



Max 45°
Min 28°

www.kuwaittimes.net

6 Ireland ends abortion ban; ‘quiet revolution’ transforms country



7 War, displacement reshuffle the Syrian demographic map



28 Super Bale sinks Liverpool; Madrid make it 3 in a row



IMSAK	03:08
FAJR	03:19
DHUHR	11:45
ASR	15:20
MAGHRIB	18:40
ISHA	20:10

2 killed as Cyclone Mekunu hits Oman; 3 Asians missing

Mekunu wreaked havoc in Yemen’s Socotra Island, killing 7

Ramadan Kareem

3 parts of Ramadan

By Teresa Leshner

Ramadan is said to be split into three thirds: the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said, “It (Ramadan) is the month whose beginning is mercy, middle, forgiveness and its end emancipation from the fire” (Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol 93). Salman Al-Farisi (RA) reported that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, “...The first third of the month of Ramadan is the time for mercy, the second third is for forgiveness, the third is for release from Hellfire...” (IbnKhuzaymah). We hope to make the most of each third so that we can receive the blessing related to each.

For the first third of mercy, the following hadith comes to mind: The Prophet (PBUH) said, “While fasting remember the hunger and thirst on the Day of Judgment. Give alms to the poor and needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words, and your eyes from scenes that are not worth seeing and your ears from sounds that should not be heard. Be kind to orphans so that if your children may become orphans they will also be treated with kindness.”

The second third of Ramadan is characterized as a time when Allah (SWT)’s forgives. The Quran says, “And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden the extensiveness of which is the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who guard against evil. - Quran 3:132. Will they not turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness, and Allah is oft-forgiving, Merciful (Quran 5:74). A prophetic tradition reported by Abu Huraira (RA) says, “Whoever observes fasts during the month of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah’s rewards, then all his past sins will be forgiven.” - Bukhari 2: 37.

The third portion of Ramadan is considered to be a time for seeking release from the hellfire. Abu Said Al Khudri (RA) said, “Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) said Allah frees some people from hellfire every day and night - meaning of Ramadan - and every Muslim has an answered supplication every day and night [of Ramadan]. (Reported by Al Bazar and authenticated by Sheikh Albaani in SaheehTargheeb No 1002). This is also the part of the month that Lailat-ul-Qadr falls in.

The Quran describes this special night: “Verily! We have sent it (this Quran) down in the night of Al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr is? The night of Al-Qadr is better than a thousand months - Therein descend the angels and the Ruh (Gabriel) by Allah’s Permission with all Decrees. Peace! until the appearance of dawn. (Quran 97:1-5)

It is Sunah to spend some time in seclusion (itikaf) for a spiritual retreat in the mosque during the last third of Ramadan. ‘Aishah (RA) narrated that “The Prophet (PBUH) used to do a retreat in the mosque during the last ten nights of Ramadan until he died. His wives continued to observe this practice after his death.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Continued on Page 24

SALALAH: Cyclone Mekunu was downgraded further to a deep depression yesterday, a day after lashing the southern coast of Oman and killing at least two people, authorities said. Civil defense officials said a man and a 12-year-old girl were killed, while three Asians were missing after the cyclone hit Oman’s Dhofar and Al-Wusta provinces. Oman police earlier reported that the man died after floods swept him away with his car near Salalah, Oman’s second-largest city, while the girl died when a gust of wind smashed her into a wall.

Mekunu, which has wreaked havoc in Yemen’s Socotra island killing at least seven people, was heading northwest to Saudi Arabia, Oman’s directorate of meteorology said. It is expected to hit parts of the Empty Quarter, one of the world’s most arid deserts, later today, it said. The meteorology department said the latest weather charts and satellite imageries indicate that Mekunu’s intensity has dropped to “a deep depression”.

It warned however that heavy rain and strong winds of about 60 kilometers (37 miles) an hour would continue to pummel Dhofar and Al-Wusta provinces, while sea conditions were rough with high tides reaching eight meters (yards). Mekunu had intensified to a category two cyclone as it hit Dhofar and Al-Wusta on the Arabian Sea on Friday, battering the coast with torrential rains, strong winds and massive waves. Three wounded Asians were rescued and civil defense teams said they had saved hundreds of people including 260 foreign sailors trapped at sea.

Continued on Page 24



SALALAH: Photo shows a car stuck in a flooded street in the southern city of Salalah as the country prepares for landfall of Cyclone Mekunu. Cyclone Mekunu was downgraded further to a deep depression yesterday, a day after lashing the southern coast of Oman and killing at least two people. — AFP

Defense Minister in Saudi to inspect Kuwait’s troops



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah travels to Saudi Arabia to inspect Kuwaiti troops in ‘Restoration of Hope’. — KUNA

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah travelled to Saudi Arabia yesterday to inspect the Kuwaiti troops in operation “Restoration of Hope.” Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad congratulated the troops on the advent of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the Defense Ministry’s

Directorate of Moral Guidance and Public Relations said in a press statement. The First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister is accompanied by Chief of the General Staff of Kuwait’s Army Lieutenant-General Mohammad Al-Khudher and a high-ranking military delegation. They were seen off by senior military commanders. — KUNA

Leaders of two Koreas hold surprise meeting

SEOUL: South Korean President Moon Jae-in held a surprise meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un yesterday to ensure the upcoming high-stakes summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump is a success. South Korean officials said. The unannounced meeting is the latest dramatic turn in a week of diplomatic flip-flops surrounding an unprecedented summit between the United States and North Korea, and the strongest sign yet that the two Korean leaders are trying to keep the on-again off-again summit on track.

Their two-hour talks at the Panmunjom border village came a month after they held the first inter-Korean summit in more than a decade at the same venue on April 27 and declared they would work toward a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War. “The two leaders candidly exchanged views about making the North Korea-US summit a successful one and about



PANMUNJOM: South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in (right) hugs North Korea’s leader Kim Jong Un before their second summit at the north side of the truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). — AFP

implementing the Panmunjom Declaration,” South Korea’s presidential spokesman said in a statement.

He did not confirm how the secret meeting was arranged or which side asked for it. Moon, who returned to Seoul on Thursday morning after meeting Trump in Washington earlier this week in a bid to keep the summit on track as initially planned, for June 12 in Singapore, was due to announce details of the meeting with Kim early on Sunday.

Continued on Page 24

Start-up of Arab world first nuke reactor delayed

DUBAI: The start-up of the Arab world’s first nuclear reactor - in the United Arab Emirates - has been delayed and should start operations between the end of 2019 and early 2020, the plant’s operator said yesterday. Nawah Energy Company, the operator of the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant in the Al-Dhafra Region of Abu Dhabi, said it “has completed a comprehensive operational readiness review” for an updated start-up schedule for the reactor. The \$24.4 billion Barakah power plant is the world’s largest nuclear project under construction and will be the first in the Arab world.

“The results of Nawah’s review forecast that the loading of nuclear fuel assemblies required to com-

mence nuclear operations at Barakah Unit 1 will occur between the end of 2019 and early 2020,” it said in a statement. Reuters reported in March that the start-up had been pushed back to 2019 due to training delays. “The resulting projection for the start-up of Unit 1 operations reflects the time required for the plant’s nuclear operators to complete operational readiness activities and to obtain necessary regulatory approvals,” Nawah said.

The first of four reactors being built by Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) in the UAE is part of the Barakah power plant project that was originally scheduled to open last year. Barakah One is a joint venture between Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) and KEPCO. The UAE will be the first new country to acquire nuclear power in more than two decades. Bangladesh, Turkey and Saudi Arabia are preparing to follow suit and the World Nuclear Association estimates that nuclear power is planned in over 20 countries which do not currently have it. — Reuters

GCC crisis threatens East African peace efforts, EU warns

ENTEBBE: Diplomatic tensions between countries in the Gulf are threatening peace efforts in East Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa, the EU’s special envoy has warned. The crisis, which erupted nearly a year ago, has pitted Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain against Qatar, with Riyadh and its allies accusing Doha of fostering close ties with Iran and backing Islamic extremists.

But the fallout has had direct repercussions in the Horn of Africa where it has exacerbated already-existing tensions, notably in Somalia, said Alexander Rondos, Europe’s special envoy to the region. In particular, tensions have escalated steadily between Somalia and the United Arab Emirates, which has sought to

extend its influence there as the war in Yemen rages on. Although the two countries have been traditionally close, Mogadishu’s attempts to remain neutral over the Gulf divisions have not gone down well.

One of the EU’s “most important objectives” is to make sure that East Africa “is as well protected as it can be from what is a rapidly shifting geo-political environment” in the Gulf, he said on Friday following a two-day seminar of EU envoys to the region. Political strife between Gulf states and their alliances with east African players was “the biggest strategic issue because it could easily undermine all of the efforts to overcome East Africa’s own particular crises, whether it’s South Sudan or Somalia,” Rondos said.

“We don’t need something aggravating these efforts,” he added, describing the geo-political challenge as the “biggest game in town”. In Somalia, the conflict has raised tensions between the federal states and the central government, with many unhappy about President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed’s neutral stance.

Continued on Page 24

Local

Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque still standing proud after 2015 cowardly attack



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah prays inside the renovated Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque. — KUNA archive



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen upon his arrival at the site of the Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque shortly after the attack took place.

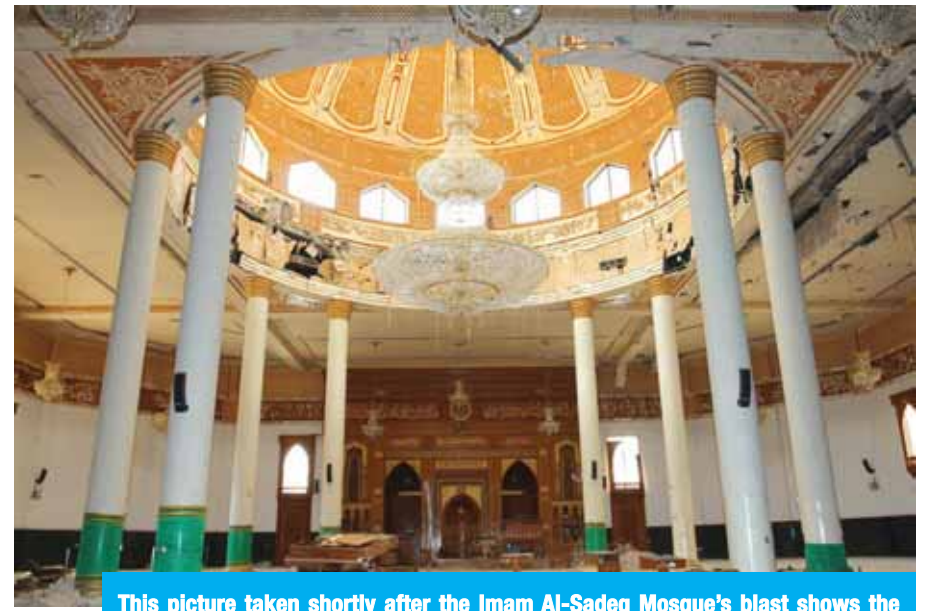


Impact of the blast at the entrance of the Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque.

KUWAIT: On the ninth day of the holy month of Ramadan (June 26, 2015) Kuwaitis were shocked by a cowardly terror attack against the Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque in Kuwait City, an incident that left 26 people dead and some 227 others injured. After three years from the attack, the mosque was renovated upon directives from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who was amongst the first to rush to the scene of the attack after it occurred. With prayers resuming and people returning to the facility, the mosque stands defiantly against those who sought to create strife and disunity amongst the people of Kuwait. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah offers condolences to the families of the attack's victims.



This picture taken shortly after the Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque's blast shows the heavily damaged main prayer hall.

Signed letter to Bush Sr symbol of enduring friendship with Kuwait

KUWAIT: In a warm Ramadan night, a galaxy of young Kuwaiti men and women had the opportunity to relive a very special moment in their lives: a tad over quarter-century ago. Back in 1991, a group of some 104 children had signed a letter to President George HW Bush, thanking him for the major role the United States played in liberating their country on February 26th of that year.

Around 15 members of that group gathered at the residence of US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman last night for a 'ghabka' in their honor and to celebrate yet another special occasion. A copy of the letter they signed is framed at the Embassy and the original was sent to the George HW Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, TX, where former President Bush Sr took a photo with it. This photo was framed and hunged at the Embassy as well.

In remarks on the occasion, Ambassador Silverman voiced "real pleasure" to commemorate the letter inked some 27 years ago. "I'd like to give a special thanks to Dr Sarah who organized the letter all those years ago and who helped us connect with many of you here today," he said. Dr Sarah is the author of the 'thank you' letter and daughter of Abdullah Al-Rakyan; initiator of its idea.

"The first time I saw your letter here at the Embassy, I wondered how many people have had the opportunity to see it over the years. I knew that very few Americans had seen it. We thought that the American people should see your kind gesture to President Bush, thanking him for US support for the liberation of Kuwait and wishing him a Happy Birthday," the ambassador said. The 41st US president was born June 12, 1924. "So we contacted the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Texas and asked if they would like to exhibit the letter for all to see. They were thrilled. From now on, all visitors to the Bush Library will be able to see your letter," Ambassador Silverman noted with a joyous tone.

"As I think you know, President Bush felt US leadership of the coalition to liberate Kuwait was a matter of principle. I still remember seeing how angry he was when he heard the news of the invasion and how his immediate reaction was that, the invasion and occupation 'will not stand'. Some 540,000 Americans participated in the effort to help liberate Kuwait, and 148 died in the fight. It was the right thing to do - a matter of principle, as President Bush said," said Silverman, underlining that US commitment to Kuwait's security remains "as strong



KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman poses with a group of the letter's signatories. — KUNA



George HW Bush is pictured with the original letter.

today as it was then." He said that he views such letter, signed by "kids back then," as a symbol of the enduring friendship between the two countries and peoples. "Our relationship has grown stronger since that time, and our cooperation closer," he said. That cooperation makes both Kuwaitis and Americans more secure. It makes this region more secure. It also helps expand economic and educational ties, he stressed. "We hope that future generations will see your letter and remember the sacrifices you and your families made in the struggle for liberation, as well as the long friendship between our two nations and our peoples. The initiative that you took so many years ago showed your character, something that I am sure has guided your lives since then," Silverman addressed the audience.

