the competition, on six with team-mate Graeme Souness and Karl-Heinz Rummenigge of Bayern Munich.

"I got a hat-trick in the first game against a Finnish team, Oulun Palloseura," McDermott said, in an exclusive interview with AFP. "That certainly helped." Yesterday, the former box-to-box midfielder, who grew up a stone's throw away from Liverpool's Anfield stadium, put his three trophies up for sale at a London auction. They were expected to fetch around £15,000 (\$20,200, 17,100 euros) each.

"I've thought about it for a while," McDermott said. "My three kids are doing fine but they can put it into a house or pay off the mortgage." The memories, however, remain of when Liverpool last played Europe's most

25 Capitals blank Lightning to force NHL playoff showdown



26 Juan Soto three-run homer trigger Nationals to a 10-2 win over Padres



27 Pellegrini targets attacking revolution at West Ham



LeBron scores 44 to lead Cavaliers

James adds more records to his amazing NBA legacy



CLEVELAND: Tristan Thompson #13 of the Cleveland Cavaliers goes to the basket against the Boston Celtics during Game Four of the Eastern Conference Finals of the 2018 NBA Playoffs on Monday at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, Ohio. —AFP

WASHINGTON: LeBron James scored 44 points, adding more records to his amazing NBA legacy, and powered the Cleveland Cavaliers over Boston 111-102 Monday, equalizing their Eastern Conference final at two wins each.

The 33-year-old superstar made 17-of-28 shots from the floor, 1-of-4 from 3-point range, and 9-of-13 free throws while contributing five rebounds, three assists and two steals to spark a crucial home triumph.

"I've just put a lot of work in," said James of his point production. "The Man Above has given me some abilities I try to take advantage of."

The best-of-seven showdown, level at 2-2, continues today at Boston, where the Celtics are undefeated in these playoffs, with game six on Friday in Cleveland, where the Cavs have won seven in a row.

"There's no love in there if you're not wearing green," James said of Boston. "If we play like we did in (games) three and four, I think we'll have a good shot."

The series winner will face either season wins leader

Houston or defending champion Golden State in the NBA Finals starting May 31.

James seeks his eighth consecutive trip to the NBA Finals and fourth with the Cavaliers.

In unleashing his sixth 40-point performance of this year's playoffs, the most such efforts in any year since Allen Iverson's six in 2001, James rose to second on the all-time 40 or more playoff game list, passing NBA legend Jerry West with his 21st such total.

And with his sixth basket of the night, James passed the old mark for career playoff field goals of 2,356 by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

"Any time I'm in the same breath with the greats, it's just humbling," James said. "I think it's pretty cool."

CAVALIERS DOMINATE EARLY

The Celtics outscored the Cavs in each of the first three quarters but never managed to overcome Cleveland's ferocious start. James had five points in a 10-0 run that gave the Cavs a 19-10 edge on the way to

a 34-18 lead after the first quarter, Cleveland closing the period on a 13-3 run and the Celtics missing three dunks in the opening 12 minutes. "Once we settled down after the first we played much better. I don't think they were doing anything different," Celtics forward Al Horford said. "We have to execute better. It's much harder on the road."

James scored 22 points on 8-of-11 shooting in the first half and Kyle Korver added 14 points off the bench, all in the first half, as Cleveland led by as many as 19 points and opened a 68-53 half-time advantage.

"He's the best in the game at evaluating the game and figuring out what he wants and where he wants it," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said of James. "You have to make it as tough on him as possible."

Although the Celtics trimmed the deficit to 89-76 entering the fourth quarter and made a charge within eight, the rally was too little and too late.

"We were a lot better defensively, making them take contested shots, make the extra pass," James said. "We

have to have the same mindset we had the past two games. If our mind is there, we have what it takes to be victorious."

TURNOVERS DEADLY FOR CAVS

Tristan Thompson added 13 points and 12 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who need to win once at Boston to advance. "They hit us in the mouth. We struck back," Thompson said. "The real test is how we play in Boston." Cavs coach Tyrone Lue hopes it won't match Monday's 18 turnovers, twice as many as the Celtics. "Turning the basketball over has been killing us in this series," Lue said. "We like what we're doing defensively holding them to 41 percent (shooting). We just have to take better care of the ball."

Jaylen Brown led Boston with 25 points while Jason Tatum netted 17, Terry Rozier contributed 16 points and 11 assists and Horford added 15 points. "Right now we're fighting for our playoff lives," Horford said. "We have a big challenge." — AFP

Spurs striker Kane to skipper England in Russia

LONDON: Striker Harry Kane will wear the captain's armband for England at next month's World Cup, ending speculation about who would lead Gareth Southgate's squad in Russia. The announcement was made in a video published on Twitter in which Southgate said Tottenham Hotspur's Kane had "outstanding leadership" qualities.

England's last full-time captain was Wayne Rooney but the armband has been worn by several players since the former

Manchester United forward lost his place in the squad. Southgate has often played down the significance of the position, preferring to nurture a collective leadership within the team, but Kane will be the figurehead as England go into their 15th World Cup.

Kane, who scored 30 Premier League goals for Tottenham this past season, has 23 caps for England and netted 12 times. "For me the key for a captain is that you set the tone every day in everything that we do, the way we train, the way we prepare and the professionalism towards the task," Southgate said.

"Harry is an exemplary model of that. He is a meticulous professional and is prepared to challenge people. Now is a moment in his life where he is prepared to bring that into the team environment."

Kane, who first captained England in a World Cup qualifier against Scotland last year, said it was a "massive honour". "I'm very excited for the World Cup, can't wait," he said.

"Leading the lads out is going to be special." England face Tunisia, Panama and Belgium at the World Cup in which they will send their third-youngest squad to a major tournament, with an average age of 26. He will have some experience around him, however, such as Liverpool skipper Jordan Henderson and Chelsea's Gary Cahill. "Harry will need the support of the other good leaders we've got around him," Southgate said. "You don't become a top team by just having a good captain with good values. That has to spread right throughout the group but I think he's the one ready to take that challenge on." — Reuters



BURTON-ON-TRENT: England's manager Gareth Southgate (R) talks with England's striker Harry Kane during a training session at St George's Park in Burton-on-Trent yesterday, ahead of their international friendly football matches against Nigeria and Costa Rica. — AFP