Rakyan said meanwhile that "showing appreciation" was the drive behind the letter. "We focused that young school children should be the

signatories of the letter as a pure manifestation of gratitude to the role former president Bush Sr played in liberating Kuwait. "I will definitely take my children and grandchildren to see the original letter displayed in George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in Texas," he said.

Jarrah Al-Hindi, now a financial analyst, said that when he signed the letter some 27 years ago, he was too young to realize the magnitude of its impact on the recipient. But now, and after seeing President Bush's picture with the letter, "I feel proud."

Meanwhile, Mohammad Banayan, a telecommunications specialist at Zain Co. said that despite the fact that he was very young at that time: four years old, yet he could recall the sense of excitement he felt after knowing that he took a small part in offering a "nice gesture for a good man." Ambassador Silverman then handed each guest a copy of the photo at the end of the event.— KUNA

KFH holds sign language training program for staff

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) held a sign language training program for its employees in efforts to empower them to offer banking services to people with special needs. This comes in response to the regulatory authorities and the Central Bank of Kuwait's (CBK) instructions, and in line with KFH's keenness to ensure that its services encompass all society segments as per the highest standards of services quality.

Deputy General Manager Sales and Distribution at KFH, Khaled Alsubaiei said that the training program aims at empowering the staff to skillfully communicate with the deaf-mute and offer them the best service at six branches.

He added that the program tackled different theoretical and practical topics of

special education, prevention methods, and the indicating symptoms, while the practical side of the program revolved around the manual alphabet that is used in deaf education, and had subsequently been adopted as a distinct part of a number of sign languages.

The program witnessed remarkable response and participation, which reflects the employees' desire to serve this important segment in the society stemming from their social values and the Islamic identity of the bank. Twelve male and female employees participated in the program to offer the best banking services to the people with special needs; the deaf-mute people. KFH had previously wrapped up a sign language program of training 30 employees.



Burgan Bank sponsors Dasman School workshop

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank recently sponsored Dasman Bilingual School's workshop entitled 'Teaching Strategies to Engage Learners and Prepare a Differentiated Lesson Plan'. Recently organized by Dasman Bilingual School in order to raise the level of knowledge among teachers in Kuwait on the strategies of teaching to encourage teachers to engage in the educational process and how to prepare a lesson plan distinctive. The recent support of the school's initiative comes as part of Burgan Bank's commitment to its social responsibility towards enriching the educational process.

Dr Richard Cash presented the workshop which was held between 15 - 19 April, he delivered modern teaching methods and techniques to inspire creativity for educators at advanced levels. Nearly 100 teachers from different schools in Kuwait



attended and participated in the productive platform by the renowned academic.

Due to the success of the workshop, Burgan Bank has hosted Dr Richard Cash to present a special workshop for the bank staff with the name "Creativity in the workplace." During the Teaching Strategies workshop, the bank by presence participated in the Dasman School to showcase its various products and services for the integrated banking of teachers.

Local

Investments' revenues surpassed oil incomes in 2017: Lawmaker

Outdoor work afternoon ban starts June 1

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Revenues by Kuwaiti investments surpassed oil revenues last year, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said, adding that the future generations fund's assets increased as well. Adasani, who is the rapporteur of the parliament's budgets and final statement committee, stressed that the committee is working relentlessly on examining government bodies' final statements, budgets and audit reports.

Capital spending program

The Finance Ministry, the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development and other relevant government bodies are setting a plan to accelerate the achievement of the ambitious capital spending program listed in the development plan, focusing on building infrastructure, water and energy according to the public-private-partnership (PPP) system, said informed sources. The sources added that KD 5.2 billion had so far been spent on construction projects, roads, airport and power generation in the 2018-2019 budget, and explained that total revenues in the same budget are expected to be KD 15 billion, while the estimated expenditure is KD 20 billion. The sources said mega oil projects reflect the volume of spending on oil projects in the 2017-2018 budget with the aim of creating more job opportunities and making the best use of Kuwait's natural resources.

New Sabah Hospital

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah denied any delay in the new Sabah Hospital project schedule. Responding to an inquiry by MP Mubarak Al-Hajraf in this

regard, Sheikh Basel said that according to annual reports, 38.77 percent of the project was completed by Feb 28, 2018 and that the entire project will be finished and handed over by March 31, 2019. He added that the only possible delay would be due to adding a VIP ward upon instructions from the Amiri Diwan.

Loans to Philippines

Responding to an inquiry by MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei concerning loans given to the Philippines by the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah denied any plans to give further loans to the Philippines. He added that a list he provided included details about all the loans given to the Philippines since the fund was established. He also reviewed the conditions the fund follows on giving loans to any Arab or developing country, including the Philippines.

Afternoon work ban

Official sources at the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) said the team inspecting outdoor working sites during summer will be re-formed to start working from June 1 to Aug 31, during which working in the open is banned from 11 am till 4 pm. The sources added employers can instead have the workers make up for the ban hours by working in the evening or early morning. In other news, the manpower authority intensified its inspection campaigns on various private sector establishments, and many citations were filed: some because citizens working there did not respect the timing schedule they had submitted to the authority. An official source at the manpower authority noted that the national labor support allowance will be



suspended for citizens who do not show up to work and the concerned company's dossier will be blocked.

Price increases

Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies' Chairman Khalid Al-Hudaiban stressed that the union's prices committee is the only body that sets prices for various goods. "So far, no prices have been increased as we

promised consumers," he underlined. Hudaiban added that price increases will only be done through a specialized committee that fully knows the companies that deserve to increase their goods' prices. "Companies usually aim too high and we work on restraining them to protect consumers," he stressed. Hudaiban said that the committee toured various co-ops to inspect prices and check whether any unjustified price hikes were made.

Missing diver's body found

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Navy found the body of the citizen Saud Al-Mislem afloat in Aryaq Al-Durrah, two kilometers from the location where he had gone missing, the army said in a statement. The body was taken to Mohammad Al-Ahmad Naval Base. The army and other apparatuses have been searching for Mislem since he had gone missing at sea a week ago.

Police helicopter burned

A fire erupted at an aircraft hangar of the Kuwaiti air police department at the Abdullah Al-Mubarak Airbase in the Kuwait International Airport, the Ministry of Interior announced. The fire caught and totally destroyed an AS356-(MOI) 03 Dolphin helicopter, the ministry stated in a press statement. The statement noted that the cause of the blaze was a short circuit at the Air conditioning unit at the hangar. The massive fire damaged the hangar almost completely and extended to another one, the statement noted, adding that a helicopter from the same model was salvaged from the fire. It pointed out that the ministry had reported the incident to the criminal investigations authorities and the investigations department of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate and a case with No 333/2018 was registered.

No injuries in farm fire

Four fire centers fought a blaze in a 100,000 square meter farm on Sixth Ring Road near Abdullah Al-Mubarak. The flames burned nearly 5,000 square meters of the farm which belongs to the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources. No injuries were reported. Investigations are underway to find out the cause of the fire.

Policemen jailed for illegal parking

Two policemen were ordered jailed for parking in handicapped designated areas. One of them parked his car in a co-op society's parking lot, Al-Rai reported. Shoppers did not like what they saw and informed Acting Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Maj Gen Ibrahim Al-Tarrah, so he ordered the jailing of the policeman for five days in the military prison. The second policeman parked his patrol car in the handicapped designated area of Sulaibkhat health center, so Tarrah also ordered him jailed for five days and issued him a grave traffic citation.

Mom hands over addict son to police

A citizen handed her drug addict son to Bayan police after she woke up while he was screaming. She found her



KUWAIT: Firefighters tackle a blaze at a farm near Abdullah Al-Mubarak.



son in a hysterical state, so she called police and allowed them in the house, and gave them a bag he was hiding under the bed. The bag contained drugs, joints and packets containing herbs. He was sent to concerned authorities. In a separate case, an Egyptian family asked for police's help to rescue them from their drug addict son who threatened them with a knife. Police arrested the suspect and took him to the Drugs Control General Department.

Brothers caught in pre-iftar fight

Two brothers had a fight just before iftar, and one of them suffered an injury to his head. Both were sent to the police station for questioning. Separately, Jahra police broke up a fight between five bedoons at Jahra stables, resulting in one of them receiving several stab wounds.

KRCS blood donation campaign kicks off today

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced that its seasonal blood drive begins today, in conjunction with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Kuwait Central Blood Bank.

The campaign aims to encourage citizens and residents alike to donate blood during the holiest month of the year to ensure sufficient blood supply, the venerable Kuwaiti charity's chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said yesterday.

He hailed the endeavor as an altruistic act and a humanitarian obligation given the fact that a number of hospitals across the nation suffer from a dearth of blood supply. Sayer emphasized that KRCS is eager to save humanity by any means necessary, pointing out that the blood drive will take place today at the charity's headquarters from 8:00 pm to 1:00 am.— KUNA

18 violations in one week

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Eighteen charity violations were detected during 93 field visits made to various mosques in the first week of the holy month of Ramadan, said Hana Al-Hajri, Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Affairs at the Ministry of

Social Affairs and Labor. The violations included setting up 10 illegal clothes collection booths, not following MSAL's schedule for charity collection and collecting charity for an unlicensed charity project, Hajri added.

The violations also included collecting cash donations in two mosques, illegal calls to collect leftover food, a telecom company sending text messages urging the public to donate without a prior license and an unlicensed foreign body calling for collecting donations in Kuwait, she added.

High school finals' results to be announced June 4

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Ministry of Education said Friday it would announce the results of the final examinations of the high schools on Monday, June 4, at most. The correction process of the exam papers is going smoothly, Undersecretary of the Ministry

Dr Haitham Al-Athari told reporters on Friday night. He expected that there would be no major problems in the process, noting that there could be only minor matters that would be addressed as routine.

On the incidents of denying some students access to the examinations, he said such incidents are very few since the students reached higher levels of awareness about the adverse consequences of cheating. Athari affirmed that the ministries of education and interior are in close contact to deal with any cases of leaking the final examinations whether online or by any other means. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Education Ministry Dr Haitham Al-Athari (second from right) speaks during the press conference. — KUNA

local spotlight

Cyclone Mekunu



By Muna Al-Fuzal

Muna@kuwaittimes.net

Cyclone Mekunu made landfall on the Arabian Peninsula with extremely severe cyclonic winds. The cyclone continues to weaken, but leaves lessons for all of us in crisis management. In the past few days, we all watched with great concern Mekunu battering Oman and causing damage. The head of the executive office of the National Committee for Civil Defense of Oman said the emergency management team evacuated 10,000 people from the province of Dhofar in record time. All sectors of the economy in Oman worked closely and effectively until the end of the crisis despite material damages.

A state of emergency was also declared in Socotra, a Yemeni island located between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. The government of Yemen declared Socotra a disaster area due to the damage caused by Mekunu. This became the first major cyclone to affect both Oman and Yemen in the history of recordkeeping in the Arabian Sea.

I believe that floods around the world will not stop and will keep causing humanitarian disasters, as they lead to the displacement of thousands of people who lose their homes and properties and need urgent assistance. Over the past years, hurricanes have increased in several countries, which can cause flooding due to the rush of seawater into cities or heavy rain.

As for naming the cyclone "Mekunu", a climate professor at Saudi Arabia's Qassim University Dr Abdullah Al-Misnad said on Twitter that the moniker came through a proposal from the Maldives. He said that it is well known that names of hurricanes that form in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean are agreed between eight countries surrounding these two bodies of water. The Maldives proposed the name "mekunu", which is a kind of fish.

Although hurricanes occur annually and in more than one place in the world, some of them cause massive destruction. So why can't we limit losses by hurricanes even though we know they are coming? I think that in order to reduce the impact of hurricanes, it is necessary to plan and work simultaneously before they hit to reduce the damage and injuries associated with the storms. Preparations must be made on two national levels - by individuals, as well as concentrated and effective efforts by governments and strengthening civil defense centers with manpower and equipment.

Another key element here is the media and public awareness to transfer right and accurate information from its source to prevent malicious and false rumors. Today, I don't think we need more conferences to only talk about climate impact and global warming. It is better to create an international fund to work seriously towards the allocation of international assistance to help affected areas and people, especially the poor. I think Red Crescent societies around the world must work collectively to set an international strategy in establishing a global fund to protect families after these storms.

The issue of risk and crisis management means there must be accurate work, and I believe that these hurricanes provide us with lessons on how to deal with crises, and no one can imagine that we are completely safe.

Local



Lugaimat: Kuwait's favorite Ramadan sweet

By Nawara Fattahova

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.

Lugaimat are special Kuwaiti sweetmeats synonymous with Ramadan, despite the wide selection of all kinds of international sweets available in the local market and the dozens of home businesses focusing on new trends in sweets. Other Kuwaiti sweets such as darabil, zalabya, sab algalsha and others are also popular amongst Kuwaitis, but lugaimat are more well-known, maybe because there are very similar sweets in other Arab countries with different names such as awama or luqmat alqadi.

Lugaimat (bite-sized morsels) are small balls crunchy from the outside and soft from the inside, dipped in 'sheera' (sugar syrup). It is usually served with Arabic coffee to get the perfect balance of the bitter taste of coffee and the sweet taste of lugaimat. As lugaimat are

no longer served on every occasion due to the prevalence of other modern sweets, their presence on any occasion reminds us of Ramadan. Various stories can be found on the history of this traditional Arab sweetmeat. The most probable is that it originates from Baghdad, where it was made in the 13th century for the judge, who was paid with it as his salary. It was called 'luqmat alqadi' (morsel of the judge). It then spread to other Arab countries, Turkey and even Greece.

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



History of Kuwait



KUWAIT: Cafes and their customers in early 1960. The picture shows a group of popular cafes inside the main market close to the Safat Square. Old Cadillac cars are seen parked outside the cafes. (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)

Zain participates in the Avenues Ramadan Souk

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its participation in the Avenues Ramadan Souk exhibition. The event, organized by the Avenues mall, features entrepreneurs offering a wide range of Ramadan-related products and services. The exhibition is held from 24-30 May at Phase Four - Grand Plaza.

Zain's participation in the event comes as part of its keenness to dedicate more efforts into supporting and empowering Kuwaiti entrepreneurs, as well as take part in initiatives that contribute to infusing creativity within the entrepreneurial community through partnering with entities that aim at developing this sector.

Zain will be present at the Avenues Ramadan Souk exhibition through its own dedicated booth, where the company offers many of its services to the exhibition's visitors, including bill payment and line recharge services and more. Zain will also offer its latest promotions and offerings to prepaid and postpaid customers as well. Zain is aware of the important role private sector companies play in supporting the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) segment, especially that Zain is one of the leading national companies in the private sector. The company's participation in this exhibition showcased its keenness in developing the Kuwaiti entrepreneurial community.

The Avenues Ramadan Souk exhibition gathers many entrepreneurs who offer a wide range of products and services related to the holy month of Ramadan, including snacks, sweets, accessories, dresses, incense, perfumes, and more. The exhibition also features private-sector companies offering their services to visitors. The event is held from 1 pm - 6 pm and 9 pm - 12 am at the Avenues mall, Phase Four - Grand Plaza.



KUWAIT: Zain and Avenues officials during the exhibition's opening ceremony.

Marina Hotel hosts exciting ghabka for local media



KUWAIT: In celebration of the holy month of Ramadan and in recognition of the ongoing support and efforts made by the media, Marina Hotel Kuwait hosted its much-awaited annual Ramadan ghabka at Kamar Al Marina tent in the Six Palms.

Nabil Hammoud, General Manager of the hotel and the entire management team welcomed guests upon arrival and invited them to enjoy the distinctive hospitality of the special event. The evening revived the traditions

of this occasion by offering a range of sumptuous buffet tables filled with delicious Arabic dishes and other cuisines from the live cooking stations.

The special ghabka included a large array of food, drinks, desserts and flavored Shisha to be the perfect place for such a meaningful night during this holy month. The evening was enhanced by the sounds of soft oriental music as well as many activities and competitions to engage all attendees.



The highlight of the evening was an exciting Raffle Draw held on the entrance tickets, which granted a range of fabulous prizes adding more joy to the evening. The ghabka lasted till after midnight and Marina Hotel ensured that each guest had a truly memorable evening filled with fun and exceptional delight.

Nabil Hammoud expressed his appreciation to the media for their ongoing support and extended his gratitude to the sponsors of Marina Hotel which included

KLM airlines for sponsoring "Kamar Al-Marina Tent" for the entire period of Ramadan.

Kamar Al-Marina tent is specially prepared every Ramadan with new selective decorations, and Oriental music to reflect the traditional feel of the Holy month. With a capacity to accommodate up to 200 guests, Kamar Al-Marina tent has proven to be the favorite venue for companies and individuals to host their own private ghabkas during the whole month of Ramadan.





Crown Prince visits Disabled, Blind, Deaf Clubs



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a memorial gift during his visit to the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club.— KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses for a group picture during his visit to the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by Deputy National Guard Commander Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, visited Thursday the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club. His Highness the Crown Prince was welcomed at the club by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Hmoud Fulaiteh Al-Shammari, the honorary chairperson of the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club Sheikh Al-Abdullah Al-Khalifa Al-Sabah, senior officials of the Public Authority for Sports, and chairman and board members of the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club.

His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed to them greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of the holy fasting month of Ramadan. He expressed admiration and appreciation of the achievements of the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club in international sports events. He also lauded the club's care and support to all members.

Later, His Highness the Crown Prince visited the Kuwait Blind Association, where he was welcomed by Minister of State for Housing Affairs, Minister of State for Services Affairs, Acting Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Acting Minister of State for Economic Affairs Jinan Boushehri and chairperson members of the Kuwait Blind Association. His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed to the attendants greetings of His Highness the Amir on the occasion of the holy fasting month of Ramadan. He voiced appreciation for the association's efforts and role to serve the blind people.

Later, His Highness the Crown Prince visited the Kuwait Club for the Deaf, where he was welcomed by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Hmoud Fulaiteh Al-Shammari, senior officials of the Public Authority for Sports and chairman and board members of the Kuwait Club for the Deaf. His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed to the gathering greetings of His Highness the Amir on the occasion of the holy fasting month of Ramadan. He expressed sincere gratitude to the Kuwait Club for the Deaf for the care and support it provides to all members. Memorial gifts were handed to His Highness the Crown Prince marking the occasion of his visits. — KUNA



Minister of State for Housing Affairs Jinan Boushehri welcomes His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at the Kuwait Blind Association.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah signs the guestbook during his visit to the Kuwait Club for the Deaf.

ALWAYS A BETTER WAY

TOYOTA

Ramadan Kareem

GENEROUS OFFER ON TOYOTA THIS RAMADAN

MADE IN JAPAN

CAMRY

COROLLA

YARIS SEDAN

YARIS HATCHBACK

Offer valid for invoices from 29th of April 2018 until 16th of June 2018.

- Flexible Financial Packages available
- Complimentary Service Package for 1 year/20,000 km*
- Complimentary KD 50/- Fuel Card
- Key Loss Insurance and Travel Insurance for one year**
- Complimentary 3rd Party Insurance and Registration
- COMPLIMENTARY RAMADAN GIFT

IN COOPERATION WITH:

* Whichever comes first - does not include brakes ** Applicable for retail deals only. Offer not valid on Fleet/Taxi/bulk deals. Terms and conditions apply

Mohamed Naser AlSayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L.
A subsidiary of ALSAYER Holding

1803803
toyota.com.kw

toyotakuw

Al-Rai: 4th Ring Road • AL AHMADE: Eastern Atmad • AL JAHRA: Industrial Area • SHUWAKH: Al Tital Showroom • NEW FLEET SALES CENTRE: ARDWA Est: 2020/2023

Standoff in Italy over naming of economy minister

Page 9

Deadly disputes
over environment
and land in India

Page 8



In this photograph taken on April 7, 2018, Rohingya Muslim refugees (from left) Robi Alam, 16, Mohammad Hashim, 17, Mohammad Jaber, 18, and Abul Faiz, 12, pose for a photograph in their house in Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district. —AFP

The dispossession of the Rohingya

One family, four countries

KUTUPALONG, Bangladesh: It takes a few moments to sift through the years of chaos and dislocation before Rohingya refugee Robi Alam settles on the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, Aug 2012, as the last time he saw his seven brothers together in Myanmar. “We were still a family then under one roof, in one country,” the 16-year-old says, from his current home - a bamboo shack in a Bangladesh refugee camp. By then Myanmar had already lurched into a dark new phase of an old conflict between their Muslim Rohingya minority and the Buddhist ethnic Rakhine.

Violence unravelled after the alleged rape and murder of a Buddhist woman by Rohingya men: neighbor turned on neighbor as villages across Rakhine state were set ablaze. Still, where they could, Rohingya families celebrated Eid, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. Robi recalls being carried on his older siblings’ shoulders as they went door-to-door through the village of Yae Twin Kyun in Maungdaw district gorging on snacks.

Nearly six years on, the eight brothers are now split across four countries: Bangladesh, India, the United States and Myanmar. One is in a Myanmar jail, another has vanished on the treacherous trafficking route south - a painful family history that traces the key events in the dispossession of the Rohingya in Myanmar, and their dispersal overseas. When the brothers were last united, in 2012, there were around 1.2 million Rohingya living in Rakhine state. Now fewer than a third remain.

Myanmar, which denies the Rohingya citizenship, drove most of the minority out in October 2016 and August 2017 in army-led crackdowns that the United Nations has said may amount to “ethnic cleansing”. Separated from their four older brothers, the younger siblings - Robi, Jaber, 18, Hashim, 17, and Faiz, 12 - are starting new lives as refugees. For now, home remains a 10-metre (30 foot) hut covered by a UN-branded tarpaulin in the Kutupalong camp, which the brothers share with 15 other relatives including their mother. “We can’t

work here, it’s a place we know nothing about,” says Robi. “But how do we go back to Myanmar again?”

Mohammad Rashid

The first of the brothers to flee Rakhine was Mohammad Rashid. It was early 2013, and by then conditions described as “apartheid-like” by Amnesty International were biting hard, with Rohingya locked out from hospitals, schools and their own farms. Worn down by the asphyxiating security controls, Rashid crossed the Naf River into Bangladesh, paying a broker 30,000 taka (\$355) to take him to Malaysia, where menial jobs await Rohingya.

Robi shows a photo on his mobile phone of the 25-year-old on the day of his departure - staring confidently back, an arm slung around a cousin. “We haven’t heard from him since.” Rashid disappeared as a transnational trafficking network was at its peak, spinning a fortune carrying a desperate human cargo of Rohingya and Bangladeshi economic migrants south by sea.

They docked in Thailand, where gangs - including a powerful southern army general - corralled the migrants overland to Malaysia. That escape route collapsed in May 2015, when shallow graves of migrants were found pitting the hills along the Thai-Malaysia border. Authorities closed in on the traffickers, who abandoned migrant boats in the Andaman Sea, leaving starving and dehydrated passengers to drift south, hoping for rescue by Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian authorities. No one knows exactly how many died in the migrant camps or at sea.

Abdur Rashid

His older brother had disappeared, but Abdur Rashid chose the same escape route. “I tried to stop him, I begged him,” his mother Khadija Begum says. “But he is stubborn. He said ‘I will swim to Malaysia if I can’t get a boat’ and so he went.” His months-long odyssey, which

began around early 2014, eventually led to resettlement in the United States, via detention in Thai immigration facilities. “I wasn’t scared. It was pre-destined,” the 23-year-old told AFP from Colorado, where he is now learning English and working in a cake factory.

“After 10 days at sea we were near Thailand... we came to shore in smaller boats, 50-60 people on each, but when we landed Thai police, military and even journalists were there,” he said. Thailand does not accept refugees and so, after several months in immigration detention, the UNHCR secured the US move - but resettlement is open to only a tiny number of Rohingya refugees. He moved in 2017 and, when he can, sends money to his brothers 8,000 miles away in the world’s biggest refugee camp.

Abul Kashim

Violence and repression have hit the Rohingya in waves since the late 1970s. In 1982 Myanmar’s ruling junta stripped the Muslim minority of citizenship, stirring up hatred towards the group and casting them as “Bengali” infiltrators to the Buddhist-majority country. As such, life in Rakhine has always been hard, says Jaber, the oldest of the four brothers in the Kutupalong camp. “But after the violence started in 2012, the ‘Moghs’ (a pejorative word for ethnic Rakhine) gradually took everything.”

Rohingya who strayed from their villages were frequently lynched or beaten, he says-allegations backed up by rights monitors. One of the brothers, Abul Kashim, now 19, suffered a beating while fishing with friends. A teenager at the time, he was jolted into leaving by the brutality of the attack, first for Bangladesh, then overland to join an uncle in India. For now, he has a made a decent life - he is married and works as a mason in Haryana state. But India has threatened to deport 40,000 of the minority. “I miss my family,” he told AFP, saying each phone call leaves a yearning to travel to Bangladesh. “But I can’t. I don’t have any travel documents.”

Hamid Hussein

On Oct 9, 2016, Rakhine again went up in flames as a nascent Rohingya militant group - known now as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) - raided border posts. The army response was swift and unforgiving. Tens of thousands of Rohingya were driven into Bangladesh, fleeing murders, rapes and mass arrests. The crackdown visited more tragedy on Robi Alam’s family. Their 60-year-old father Nagu Miah was arrested and, the family alleges, beaten to death in police custody.

Confined to their homes with food running scarce, the oldest brother Hamid Hussein, 28, defied a strict curfew and went fishing after his children complained of eating rice every day. He was arrested by soldiers and taken to Buthidaung jail. Soon after, soldiers swarmed their village, ordering Rohingya residents to sit hands on their heads in a field as they ransacked homes. “Then they started to burn our homes, they raped some women and pushed them inside burning homes,” says 17-year-old Mohammad Hashim, from Kutupalong camp. “We could not stay any longer.”

Over the next six weeks the extended family crept over to Bangladesh. In Aug 2017, another 700,000 others began to join them after an even more ferocious army crackdown. With their land taken and security still parlous, Robi and his family have little expectation of returning to Rakhine. Instead they are preparing for long-term life as refugees. And in their freshly trimmed haircuts, football shirts and fixation with mobile phones, there are even flickers of teenage normality in the most abnormal of circumstances.

But the fragmentation of their family is never far away. Through the smudged memories of life in Rakhine, the youngest brother Abul Faiz recalls flecks of freedom - playing football or fishing - as a child in Rakhine. “My older brothers would hug me, give me money for the shop,” the watchful youngster adds in a near-whisper. “I miss them.” —AFP

Ireland ends abortion ban

DUBLIN: Ireland has voted by a landslide to liberalize some of the world’s most restrictive abortion laws in what its prime minister described as the culmination of a “quiet revolution” in what was one of Europe’s most socially conservative countries. Voters in the once deeply Catholic nation were estimated to have backed the change by more than two-to-one, according to two exit polls released on Friday evening, and the government plans to bring in legislation by the end of the year. “It’s incredible. For all the years and years and years we’ve been trying to look after women and not been able to look after women, this means everything,” said Mary Higgins, obstetrician and Together For Yes campaigner. After official results began to be announced yesterday, politicians on both sides agreed that the referendum had passed by a large margin.

“The public have spoken. The result appears to be resounding ... in favor of repealing the 8th Amendment” constitutional ban on abortion, Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, who campaigned for repeal, told journalists in Dublin. “What we see is the culmination of a quiet revolution that has been taking place in Ireland over the last couple of decades,” said Varadkar, who became the country’s first openly gay prime minister last year.

If confirmed, the outcome will be the latest milestone on a path of change for a country which only legalized divorce by a razor thin majority in 1995 before becoming the first in the world to adopt gay marriage by popular vote three years ago. “For him (his son), it’s a different Ireland that we’re moving onto. It’s an Ireland that is more tolerant, more inclusive and where he can be whatever he wants without fear of recrimina-



DUBLIN: Yes campaigners jubilate as they wait for the official result of the Irish abortion referendum at Dublin Castle yesterday. —AFP

tion,” said Colm O’Riain, a 44-year-old teacher with his son Ruairi, who was born 14 weeks premature in November.

A spokesman for an anti-abortion umbrella group Save The 8th John McGuirk conceded there was “no prospect” the country’s abortion ban, imposed in a 1983 referendum, would be retained. “What Irish voters did yesterday is a tragedy of historic proportions,” Save The 8th said. “However, a wrong does not become a right simply because a majority support it.”

Voters were asked if they wish to scrap the amendment, which gives an unborn child and its mother equal rights to life. The consequent prohibition on abortion was partly lifted in 2013 for cases where the mother’s life was in danger. The country’s largest newspaper, the Irish Independent described the result as “a massive moment in Ireland’s social history”. Campaigners for change, wearing “Repeal” jumpers and “Yes” badges, gathered at the main Dublin court center, many in tears and hugging each other. —Reuters

Trump says Venezuela frees US missionary

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump announced yesterday that Venezuela has released American Joshua Holt after nearly two years in jail in the leftist-ruled country. Trump, in a tweet, did not identify Holt by name but Utah Senator Orrin Hatch confirmed that the Utah resident had been freed. “Good news about the release of the American hostage from Venezuela,” Trump tweeted. “Should be landing in DC this evening and be in the White House, with his family, at about 7:00 PM The great people of Utah will be very happy!”

Holt’s release came after Senator Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, met in Caracas Friday with President Nicolas Maduro. Senator Hatch said Holt was on his way to the United States and praised Corker’s “pivotal efforts”. Hatch issued a statement saying the release was the culmination of two years of hard work and that Holt’s wife Thamy would be accompanying him home. “Over the past two years I’ve worked with two presidential administrations, countless diplomatic contacts, ambassadors all over the world, a network of contacts in Venezuela and President Maduro himself, and I could not be more honored to be able to reunite Josh with his sweet, long-suffering family,” Hatch said in a statement.

Holt, a Mormon, was being held at a prison in Caracas known as the Helicoide where political prisoners are held by the Venezuelan intelligence service Sebin. He was arrested shortly after arriving in Venezuela nearly two years ago. He surfaced in a video calling on the US government to help get him out during a prison protest earlier this month by jailed opposition activists. On Friday, the government released 20 jailed activists held in the western state of Zulia amid moves by Maduro to ease domestic tensions. Maduro was re-elected to a six-year term in controversial elections May 20 that were boycotted by most opposition parties and rejected as illegitimate by the United States and other countries. —Agencies

International

War, displacement reshuffle Syria's demographic map

Borders erected between ethnic, religious, political communities

BEIRUT: Seven years of war and massive displacement have redrawn Syria's demographic map, erecting borders between the country's ethnic, religious, and political communities that will be hard to erase. Displaced Syrians, analysts, and rights defenders have described to AFP a divided country where regime opponents have been driven out, minorities stick closer together and communities generally have become more homogenous.

The demographic reshuffle is likely to last, they say, with around 11 million Syrians displaced either abroad or within the country and unsure if they can go home. Abu Musab al-Mukasar, a 25-year-old rebel fighter, doubts he'll ever return to his birthplace in Homs city, now fully held by Syrian troops. "I could never go back to regime territory - or live side by side with Alawites," he says, referring to the religious minority sect of President Bashar Al-Assad.

The minority-led government has ruled a Sunni-majority population for decades, but Abu Musab says the rifts are now deeper than ever. "Of course I'll tell my son all this, so he'll hate the people that did this to us, too," says the fighter, contacted by AFP on an online messaging platform. Abu Musab, a Sunni, first left Homs for rural rebel zones nearby in a 2014 evacuation deal. Last week, another negotiated withdrawal saw him, his wife, three-year-old son and infant daughter bussed north to Idlib province.

Idlib has become a dumping ground for hundreds of thousands of Sunni rebels and their families transferred from areas recaptured by the regime. "The demographics

changed without us even noticing. The country has been divided," says Abu Musab.

Tit-for-tat

The fighter described the broad outlines of what he saw as Syria's new sectarian map: "The north is Sunni, the northeast is Kurdish, those in (coastal) Latakia, Tartous, and Homs are Alawite and Shiite Muslim." Syrian rebels pushed Alawite and Christian minorities out because they were perceived as Assad loyalists, says Fabrice Balanche, an expert on Syria's population and politics.

Some shifts were through population swaps

in regime territory, and more than a third of them are minorities," he says.

Some of those shifts were through population swaps, including the controversial "Four Towns Deal" that tied the fate of Sunni-majority Madaya and Zabadani to the Shiite villages of Fuaa and Kafraya. Since 2015, thousands were transferred from Fuaa and Kafraya to Damascus, in exchange for similar numbers leaving Madaya and Zabadani for Syria's north. In a 2017 AFP interview, Assad admitted that displacement was "compulsory" but temporary.

Before the war erupted in 2011, Sunni Arabs made up 65 percent of the population, Kurds about 15 percent, and all religious minorities about 20 percent. The regime has lost territory, but the consolidation of Alawites, Shiites, and Christians around it has actually granted it a stronger base, according to Balanche. "Today, 70 percent of Syria's population is



QAMISHLI, Syria: Syrian-Kurdish people demonstrate against demographic changes forced by Turkey to repopulate Kurdish areas yesterday. — AFP

'Things are different'

But minorities say they cannot imagine going home. Abbas Abbas, 36, fled Kafraya years ago for Sayyida Zeinab, a neighborhood near Damascus that hosts a shrine revered by fellow Shiites. "Most people from Kafraya don't want to go back. At least I'm not afraid of being kidnapped here," he tells AFP. In the past, Kafrayans mixed with other villagers. "But eight years into Syria's war, things are different," says the sound engineer. He expects the remaining

8,000 residents of Fuaa and Kafraya to be forced out "sooner or later".

Not far from Abbas' estranged hometown, another communal conflict is unfolding. A Turkish-led assault this year displaced over 137,000 people from Kurdish-majority Afrin to nearby regime zones, or even farther to Kurdish areas in the northeast. Some of their homes now house other displaced. Around 35,000 of those bussed out of the onetime rebel bastion of Eastern Ghouta near Damascus have resettled in Afrin. —AFP

In Moroccan desert, meteorite hunters seek to strike it rich

ZAGORA, Morocco: They roam Morocco's southern desert, braving the searing heat to scour the undulating sands for bounty fallen from the sky. These celestial treasure hunters are searching for meteorites to sell on a burgeoning international market. Equipped with a "very strong" magnet and magnifying glass, retired physical education teacher Mohamed Bouzgarine says that discoveries "can be more valuable than gold".

The price "depends on the rock's rarity, its shape and its condition", the 59-year old adds, sporting a dark blue tracksuit, lighter blue scarf and sunglasses. "Rocks coming from Mars are very expensive, sometimes as much as 10,000 dirhams (around \$1,000) per gram," he says. Bouzgarine stops in front of a hollow, hoping it could be a crater formed "very long ago" by extraterrestrial matter. "It's a first sign," he says, ready to get down to work, in the township of M'Hamid el Ghizlane.

For four years now, he's been sifting rocks in the sand, inspecting them for telltale signs of burn incurred during fiery journeys through the atmosphere. And while he is yet to strike it lucky, the success of some of his hundreds of peers provides the stamina to plod on.

Rich hunting grounds

Likewise Abderrahmane, a 48-year-old paramedic who is spending his vacation searching for meteorites. Others "have made a lot of money... one meteorite hunter found and sold 600 grams for 7,500 dirhams (\$780) per gram," Abderrahmane says, dressed in a blue safari suit. "From the 2000s, all the nomads started to look for rocks," he says. A few foreign specialists are also drawn to the quest for extraterrestrial fragments in the desert landscapes of Erfoud, Tata and Zagora.

These parts of southern Morocco are rich hunting grounds, as the wind uncovers meteorites and their black hue is easy to spot against the near-white sand. "At least half the scientific publications on the subject are made on the basis of meteorites collected in Morocco," geochemist Hasnaa Chennaoui Aoudjehane tells AFP. Desert zones are "favorable to the accumulation of meteorites, there is no vegetation... (and) ... the risk of alteration is low," adds Aoudjehane, who teaches at Casablanca's Hassan II university.

For scientists, these rocks harbor valuable information about the formation of the solar system 4.5 billion years ago, as well as the planets and their internal composition. One in every five meteorites is valuable. Demand from scientists and specialist brokers has raised prices and inspired meteorite hunters. Unlike other countries, where the state stakes a claim, there is no legal framework governing discoveries in Morocco, so it's a case of "finders keepers". While several meteor showers have occurred in Morocco in recent years, a bonanza known as the "black beauty" was the most lucrative.

'Like playing the lottery'

In 2011, fragments of this Martian landing fell in southern Morocco's Tata region, setting in motion a scramble that saw seven kilograms of fragments recovered. The haul fetched prices of between \$500 and \$1,000 per gram. Back on the desert plains, it can be frustrating work, requiring a lot of patience. Twenty days into his "holiday", paramedic Abderrahmane has been "searching for fragments" without finding anything of note, he says. But he remains undeterred. "It is a question of luck - it's like playing the lottery," he smiles.

And he knows how he will handle a major find. "The sale is made discreetly - it is necessary to get the vendor's confidence," he says. Transactions are also made online, in specialist forums and even on classified advertising sites. The most valuable finds are sold at auction in Paris or New York. "What one finds in the (local) souks are just odds and ends," says Abderrahmane. And there's not much money to be made at the bottom end of the meteorite sales chain. —AFP

Iran's first female manufacturer a victim of Trump

TEHRAN: She fought through a male-dominated world to become perhaps Iran's first female manufacturing boss, and was on the cusp of major success with the help of a European investor. Until Donald Trump brought her crashing back to earth. When Leila Daneshvar was a little girl, she used to sit on the floor of her father's workshop, asking for small jobs. "He was a mechanic, and I always had the most fun when I was in the garage with him," she told AFP. "But in those days, there were no mechanical careers in Iran, so I went to college in India. Even there, I was the only girl in my year of 139 students. I had a hard time."

But she persevered. Now 37, she runs her own company in Iran, making mobility equipment for hospitals and the elderly. "I went to Europe and saw how disabled people live happy, independent lives. I wished my own people had this equipment, and I thought: 'This doesn't look complicated. I'm a mechanical engineer - I can do it.'"

The breakthrough for the company, called KTMA and selling under the brand "Lord", came in early 2016, just after Iran's nuclear deal with world powers came into force, lifting international sanctions. Within a couple of months, a Swedish investor, Anna Russberg, had agreed to buy 25 percent of the company, bringing much-needed business acumen and capital. "Leila had a reputation for quality production, which was practically unknown here. But I needed to

turn the business upside-down," said Anna. "It worked. People could tell we were a good mix. We respect each other's knowledge. She's the engineer, I'm the business-woman."

Being women in Iran's patriarchal business world could be tricky, but also an advantage. "Hijab is difficult when you're a manufacturer. You have to climb things, go below things," said Leila, laughing. "But being a woman has its advantages. Everyone remembers you." Anna added: "People don't know how to treat us exactly, which is useful in negotiations."

'Breaks my heart'

Things were looking up: Low production costs meant they could charge five times less than foreign firms and they were doubling sales each year, finally landing a major contract with Qatari hospitals. But then Trump happened. Even before he pulled the US out of the nuclear deal, the American president's constant threats to reimpose sanctions had a chilling effect on trade. It soon became hard to import crucial raw materials, particularly stainless steel.

"We already had problems in getting raw materials... and now it's impossible. Either I have to close the factory, or have to continue with much higher prices," said Leila. "We had to let four or five workers go last month because we couldn't pay their salaries, and it breaks my heart." She watched Trump deliver his speech on May 8, reimposing sanctions on Iran, with a mix of horror and fury, particularly when he claimed to be on the side of the Iranian people against their government. "That made me so angry. These sanctions are not on the government, it's on the people. I can give less to disabled people, to the elderly. Our saying was that we



TEHRAN: Iranian Leila Daneshvar, Managing Director at KTMA, works with an engineer at the company's factory in Tehran's Shahriar neighborhood on May 17, 2018. — AFP

are providing European quality with affordable prices. Can I do that anymore? I don't know." Anna remains defiantly positive. "Iran has 10 million older or injured people who can use our product. With or without Trump, we still have a business," she said. But whether or not the business can survive the Trump administration's vow to "crush" the Iranian economy with sanctions, it is already clear that investors like Anna are no longer coming to Iran.

The dream of the nuclear deal - that hundreds of small businesses would blossom with European support, creating an important constituency supporting good

relations with the West - was dead long before Trump finally yanked the US out of the agreement. "It's a real pity. Being an investor in Iran is a rollercoaster - you take one step forward, three steps back. But it's an amazing country with great opportunities," Anna said.

Leila stays positive by remembering her father, who passed away last month. "When I become weak and tired... I remember his strength," she said. "There is no going back. Iran faces so many problems, but I learned from him that the strength is inside me, and my partner. When we believe we can do it, we will do it." —AFP

Telling truth to power not easy for Malaysia media

KUALA LUMPUR: In the first hours after the biggest political upset in Malaysia's history, the chief editor of news site Malaysiakini gathered his team in their cramped newsroom in a shabby industrial estate on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. Some journalists and volunteers brought in to cover this month's election that ousted the Barisan in November from power after 61 years shed a few tears of joy, recounted Steven Gan, the editor. Others fretted that a government that had relentlessly harassed them, even blocking their site during the vote count on election night, may still try to cling to power. With widespread distrust in the largely party-owned or pro-Barisan press that skipped stories of corruption and gave little voice to opposition parties, reporting from alternative news sources like Malaysiakini played a major role in rousing an electorate angered by endemic graft and rising living costs.

Remembering what he said to his staff that morning, Gan said it was no victory speech, but a simple message: "It doesn't really matter who is in power, we as journalists will continue to do our job." Wall-to-wall coverage of the fallout from the election since then has given a sense that Malaysia's media has been unshackled by the arrival of a new coalition that includes pro-democracy activists and has pledged to repeal anti-fake news legislation.

However, uncertainty remains as to whether the mainstream media, conditioned to be cautious because of the diverse religious and ethnic mix in the country, will keep its focus on politics when the election fever dies down. Or whether the new administration led by 92-year-old Mahathir Mohamad - who intimidated and muzzled the media when he was prime minister from 1981 to 2003 - is really prepared to cede more power to the fourth estate.

"Mahathir is not known to be a democrat, so there is some skepticism," said Gan. "We are going through a period of euphoria and things are still in flux. It will take a few months before we know."

Structural problems

At the heart of the issue is that a number of Malaysia's mainstream news outlets are either owned by parties from the former coalition government or linked to state entities. This allowed the political leadership to vet senior editorial appointments and influence coverage, stifling opposition voices during the campaign and sending readers elsewhere for the facts. "In prison I had no access to newspapers, television, so in a way it was good. I kept my sanity by not reading local papers," reform leader Anwar Ibrahim joked as he addressed reporters last week after his release from prison, where he was jailed three years ago on charges of sodomy that he said were politically motivated.

He and Mahathir came together in the alliance that won the May 9 election. In the free-for-all that has followed, journalists at the likes of the Star, an English-language newspaper majority owned by one of the Barisan parties, have scrambled to catch up on big stories mostly ignored previously. "Up until May 8, the mainstream media was used by the government to create an alternate reality which no thinking person could really have believed in," said Martin Vengadesan, news editor at the Star.

The paper this week published his interview with Clare Rewcastle-Brown, whose groundbreaking reporting on a financial scandal at state fund IMDB was suppressed and led to her exile from Malaysia, on the front page. "When I was interviewing (Rewcastle-Brown) and we were talking openly about ... corruption at the highest level, I had to keep checking myself because I was not used to this much openness," Vengadesan said in an email.

But Vengadesan added that because of the Star's political ownership, it does face uncertainty. "I don't have any answers as to what future direction we may take," he said. The Star's major shareholder, the Malaysian Chinese Association party, was in the former coalition government but lost all but one of its seats in the election. For even the most intrepid reporters, years of persecution at the hands

of the government have made them wary of promises of change. Under the previous administration, financial newspaper the Edge and news site the Malaysian Insider were suspended, two cartoonists were charged for satirizing Prime Minister Najib Razak, and charges were brought against Malaysiakini's co-founders. Gan and Premesh Chandran. Life was set to get even tougher under fake news laws brought in last month, under which misleading reports can lead to prison terms of up to six years. On the campaign trail, Mahathir's political alliance promised to repeal the fake news law but since the election the new premier has equivocated. "Even though we support freedom of press and freedom of speech, there are limits," Mahathir said.

In the early years of Mahathir's first spell as prime minister, he suspended three newspapers - the Star, Sin Chew Daily and Watan - and used several laws to curb speech freedoms. "After that, everybody did a lot of self-censorship and wanted to avoid problems," Chan Aun Kuang, editor-in-chief of Chinese-language newspaper Nanyang Siang Pau, told Reuters.

However, this time, Mahathir's party is a minority in the new ruling coalition, and if his authoritarianism resurfaced it is likely to be curbed by his partners. So far, he has shown a consultative approach in dealings with his new allies. Anwar, an enemy-turned-ally of Mahathir who is expected to take over as prime minister at some point, has already sounded a different note. "We are committed to the reform agenda, beginning with the judiciary, media and the entire apparatus," he said last week.

The Malaysian way

Even if some of the publishing controls are dismantled, and government pressure subsidies, some of the country's leading independent media outlets don't expect radical changes in a press corps conditioned for years to behave cautiously. "We have our own way," said Kamarul Bahrain Haron, deputy editor-in-chief of Astro Awani, a round-the-clock news channel. "We always love to say in editorial meetings an idiom or proverb in Malay: 'If there's a pound of flour, and just one strand of hair, you pull the hair without disturbing the flour,'" he said, explaining that means being critical without creating a stir.—Reuters

Deadly disputes over environment and land in India's wealthiest states

Several states have diluted provisions to speed up acquisitions

BANGKOK: Deadly clashes last week in southern India, and farmers' protests in the west against a refinery and a bullet train, highlight the increasingly fraught disputes over land and environment in the country's most industrialized states. Police opened fire Tuesday on protesters seeking to shut down a copper smelter run by Vedanta Resources in the southern port city of Thoothukudi, killing 10. Three more persons have since died.

Residents and activists had for years demanded the plant be shut down, saying its emissions were polluting the air, water and soil, affecting people's health and livelihoods. Vedanta denied the allegations, and said in a statement that it had complied with "all the necessary regulations". On Thursday, officials in Tamil Nadu state, where Thoothukudi is located, ordered the plant to be shut down. "This government...respects the sentiments of the people (and) is taking steps legally to close down the unit," chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami told reporters.

The protests are among several in India's wealthiest states, where villagers are increasingly taking to the streets against industry-friendly policies they say are taking away their land and livelihoods. Across the country, such conflicts have increased, activists say, as land is sought for industrial use in one of the world's fastest growing major economies. A 2013 law was meant to protect the rights of farmers and villagers, ensuring consensus over land acquisitions, rehabilitation for those displaced, and adequate compensation. It also requires environment and social impact assessments.

But several states have diluted these provisions to speed up acquisitions for developments they say generate jobs and wealth. In the rush to lure more investors, officials often clear projects too quickly and overlook violations, analysts say. "The more developed states have a reputation for being more business friendly, so they receive more applications for setting up industry, and they clear them faster," said Aseem Shrivastava, a development economist. "They tend to have a lighter touch with violations to keep investments

coming," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Blind eye

Tamil Nadu, among the most industrialized states in the country, is dogged by reports of child labor and abuse of tens of thousands of women workers in its multi-billion dollar textile industry. At the same time, policies that favor industry have driven hundreds of desperate farmers in the state to take their own lives, activists say. "Laws to protect people only exist on paper," said Geetha Narayanan, an activist in Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu state where the deadly protests against the smelter took place.

"In Thoothukudi, people have been protesting for 20 years, and going to court to say public consultations were not held, that environmental impact assessments were not done. Yet the government turned a blind eye until lives were lost," she said. In the western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, farmers have taken to the streets to protest land acquisitions for a bullet train, as well as a \$44-billion refinery and petrochemical project. The \$17-billion-dollar high-speed rail link to connect financial hub Mumbai and Ahmedabad, has sparked a debate on the definition of "public purpose", or the state's legal right to take private property for public use.

Officials say the train, being built with Japanese cooperation, will cut travel time between the two cities by more than half, to under three hours, helping businesses, and generating more jobs in the areas serviced by the line. Farmers stand to lose 850 hectares of land, and have not given their consent as required, said Sagar Rabari, a leader with farmers' group Gujarat Khedut Samaj. "This is fertile land that is the only means of livelihood for thousands," Rabari said by phone. "If we lose this land, how will we live?" Calls to the National High Speed Rail Corporation seeking comment were not returned.

Hold accountable

Gujarat and Maharashtra states account for more than a tenth of the nearly 600 ongoing land disputes in the coun-



CHENNAI: Indian protesters hold placards and shout slogans during a demonstration against the killings of protesters in Tuticorin on May 24, 2018. — AFP

try, according to data from research firm Land Conflict Watch. Along with Tamil Nadu, they are among India's most industrialised states, with wealthier and better educated populations - factors that contribute to a greater number of conflicts, said Shrivastava. "While the states are wealthier, the urban-rural divide is wider, which is leading to more dissatisfaction among villagers," he said.

"But because literacy levels are higher, people are more aware of their rights, follow the government's moves more closely, and are better able to organize and protest. So we're going to see more, and more violent conflicts," he said. In Maharashtra, thousands of farmers are also refusing to surrender land for a proposed refinery of a consortium of Indian firms with Saudi Aramco, the world's top oil producer.

The earmarked region along India's west coast is famed for its juicy Alphonso mangoes and lush cashew plantations.

The state government has failed to secure even one acre of the roughly 15,000 acres needed, state industry minister Subhash Desai told Reuters. Some of those farmers joined thousands of others in a 180-km march to Mumbai recently, demanding that the government recognize their rights over forests and stop the forced acquisition land for industrial projects.

Other farmers in Gujarat had reason to celebrate this week, as the US Supreme Court agreed to hear their lawsuit against a World Bank agency, which financed a power plant they blame for damaging the environment and their livelihoods. "The government says development is good. But the fact that industries contribute to the economy does not preclude them from following the law," said Ritwick Dutta, an environmental lawyer who has taken Vedanta and other large corporations to court. "People's lives are at stake," he said. — Reuters

News in brief

48 killed in Uganda road crash

KAMPALA: At least 48 people including 16 children died in northern Uganda when a bus hit a tractor driving with no lights at night and then a truck, the Red Cross said yesterday. "Evacuation teams are working tirelessly to rescue the injured", said Ugandan police spokeswoman Emilian Kayima, adding that all three drivers had died. "The death toll is now at 48 including 16 children," Red Cross spokeswoman Irene Nakasiita told AFP. The accident happened on Friday night in Kiryandongo, about 220 km north of the capital Kampala. The bus collided first with the tractor before hitting a truck transporting beer. Local media said the death toll exceeded 30. Uganda has one of the worst records for road safety, due to the poor condition of vehicles and roads as well as dangerous driving. More than 9,500 people died in a road accident in the country between 2015 and 2017, according to figures from the transport ministry, with the situation worsening each year. — AFP

Migrants flee from captors

TRIPOLI: More than 100 East African migrants escaped from smugglers holding them captive near the Libyan town of Bani Walid earlier this week, with some of them wounded and reportedly killed in the process, a local source and humanitarian workers said. The local source in Bani Walid and Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said the migrants were shot at as they tried to flee. Survivors told MSF that at least 15 people were killed and up to 40, mostly women, had been left behind. MSF said in a statement it had treated 25 of the migrants at Bani Walid hospital, and that some had severe gunshot wounds and multiple fractures. The migrants, numbering about 140 and of Eritrean, Ethiopian and Somali nationality, had been held by "notorious trafficker Mousa Diab", according to a separate statement by the UN migration and refugee agencies. They were mainly teenagers seeking asylum in Europe, and reported being held by traffickers who had sold them multiple times around Bani Walid and the nearby town of Nesma, MSF said. — Reuters

Cheap rides at risk in drive to clean up streets

MANILA: From Manila's iconic jeepneys to Kuala Lumpur's motorbike taxis, Southeast Asian capitals are on a drive to clean their streets of vehicles that cause pollution and traffic jams, while experts defend the vital role they play in cities without adequate public transit. The Philippines this year began rolling out electric vans, which officials say will replace jeepneys older than 15 years with safer, more environment-friendly vehicles by 2020. But operators and drivers of the 270,000 jeepneys that ply the country's choked roads are resisting the plan, saying the strict conditions and high cost of the new vehicles will push them out of business and raise prices for commuters.

"It will definitely send transport workers and their families into poverty and dangerous desperation," said Daisy Arago, executive director of the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights in Manila. "Modernization is acceptable only when rights and welfare are at the center of the program, she said, adding that privatizing operations may increase fares and hurt poorer residents. Jeepneys, known endearingly as "Kings of the Road", have for decades been the cheapest option in a country where millions struggle with inadequate public transport.

Cobbled together initially from surplus army jeeps left behind by the US military after World War Two, jeepneys have evolved into cultural icons, brightly painted and decorated with religious symbols, pithy slogans and luxury logos. At a cost of 8 pesos (\$0.15) for 4 km in Manila, even the city's poorest residents can afford them. Manila aims to phase out about two-

thirds of jeepneys. But the government denies it is unfairly targeting drivers and operators.

"We assure Filipino jeepney drivers that this initiative of the government to improve our public transport sector will not put them out of business," presidential spokesman Harry Roque said in a statement. "In fact, the program aims to strengthen and guarantee the profitability of the jeepney business," he said.

'Disastrous'

In Metro Manila, one of the world's most densely populated urban areas with nearly 13 million people, jeepneys are the preferred transport option, ferrying millions of commuters every day. Each vehicle packs in 15 to 20 people, who sit knee-to-knee on twin benches without seatbelts or air-conditioning. Drivers are known to speed, stopping randomly to pick up and let off passengers. They make between 200 and 400 pesos a day, and pay a portion of their earnings to the owner.

Most vehicles run on heavily-polluting diesel, which is the main reason they must be replaced, according to officials. The government also wants to set new routes with fixed drop-off and pick-up points, and consolidate vehicle ownership, which officials say will streamline operations and improve earnings. But drivers say the new vehicles, priced at about 1.8 million pesos (\$34,000), are too expensive, and that the government subsidy of 80,000 pesos is inadequate.

Anyone who wants to buy a franchise must have a market capitalization of at least 7 million pesos and a fleet of 20 units, which would bar thousands of small and independent operators who now make a living from jeepneys, Arago said. "Providing efficient and affordable public transportation services is a principal obligation of the state to its citizens," she said. "Handing public transportation services over to private corporations would be disastrous to public interests, particularly commuters and



MANILA: Jeepneys are seen in this March 15, 2018 photo. — Reuters

wage earners," she added. The government will offer subsidized loans to help buy new vehicles, according to Roque.

Priority lanes

Elsewhere in the region, motorcycle taxis - the fastest way to get around gridlocked streets - face an uncertain future, as do all motorbikes in some cities, even as car sales boom. Kuala Lumpur last year banned motorcycle taxi services due to safety concerns. In Bangkok, drivers face increasing restrictions from the military government including on parking on sidewalks, said Chaloei Changtongmadun, president of the motorcycle taxi association, which has long sought designated parking zones.

City officials have said that motorbike taxis clutter sidewalks and cause accidents with their rash driving. Thailand's road death rate is the highest in the world apart from war-ravaged Libya, according to a 2015 World Health Organization report.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's Supreme Court earlier this year lifted a ban on motorcycles on Jakarta's main thoroughfares, following a petition by a motorcycle taxi driver who argued that it was discriminatory. Hanoi has vowed to ban all motorcycles by 2030 to unclog its streets and reduce emissions.

These moves are misguided when public transport systems in the region are still inadequate, said Rene Santiago, at the Transportation Science Society of the Philippines. "Instead of posing hurdles, governments should work with operators and help them become more efficient to solve urban transit problems," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. In Manila, priority lanes for jeepneys, passenger shelters and digital booking systems similar to ride-hailing apps can help relieve congestion while also serving drivers and commuters, he said. "They are seen as a traffic hazard, but really, we must acknowledge they play a very vital role in urban transit." — Reuters

Hawaii street swallowed by 'lava tide'

PAHOA, Hawaii: A tide of molten rock turned a Hawaii street into a volcanic wasteland on Friday as the number of homes destroyed by the erupting Kilauea volcano soared and authorities told residents to flee a surge of lava heading towards them. The destructive fury of the erupting Kilauea volcano was unleashed on the Big Island's Leilani Estates housing development, with the number of homes and other structures destroyed leaping to 82 from a previous count of 50, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Some 2,200 acres of land have been torched by lava since May 3, in what is likely to be the

most destructive eruption of Kilauea in more than a century, according to the County of Hawaii. "There were eight houses taken on this road in 12 hours," Ikaika Marzo said in a Facebook video as he stood on Kaupuli street and showed a black, glass-like lava field where his cousin's house previously stood.

Magma spewed from 30-m-high cinder cones and formed elevated ponds of molten rock that were expected to soon overflow and stream into the next rows of homes - Kahukai Street and Mohala Street. Firefighters went door to door evacuating residents before the lava arrived. "It's this tide of lava that rises up and overflows itself on the edges and keeps rising and progressing forward," US Geological Survey geologist Wendy Stovall told journalists on a conference call.

Around 37 structures are already "lava locked", meaning homes are inaccessible, and people who do not evacuate may be trapped by lava flows. "Any residents remaining in the current affected areas

should evacuate now," Hawaii County Civil Defense said in an alert. Magma is draining underground from a sinking lava lake at Kilauea's 4,091-foot (1,247-m) summit before flowing around 40 km east and bursting from giant cracks, with two flows reaching the ocean just over 5 km distant.

Stovall declined to comment on lava volume being emitted. Marzo said he was told by a USGS geologist there was much more to come from Kilauea. "What has been coming out is just a small fraction of what was in the volcano," he said. Though lava destruction from the volcano is confined to a roughly 26-sq-km area, the eruption is hurting the island's tourist-driven economy as potential visitors fear ashfall or volcanic smog belching from Kilauea's summit. Visitor numbers to the Connecticut-sized island so far in 2018 are "trending a little bit lower" than 2017, with the cancellation of some port visits by cruise ships expected to have a \$3 million impact, Ross Birch, head of the island's tourism board said on a conference call. — Reuters



PAHOA: Community members watch as a home is destroyed by lava from a Kilauea volcano fissure in Leilani Estates on Hawaii's Big Island on Friday. — AFP

International

Collapse of Trump-Kim summit threatens to deepen US-China rift

China calls for both sides to meet halfway

BEIJING: US President Donald Trump's cancellation of a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un threatens further strain on US-China ties amid a trade dispute that had been intertwined with Beijing's pressure on isolated Pyongyang. The United States and China are also increasingly at odds in the disputed South China Sea. The Pentagon this week withdrew an invitation for China to take part in a major naval exercise in Hawaii, and Beijing has ramped up pressure on self-ruled Taiwan, armed by Washington but claimed by Beijing.

Trump on Thursday released a letter to Kim announcing his withdrawal from the planned June 12 meeting in Singapore, which would have been the first between leaders of the two countries. Although Chinese state media called for continued engagement between Washington and Pyongyang, Trump's move could mark a split between China and the United States over how to deal with North Korea and its nuclear weapons, experts said.

It also risks adding fuel to simmering trade tensions, just days after China and the United States pulled back from the brink of a full-blown trade war. "Definitely there are people in the US who want to use this as an excuse for their efforts to push the relationship in the direction of confrontation," said Jia Qingguo, dean of the School of International Studies at China's Peking University, referring to the collapse of the Trump-Kim summit. "This is one of the lowest points in the relationship since the normalisation of relations between the two countries," he added. China's foreign ministry on Friday said the government would keep encouraging the United States and North Korea to have direct talks, describing such communication as having a "pivotal" role in denuclearization. "Rest assured, China will continue, in our own way, to carry out US-North Korea work, so as to promote the resumption of the dialogue process on the peninsula," ministry spokesman Lu Kang told reporters.



Beijing will grow closer to Pyongyang, nervous of US

China aligned with Kim

China has long viewed North Korea as a useful buffer between it and US forces in South Korea. The two also have deep emotional ties: Chinese troops fought side-by-side with North Korea in the 1950-53 Korean War. But in recent years, relations between China and North Korea had nosedived to the point of a near diplomatic freeze, as Beijing signed on to ever-stricter United Nations sanctions over Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. China's willingness to keep up pressure on its neighbor may now wane. Even with the summit's collapse, China must continue to improve ties with North Korea given Kim's pledge not to carry out nuclear and missile tests, China's widely read state-run Global Times tabloid said in an editorial on Friday. A military conflict on the peninsula might see refugees flood over China's long border with North Korea, or even drag it into confrontation with the United States - both scenarios Beijing would like to avoid.

"China actually has played the role of hidden guarantor for the North Korea-United States summit, so China will continue to promote this meeting," Sun Xingjie, an expert on North Korea at the Jilin University, said in comments to the People's Daily Overseas Edition, an official Communist Party paper. "If they cannot come to the negotiating table, then they will enter the battlefield," Sun said.

Trump last week hinted that he partly blames China for how summit preparations went awry, saying President Xi Jinping might be "influencing" Kim after the North Korean leader made two visits to China in quick succession. But Chinese experts said Xi would not have sabotaged the meeting, given China's deep interest in reducing tensions on the peninsula.

"If the summit is cancelled, China is the one that faces great increase of uncertainty," said Shi Yinhong, an international relations expert at Renmin University in Beijing who has advised the government on diplomatic issues. Renewed friendly ties between



This undated picture released yesterday shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un inspecting the construction site of the Wonsan-Kalma coastal tourist area. —AFP

China and North Korea would make Beijing more closely aligned with Pyongyang and nervous about Washington, Shi said. "A return by Trump to maximum pressure and military and economic threat brings a significant problem" for China.

Trade deal uncertainty

Meanwhile, Trump also cast uncertainty over progress in trade talks, saying Wednesday that Washington would seek a new "structure" for the deal and a new direction for talks with Beijing, days after the two had taken conciliatory stances. US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross will visit China from June 2 to 4. "China does not link trade and North Korea because that will make things

more complicated," said Ruan Zongze, a former diplomat now with the China Institute of International Studies, a think tank linked to China's foreign ministry.

Some analysts had suggested, however, that China was using its leverage on North Korea, and Trump's perceived desire for a successful summit with Kim, to blunt the sharpest edges of US trade threats. Tu Xinquan, dean of the China Institute for WTO Studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, said the summit's collapse added to uncertainty in US-China trade relations. "Even before this announcement, Trump's attitude on trade with China had changed a bit," he said. "I am a little pessimistic about this trade deal." —Reuters

'Poker player' Xi holds North Korea trump card



DALIAN, China: This picture taken on May 8, 2018 shows Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) walking with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. —AFP

BEIJING: Dubbed a "world-class poker player" in diplomacy by Donald Trump, Chinese leader Xi Jinping may hold the best cards after the US leader scrapped his planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. While China had publicly backed the June 12 meeting, analysts say Beijing was worried that a deal between its traditional ally and the United States could harm its strategic interests. With both Trump and North Korea leaving the door open for the summit to take place at a later date, Beijing has won more time to ensure that its interests are protected, and possibly gain leverage in separate US trade talks, according to analysts.

Foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang on Friday denied that China had "any ulterior motives", adding it remains committed to the denuclearization of the peninsula, peace and dialogue to resolve the issue. Lu urged the US and North Korea to be "patient" and "show goodwill". Beijing's relations with Pyongyang had been strained and distant in recent years, with China backing a slew of United Nations sanctions following the North's nuclear and missile tests.

But Xi made sure to finally meet Kim this

year - for the first time ever before the North Korean leader held talks with either Trump or South Korean President Moon Jae-in. Trump suggested earlier this week that the veteran Chinese president may have influenced the younger North Korean autocrat, whose position apparently hardened after meeting Xi twice within two months. Analysts agree. "Everything changed because the Chinese told (Kim) not to give up too much too quickly," Jean-Pierre Cabestan, China specialist at Hong Kong Baptist University, told AFP.

'Turning point'

Cabestan said the second Kim-Xi summit, in the Chinese port city of Dalian, was a "turning point" in the North Korean leader's position, with Xi probably reminding Kim that he was better off dealing with his country's chief benefactor than the United States. Xi may have asked Kim to put demands for the suspension of US-South Korean military exercises back on the table, after announcing a unilateral halt to nuclear and missile tests on April 21, said Bonnie Glaser, a senior adviser for Asia at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. —AFP

and the premier alone who appoint ministers.

And according to the Italian press, Mattarella will not bend for two reasons: to avoid isolating Italy in Europe and to protect the role of the president. Conte met the president late on Friday to report "informally" on the discussions, but without presenting his final list of ministers. Already unconvinced of Conte's authority over the political heavyweights who will compose his team, Mattarella - elected by a parliament which at the time was dominated by the center-left - wants Italy to respect its European commitments. But Salvini, 45, emboldened by the March 4 election, does not intend to give up either, reportedly to the point that he is willing to "blow everything up" and return to the voters.

As guarantor of international treaties, Mattarella has been more discrete since the standoff began on Thursday. But he was clear in denouncing the "unacceptability of diktats towards the prime minister and president" by political parties. The center-left Democratic Party of former premier Matteo Renzi, however, did not pull its punches. "You are playing around at the expense of the country just to defend your miserable interests," party leader Maurizio Martina said in remarks addressed to Salvini said on Saturday. —AFP

Standoff in Italy over naming of economy minister

ROME: The political standoff in Italy continued yesterday over President Sergio Mattarella's refusal to approve the euro-sceptic coalition's choice for economy minister. Three days after being appointed by Mattarella as prime minister, Giuseppe Conte, 53, has still not been able to form a government. Writing on Facebook late on Friday, League chief Matteo Salvini, who insists on naming the noted euro-sceptic Paolo Savona as economy minister, was blunt. "I am really very angry," he wrote.

The far-right leader doubled down yesterday, tweeting images of cartoons in German media lampooning Italy, writing: "The newspapers and German politicians insult us: Italian beggars, idlers, tax evaders, freeloaders and ungrateful. And we should choose an economy minister that suits them? No thanks!" Salvini had nominated Conte for the premiership along with Five Star leader Luigi Di Maio, but officially it is the head of state

SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW

KD 25

PAINTBALL KUWAIT

*** your subscription for one year for only kd 25 and get 4 Free tickets to Paintball kuwait valued at kd 37**

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

1 دخول
Entrance Ticket
Value KD 9.250

50+ طاقمة
Paintballs

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

Trump’s North Korea U-turn: Art of the deal or a boon for regime?

Donald Trump's abrupt cancellation of his summit with Kim Jong Un will strengthen the hand of the reclusive state's leader, analysts say, re-invigorating Pyongyang's relationship with China and driving the two Koreas closer together. Only a day before the sudden U-turn, Trump and US officials had been indicating there was every chance the historic pow-wow between a sitting American president and the third generation Kim would go ahead in Singapore. The meeting, scheduled for June 12, was to be the consummation of a relationship that had raced from threatening each other with nuclear destruction to chummy bonhomie and talk of a peace treaty-all in a few short months.

Decades of diplomatic stalemate had given way to what appeared to be genuine progress in one of geopolitics' stickiest issues, thanks, supporters said, to Trump's unorthodox approach and willingness to engage an international pariah. Pyongyang had released three American prisoners, agreed to a moratorium on missile tests, quietly accepted a US-South Korean military exercise on its doorstep and even blown up its only atomic weapons testing site. Then, barely hours after the dust had settled at the Punggye-ri nuclear facility, Trump announced the summit was dead in a personal letter to Kim.

"The timing of this letter is... highly questionable," said Abraham M Denmark, director of the Asia Program at the Wilson Center. "Coming just a few hours after NK demolished its nuclear test site, it guarantees that the US takes the blame for undermining diplomacy. NK comes out looking like the reasonable one." Pyongyang furthered that impression in the hours after Trump's letter, defying expectations in some quarters that it might launch a missile, or at least a volley of abuse. Instead, it described the decision as "regrettable" and calmly declared its officials were willing "to sit face-to-face at any time".

'Shaky alliance'

Such an overt display of levelheadedness leaves US demands for continued pressure on North Korea looking hollow, said Denmark-especially for one key regional player. "China is likely to more openly back North Korea. Sanctions enforcement will soften, and I expect high-level contacts will continue," he said.

And where Beijing had, until a few months ago, appeared almost ready to cast its troublesome younger brother to the wind, that looks a lot less likely now. "If US returns to talk of (attacking North Korea), expect Beijing to be more explicit in its willingness to intervene." Pyongyang's new-found moderatism has also won plaudits-and allies south of its highly-fortified border. South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who leapt on the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics as an opportunity to broach a detente with his prickly neighbor, is unlikely to abandon the process now-even at the cost of a deterioration of his country's US alliance.

North Korea's willingness to keep the door open for talks gives Seoul the cover it needs to press ahead with engagement, said Go Myong-hyun, an analyst at Asan Institute of Policy Studies. "It won't be like last year when South Korea and the US stressed their firm alliance and pressured North Korea," he said. "Moon has to double down. In short, he will push ahead with the policy of engagement and focus on dialogue with the North. The South Korea-US alliance will be shaky."

But, Go added, it isn't all bad news for Trump. Analysts have decied the pace of events over the last few months, pointing out that the diplomatically untested businessman-president appeared to have little understanding of the complexities of dealing with North Korea. He and his hawkish administration talked of "denuclearizing the Korean peninsula" as a readily-navigated one-way street that simply involved North Korea mothballing its weapons.

Pyongyang's understanding of the term has always been more nuanced, and likely involves retaining some of its nuclear arsenal whilst pushing for a reduction of American troops in South Korea and weakening Washington's alliance with Seoul. Granting Kim a one-on-one before any concrete moves to scrap his nuclear arsenal was always akin to rushing downhill without looking, observers said. Yet Trump's equally sudden willingness to walk away from an agreement-a strategy he advocated in his "Art Of The Deal" memoir-might just help to level the playing field. "North Korea will have to propose more detailed plans for denuclearization if it wants to talk in the future," said Go.—AFP



US ‘maximum pressure’ on N Korea faces a test

US efforts to sustain and possibly intensify its “maximum pressure” campaign on North Korea are entering a perilous phase as a potential breakdown in diplomacy with Pyongyang raises fears that China may loosen its enforcement of international sanctions. With the fate of a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in limbo, US officials have suggested Washington may pursue fresh sanctions on Pyongyang over its nuclear program even though key players such as China and South Korea may be reluctant to participate.

Another way for the United States and its allies to increase pressure on North Korea could be to step up efforts to intercept ships suspected of violating international trade restrictions on Pyongyang. One US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said more countries are interested in joining that initiative.

Such moves would be designed to reinforce to Kim that he faces more potential economic pain, especially if he takes any provocative action after Trump on Thursday abruptly canceled their planned June 12 summit in Singapore.

Trump held out the possibility on Friday that the summit could still take place. His administration may be wary of acting precipitously on new sanctions while efforts are under way to salvage the meeting, aimed at forging a denuclearization deal with North Korea that could defuse tensions dating to the 1950s on the Korean Peninsula.

Trump last year launched what his administration has called a “maximum pressure” campaign against North Korea combining the toughest-ever US and international economic sanctions with diplomatic actions and the Republican president's military threats and preparations. With the summit in doubt, a big challenge for the United States is that China, North Korea's main trading partner and the linchpin for sanctions enforcement, is increasingly at odds with Trump over how to deal with Pyongyang.

Even before scrubbing the summit, Trump urged China to maintain tight sanctions, writing on Twitter that “the word is that recently the Border has become much more porous.” Analysts have seen China's willingness to pressure North Korea as waning at a time when Beijing already is

engaged in a trade dispute with Washington. “China is already de-coupling,” said Lee Seong-hyon, research fellow at South Korea's Sejong Institute think tank. “A high-level North Korean delegation just completed an 11-day economic tour of China's industrial cities.”

‘Watching closely’

A senior White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said China had given assurances it would keep up sanctions enforcement on North Korea. “We'll be watching closely to ensure that they do,” the official added. With no summit, the Trump administration would face the question of how much further it wants to go with its “maximum pressure” campaign. Pyongyang has been targeted in three US-led United Nations sanctions resolutions since Trump took office last year.

“The goal here is to achieve maximum pressure,” the White House official said. “We're still short of that.” While China would almost certainly block any US attempt to win passage of more UN sanctions, the United States still has at its disposal further unilateral measures such as imposing its own new sanctions on North

Korean officials and entities or additional Chinese companies that do business with Pyongyang.

Kim's two meetings in recent weeks with Chinese President Xi Jinping also have signaled warming ties that could make it harder for China to join with the United States in taking a harder line. US officials believe sanctions played a major role in leading North Korea to turn to diplomacy after years of missile and nuclear weapons tests. North Korea has said it did so because it had achieved its nuclear arms ambitions and wanted now to focus on economic development in the poor, isolated country.

While Trump's summit cancellation caused anxiety for US ally South Korea, Seoul is expected to keep enforcing existing sanctions. But South Korea could be wary of joining any new US measures that might damage its own delicate diplomatic engagement with the North. “If China and South Korea go wobbly and the world goes wobbly on the maximum pressure campaign, you're putting Trump in a box, and that's the worst possible thing you could do right now,” Republican US Senator Lindsey Graham told Fox News. —Reuters

Taking the US Commission on International Religious Freedom

Dr James J Zogby
President Arab American Institute

The GOP's appointment of prominent purveyors of anti-Muslim hatred to positions on the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is both disturbing and instructive. It exposes the cynical and misguided approach Republicans have taken to the entire enterprise of promoting religious freedom. Twenty years ago, pushed by right-wing religious fundamentalists in the Republican Party, Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA). It was described as an effort to establish “a multifaceted program for ensuring that religious freedom has a permanent place in the formulation of US foreign policy.”

To fulfill this mandate, the IRFA created the office of International Religious Freedom at the State Department headed by an Ambassador-at-large. This office was charged with monitoring the state of religious freedom around the world, identifying countries where serious violations occurred, and then recommending steps that the US government should take to press countries into compliance. As part of its mandate, the office was required to prepare and release an annual report detailing religious freedom conditions in “countries of concern.”

IRFA also created the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), comprised of Commissioners appointed by the White House and Congressional leadership. USCIRF was charged by IRFA with reviewing the State Department's annual religious freedom report and then commenting on its findings, making its independent recommendations and observations to Congress and the Administration. When the legislation was being debated, it was vigorously opposed by a number of groups, including the major US Protestant denominations, the Catholic Church, Arab American and American Muslim groups, and career diplomats at the Department of State.

There were early warnings that IRFA: would be used by right-wing ideologues to push their agenda on other countries without understanding that they might do more harm than good to victims of religious persecution: would inhibit efforts by diplomats and religious leaders to promote religious tolerance and understanding; that by naively seeing all conflicts through the lens of religious freedom, it would ignore the political and social root

causes of many conflicts around the world making it more difficult for policymakers to address these problems; and that by creating and imposing a false hierarchy of rights, prioritizing religious freedom above all others, it would damage efforts to ensure that all aspects of civil and political rights are protected.

As a result, while IRFA might have been considered a noble ambition, it was a flawed project from its inception and it was destined to fail. As a result 20 years and hundreds of millions of dollars later, the state of religious freedom is arguably worse than it was when IRFA was passed and the proponents of the legislation cannot point to positive changes that have been the result of their efforts.

Especially problematic has been the ill-conceived role played by USCIRF. Initially the Commission was envisioned as a bipartisan complement to the State Department office. It was to serve as an outside group that would review and evaluate the government's findings and then make independent recommendations on issues or concerns not addressed in the State Department's reporting on religious freedom. Over a period of time, the Commission began to develop an agenda of its own, writing its own report and issuing open letters or press releases chiding the government for failing to act on USCIRF's concerns.

Instead of finding ways to make advances in protecting religious freedom, USCIRF's metrics of progress became how many foreign “fact finding” visits they made, how many times they were quoted in the press, and how many invitations they received to speak on religious freedom. I was twice appointed by President Obama to serve on the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and twice elected as Vice-Chair of the Commission.

With my appointment, the White House gave me the injunction to “push back” on right-wing influence on the Commission. What I found in my four years was a deeply flawed body that was incapable of making a meaningful contribution to protecting religious freedom around the world. What was most disturbing was the extent to which USCIRF had come to be dominated by an element of hardliners who saw themselves playing an adversarial role that was all too often, more partisan, than constructive.

2 examples will suffice

First, the Obama White House was attacked for not doing enough to protect Iraqi Christians. It's true, of course, that Iraqi Christians were victims ISIS-led genocidal policies. What was problematic was that from 2003 to 2008, during the Bush Administration, when the Christian community in Iraq was ethnically cleansed from 1.4 million to 400,000, USCIRF ignored what was going on in Iraq and was silent on the persecution of these Christians. It wasn't until Obama was in office before USCIRF found its voice.

Second, members and former members of USCIRF widely criticized the Obama Administration for discriminating against Syrian Christian refugees, citing bogus sta-

tistics that only 56 of the 11 thousand Syrian refugees who came to the US during a defined period of time were Christians. After much hue and cry, USCIRF commissioned a study to examine this charge. The study found that while the numbers were correct, there were underlying factors demonstrating that discrimination was not a factor.

Unlike their Muslim compatriots, a larger proportion of Syrian Christians did not flee the country and many of those who fled went to Lebanon or Jordan where they were taken in by communities with whom they had familial ties or by churches with which they were affiliated. Of those who did flee, most did not want to be registered as refugees, preferring instead to wait out the war in hopes of returning. Also, a large number of Christians who did want to leave were able to come to the US or Western Europe as part of the family unification provision of US immigration law.

The study was rejected by USCIRF's Republican hardliners and others on the outside, with one of the newly appointed GOP Commissioners insisting on referring to Obama as “Christophobic” - a term he coined to imply that the president was opposed to Christians. This partisan divide that skews (and discredits) the commission's work is but one of USCIRF's problems. The Commission continues to act as a Congressionally-funded NGO issuing its report and releases that “name and shame” violators of religious freedom.

In all of this, they fail to understand that the “namer and shamer” must be seen as credible by its target to have a meaningful impact. Because, in too many instances they are not seen as an unbiased critic, their denunciations are either ignored or do more harm than good to the victims of violations of religious freedom. Equally problematic is the fact that the Commission lacks clarity as to what constitutes a violation of religious freedom. In too many instances they fail to distinguish between actual violations of religious freedom and regional, tribal, or sectarian struggles for political power.

Instead of spending time understanding the reality of these conflicts, they have engaged in a crude reductionist analysis, seeing everything through the lens of religious freedom. In failing to understand the complexity and non-religious underpinnings of conflicts, their analysis and recommendations often miss the mark. Because religion, per se, is not the cause of tension in Nigeria, Central African Republic, or Iraq, proposing religious freedom is not the solution to their problems.

In the two years since my term on the Commission ended, little has changed. Unfortunately, the new appointments to USCIRF will only take this dysfunctional and counterproductive entity from bad to worse. Individuals who have claimed that Islam is incompatible with “American values”, who have warned against the admittance of Muslim immigrants to the US, and who find Islam inherently violent can only cause further damage to an already damaged partisan enterprise.

SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018

12 Boursa Kuwait equities fall as investor confidence drops



13 India state banks' bailout stumbles as losses mount



14 KFH-Bahrain launches 'Jazeel', a digital account opening platform



BRASILIA: Drivers queue to pump fuel at a gas station in Brasilia, on Friday. Fearing fuel shortage caused by the truckers' national strike, Brasilia's population rushed to the gas stations to fuel their cars and face long queues across town. —AFP

Saudis, Russia signal oil production boost

Crude prices drop \$3 on possible supply spike

NEW YORK/ST PETERSBURG: Global oil prices fell Friday after top producer Saudi Arabia signaled a likely boost in supply as soon as the third quarter, and world stock markets were mixed over the sudden US move to cancel the summit with North Korea.

Russia and Saudi Arabia said Friday they believe a deal is possible to gradually boost oil output from as soon as July as world oil prices have recently hit highs last seen in 2014. President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Moscow would be satisfied with the price of crude oil dropping to \$60 per barrel, from its recent level of around \$80.

Saudi Oil Minister Khaled Al-Faleh said at an economic conference in Russia that a gradual output increase could happen in the second half of the year to prevent any supply shocks, according to the RIA Novosti agency.

Benchmark crude prices tumbled almost \$3 per barrel in London and fell more than \$2 in New York. Oil stocks were likewise hammered as a result, with US supermajor Chevron falling 3.5 percent.

The weakened energy stocks weighed on Wall Street's performance, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average and S&P 500 each lost 0.2 percent for the day.

Russia's oil tsar Alexander Novak said ministers from OPEC

and other members of the production pact would discuss how much to increase production next month.

Russia and Saudi Arabia are the key movers behind a pact between OPEC and other producers that has limited production since 2017 but which experts fear may soon lead to a spike in prices.

Al-Faleh said at an economic conference in Russia that a gradual output increase could happen in the second half of the year to prevent any supply shocks, according to the RIA Novosti agency.

His Russian counterpart Alexander Novak said they had discussed whether they need to ease production limits. "If we come to a common opinion that it is necessary" to increase supply it "should probably take place from the third quarter," Novak said, according to RIA Novosti.

He said ministers from OPEC and other members of the production pact would discuss by how much to increase production next month.

"It is too early to discuss a concrete figure," said Novak.

Their comments sent oil prices tumbling by over three percent. Brent Crude fell to \$76.43 per barrel and WTI Crude to \$68.03. OPEC and 10 other oil producers agreed at the end of 2016 to cut output by 1.8 million barrels per day to clear a glut that had led to a collapse in prices in 2014.

The deal, which has been extended until the end of 2018, has led to that glut disappearing and prices recovering from around \$30 per barrel when it first went into effect.

Uncertainties about supplies from Iran and Venezuela have led prices to spike higher in recent weeks, with industry players warning they could jump to \$100 per barrel.

Putin said that Moscow sees \$60 per barrel as the price which balances supply and demand, and where exploration and development of additional resources can take place.

"We would be completely satisfied with oil at \$60" per

barrel, Putin said in televised comments. He noted that a higher price can hurt consumers and spur production in rival nations. While higher prices were boosting revenue into the Russian budget, Putin acknowledged that "It isn't in our interest that oil prices continue to rise." Novak was later quoted as saying by Interfax news agency that any increase in supplies would be gradual.

"Our objective is to avoid destabilizing the oil market and not overheat it," he said.

"If we come to a common opinion that it is necessary" to increase supply it "should probably take place from the third quarter," Novak said, according to RIA Novosti.

The lackluster finish in New York came amid light trading volume ahead of a three-day holiday weekend, the traditional start of the US summer when many market players are on vacation.

Quincy Krosby, chief market strategist at Prudential Financial, said that more than simply reacting to oil prices, traders were seeking to reduce their exposure to global uncertainties ahead of the holiday.

"You don't want to stay in the market for a long weekend with the uncertainties surrounding North Korea as well as the situation in the middle-east with Iran," he said. —AFP

US reaches deal to keep China's ZTE in business

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration told lawmakers the US government has reached a deal to put Chinese telecommunications company ZTE Corp back in business after it pays a significant fine and makes management changes, a senior congressional aide said on Friday.

US President Donald Trump appeared to confirm the deal in a tweet late on Friday. "I closed it down then let it reopen with high level security guarantees, change of management and board, must purchase US parts and pay a \$1.3 Billion fine."

The reported deal involving China's second-largest telecommunications equipment maker ran into immediate resistance in Congress, where Democrats and Trump's fellow Republicans accused him of bending to pressure from Beijing to ease up on a company that US intelligence officials have suggested poses a significant risk to US national security.

ZTE was banned in April from buying US technology components for seven years for breaking an agreement reached after it violated US sanctions against Iran and North Korea. After ZTE makes a series of changes it would now be allowed to resume business with US companies, including chipmaker Qualcomm Inc. The deal, earlier communicated to officials on Capitol Hill by the Commerce Department, requires ZTE to pay a substantial fine, place US compliance officers at the company and change

its management team, the aide said. The Commerce Department would then lift an order issued in April preventing ZTE from buying US products. ZTE shut down most of its production after the ruling was announced.

Fox News said Trump told them on Thursday that he had negotiated the \$1.3 billion fine with Chinese President Xi Jinping in a phone call. ZTE, which is publicly traded but whose largest shareholder is a Chinese state-owned enterprise, agreed last year to pay a nearly \$900 million penalty and open its books to a US monitor. The penalty stemmed from for breaking an agreement after it was caught illegally shipping US goods to Iran and North Korea, in an investigation dating to the Obama administration.

The company has lost over \$3 billion since the April 15th ban on doing business with US suppliers, according to a source familiar with the matter. Trump on Tuesday floated a plan to fine ZTE up to \$1.3 billion and shake up its management as his administration considered rolling back more severe penalties that have crippled the company.

Responding to news of the administration's deal with ZTE, Republican Senator Marco Rubio tweeted: "Yes they have a deal in mind. It is a great deal ... for #ZTE & China. #China crushes U.S. companies with no mercy & they use these telecomm companies to spy & steal from us."

Rubio, as well as Democratic Senators Chuck Schumer and Chris Van Hollen, said Congress should act to stop Trump from letting ZTE get back into business. "If the administration goes through with this reported deal, President Trump would be helping make China great again," Schumer said Friday on Twitter. "Would be a huge victory for President Xi, and a dramatic retreat by Pres Trump. Both parties in Congress should come together to stop this deal in its tracks."

US intelligence and US law enforcement agencies have serious concerns that ZTE and other Chinese telecommunications firms use their equipment to gather intelligence on US citizens.

The US Department of Defense has also stopped selling ZTE's mobile phones and modems in stores on its military bases, citing potential security risks.

William Evanina, the acting director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, said at his May 15 confirmation hearing that he would not use a ZTE phone nor recommend that anyone in a sensitive position in government use one. Chinese officials sought a pull-back on ZTE as part of any broader deal to prevent a trade war between the world's two biggest economies. US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross is scheduled to visit China next week for another round of talks. White House legislative director Marc Short told PBS Friday that Ross "would be making that announcement in the coming day" of a resolution of the ZTE issue.

ZTE needs US components for its mobile phones and network equipment. US companies provide an estimated 25 percent to 30 percent of components in ZTE's equipment. As part of the agreements ZTE made last year it dismissed four senior employees.

Shares of ZTE's US suppliers traded higher on Friday. Optical networking equipment maker Acacia Communications Inc., which got 30 percent of 2017 revenue from ZTE, rose 4.4 percent. Optical component company Oclaro Inc, which received 18 percent of its fiscal 2017 revenue from ZTE, rose 2.7 percent. Reuters reported earlier this week citing sources that a proposed trade deal with China would lift the ZTE ban. In return, China would eliminate tariffs on US agriculture or agree to buy more farm products from the United States. —Reuters

NBK named 'Best Bank in Kuwait 2018' by Global Finance

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has been named the Best Bank in Kuwait 2018 by the international financial publication Global Finance. NBK was chosen the Best Bank in Kuwait based on input from industry analysts, corporate executives and banking consultants. Criteria for choosing the winners included growth in assets, profitability, strategic relationships, customer service, competitive pricing, and innovative products.

"We have selected the winners based on performance over the past year, as well as subjective criteria, including reputation and management excellence," said Global Finance.

NBK continues to enjoy collectively one of the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for twelve consecutive times and was awarded as the Best Bank in Kuwait in 2017 by the Banker, Euromoney and Global Finance.

NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).



BAYAN Weekly Market Report

Boursa Kuwait equities fall as investor confidence drops

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week in the red zone. The Premier Market Index closed at 4,687.71 points, down by 1.64 percent, the Main Market Index decreased by 1.13 percent after closing at 4,809.20 points, whereas the All-Share Index closed at 4,731.35 points down by 1.45 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 2.41 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 7.56 million, whereas trading volume average was 39.07 million shares, recording a decrease of 4.64 percent.

The Boursa performance was weak in general during the last week, as the negative impact remains over controlling the trading activity, amid continued low confidence rates of many investors, in addition to the noticeable decline in the trading activity, especially the cash liquidity, which decreased in one session of the week to its lowest levels in about two years, that came in light of the refrain of some portfolios and investment funds from purchase, in addition to the effect of the holy month of Ramadan, where trading activity drops in general.

Also, the selling operations witnessed by the Market during the last week included many traded stocks, especially the stocks of the companies that disclosed positive fiscal results for the first quarter of the current year, while the selling pressures included some leading stocks too, which contributed to the increase in the three Market indices' losses and pushed it to close in the red zone for the second consecutive week.

The Boursa recorded a weekly loss of

around KD 380 million, as its market capitalization by the end of the week reached to KD 26.05 billion, against KD 26.43 billion in the previous week, down by 1.44 percent. The Boursa market cap losses since the market segmentation phase reached KD 1.81 billion, down by 6.48 percent. (Note: The market cap for the listed companies in the Market is calculated based on the average weighted number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

Moreover, last week witnessed trading



Market records a weekly loss of around KD 380m

over 146 stock out of 175 listed stock in the Market, where prices of 46 stock increased against prices of 85 stock decreased, and prices 44 stock remained at no change.

Sectors' indices

Ten of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, two recorded increases. Last week's highest loser was the Basic Materials sector, as its index declined by 3.83 percent to end the week's activity at 1,033.39 points. The Industrial sector was

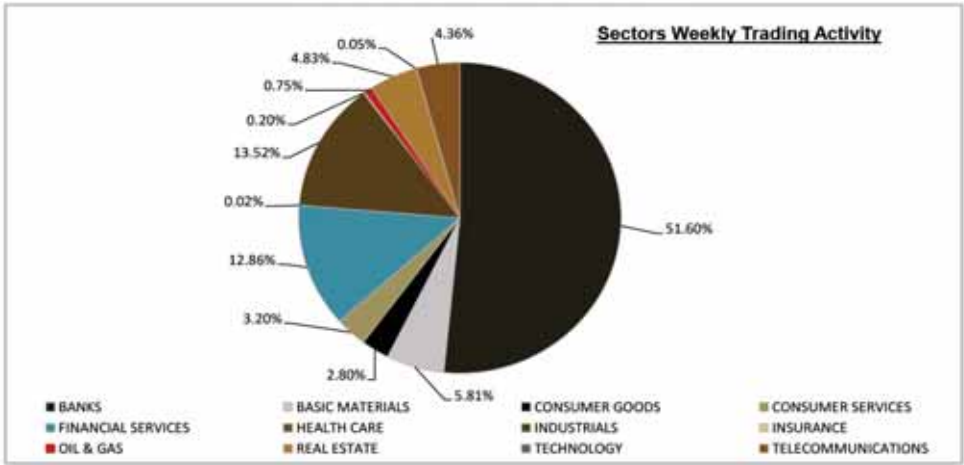
second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.79 percent, closing at 955.16 points, followed by the Insurance sector, as its index closed at 911.44 points at a loss of 2.55 percent. The Telecommunications sector was the least declining as its index closed at 802.77 points with a 0.12 percent decrease.

On the other hand, the Oil & Gas sector headed the gainers list as its index achieving 0.82 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,004.64 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Health Care sector's index closed at 999.63 points recording 0.40 percent increase.

Sectors' activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 66.91 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 34.27 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 28.88 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 56.37 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 19.50 million or 51.60 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Industrial sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 5.11 million representing 13.52 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.



SECTORS TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
BANKS	56,374,159	28.88%	19,503,753	51.60%
BASIC MATERIALS	3,808,374	1.95%	2,196,245	5.81%
CONSUMER GOODS	2,597,029	1.33%	1,059,387	2.80%
CONSUMER SERVICES	7,615,139	3.90%	1,208,880	3.20%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	66,911,762	34.27%	4,861,981	12.86%
HEALTH CARE	57,542	0.03%	7,547	0.02%
INDUSTRIALS	15,194,399	7.78%	5,110,455	13.52%
INSURANCE	229,207	0.12%	76,654	0.20%
OIL & GAS	2,808,291	1.44%	282,554	0.75%
REAL ESTATE	32,092,412	16.44%	1,823,897	4.83%
TECHNOLOGY	159,800	0.08%	17,923	0.05%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	7,377,764	3.78%	1,646,278	4.36%

SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Mkt Seg. to Date Change (%)
BANKS	961.24	977.29	-1.64%	-3.88%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,033.39	1,074.51	-3.83%	3.34%
CONSUMER GOODS	876.17	877.33	-0.13%	-12.38%
CONSUMER SERVICES	1,052.00	1,054.84	-0.27%	5.20%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	979.37	986.27	-0.70%	-2.06%
HEALTH CARE	999.63	995.60	0.40%	-0.04%
INDUSTRIALS	955.16	982.54	-2.79%	-4.48%
INSURANCE	911.44	935.29	-2.55%	-8.86%
OIL & GAS	1,004.64	996.48	0.82%	0.46%
REAL ESTATE	950.69	954.87	-0.44%	-4.93%
TECHNOLOGY	869.20	881.86	-1.44%	-13.08%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	802.77	803.72	-0.12%	-19.72%

Kenya moves to regulate fintech fuelled lending craze

NAIROBI: Kenya built a reputation as a pioneer of financial inclusion through its early adoption of a mobile money system that enables people to transfer cash and make payments on cellphones without a bank account. Now, a proliferation of lenders are using the same technology to extend credit to the banked and unbanked alike, saddling borrowers with high interest rates and leaving regulators scrambling to keep up.

This week, the finance ministry published a draft bill on financial regulation which covers digital lenders for the first time. A key aim is to ensure that providers treat retail customers fairly, it said. "We have a lot of predatory lending out here, which we want to regulate," Geoffrey Mwau, director general of budget, fiscal and economic affairs at the treasury, told reporters on Thursday. As it was for mobile cash, Kenya is something of a test case for the new lending platforms. Several of the companies involved, including US fintech startups, have plans to expand in other frontier markets, meaning Kenya's regulation will be closely watched. From having had little or no access to credit, many Kenyans now find they can get loans in minutes.

George Ombelli, a salesman for a company importing bicycles who also owns a hair salon and cosmetics shop with his wife, has borrowed simultaneously from four providers over the past year.

He took small loans from two Silicon Valley-backed US fintech firms, Branch and Tala, to see what rates he would get, as well as from a new mobile app launched by Barclays Kenya in March and a business loan from Kenya's Equity Bank. Citing a slowdown in his business due to elections-related political turmoil last year, Ombelli said he has fallen behind on some of his payments. He fears he will be reported to one of Kenya's three credit bureaux, jeopardizing his chances of being able to borrow more to grow his business. "I've realized having too many loans is a problem," the 38-year-old father of three said in an interview in a coffee shop in Nairobi's business district.

He is not alone. In the last three years, 2.7 million people out of a population of around 45 million have been negatively listed on Kenya's Credit Reference Bureaux, according to a study by Microsave, a consultancy which advises lenders on sustainable financial services. For 400,000 of them, it was for an amount less than two dollars.

Global implications

Some of the fintech lenders are expanding into other

African countries and into Latin America and Asia, saying their aim is to help some of the billions of people who lack bank accounts, assets or formal employment climb the economic ladder. Tala says it has granted more than 6 million loans worth more than \$300 million, mainly in Kenya, since it launched in Kenya in 2014. It is expanding its newer businesses in Mexico, Tanzania and the Philippines and is piloting in India.

Tala and Branch argue that their technology, which relies on an algorithm that builds a financial profile of customers, minimizes the risk of default. They say they strive to play a helpful role in planning for tighter regulation. "We believe that credit bubbles and over-indebtedness will be a challenge over the next decade. (Credit Reference) Bureaus and regulation will be a big part of the solution," said Erin Renzas, a Branch spokeswoman. Branch says it expects to grant about 10 million loans worth a total of \$250 million this year in Kenya and its other markets, Nigeria and Tanzania.

High rates

The current status of the sector, outside the direct remit of the central bank, allows providers, both banks and others, to skirt a government cap on interest of four points above the central bank's benchmark interest rate, which now stands at 9.5 percent. Market leader M-Shwari, Kenya's first savings and loans product introduced by Safaricom and Commercial Bank of Africa in 2012, charges a "facilitation fee" of 7.5 percent on credit regardless of its duration.

On a loan with a month's term, this equates to an annual interest rate of 90 percent. The shortest loan repayment period is one week. A Safaricom spokesman referred Reuters to the CBA for comment. Calls to their switchboard and an email were not answered on Thursday. Tala and Branch, number four and six in a ranking based on usage data by FSD Kenya, offer varying rates depending on the repayment period. Their apps, downloaded by Reuters, each offered a month's loan at 15 percent, equating to 180 percent over a year. Both companies say rates drop dramatically as people pay back successive loans.

Competition is heating up. Barclays Kenya launched an app in March offering 30-day loans with an interest rate of just under 7 percent, still a hefty 84 percent annual equivalent rate. Reuters was unable to reach their spokespeople by telephone. The new draft bill says digital lenders will be licensed by a new Financial Markets Conduct Authority and that lenders will be bound by any interest rate caps the Authority sets. But it is not clear if digital lenders are subject to such caps and the current government cap on banks' interest rates is under review. Introduced in 2016 to stop banks charging high interest rates, the cap has stifled traditional bank lending and the International Monetary Fund has conditioned Kenya's continued access to balance of payments support on its removal. — Reuters

S&P drops debt downgrade warning for Catalonia

WASHINGTON: Ratings agency S&P on Friday dropped the downgrade warning for the debt of the Catalan region of Spain, saying the provincial government's financial situation was stable even while the political confrontation persists. S&P Global Ratings also affirmed Catalonia's B+/B rating and maintained the negative outlook given the "deterioration of the relationship" between Madrid and the new provincial government, elected last week.

While political tensions remain a "major hurdle" to debt payments, S&P removed the region's debt from the CreditWatch negative, which was imposed in early October, meaning a downgrade was now no longer seen as an imminent threat.

The ratings agency Fitch had also put a warning on Catalan government debt in October as tensions with

Madrid escalated amid the region's push for independence. "Despite continued political tension, Catalonia's budgetary execution continues to improve and the region continues to receive liquidity support from the central government to service long-term debt, while rolling over its short-term debt as it comes due," S&P said in a statement.

But the agency cautioned that the outlook remained negative, reflecting "the possible adverse impact on Catalonia's ability to fully and timely service its debt because of ongoing political tension."

S&P said it saw no indication of how the impasse could be resolved and that the situation was likely to "drag on in the medium to long term." Catalonia's new separatist leader, Quim Torra, was sworn in last week ending nearly seven months of political limbo in the northeastern Spanish region. The region had been under direct rule from Madrid since the central government deposed Catalan president Carles Puigdemont following a failed declaration of independence on October 27.

Catalonia is a major engine for growth, accounting for around 19 percent of the country's GDP, and the confrontation was Spain's worst political crisis in decades. — AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
Europe			
British Pound	0.400082	0.407582	
Czech Korune	0.005821	0.015121	
Danish Krone	0.043745	0.048745	
Euro	0.350626	0.358126	
Georgian Lari	0.123136	0.123136	
Hungarian 0.001025	0.001215		
Norwegian Krone	0.033399	0.038599	
Romanian Leu	0.060039	0.076889	
Russian ruble	0.004914	0.004914	
Slovakia	0.009034	0.019034	
Swedish Krona	0.030691	0.035691	
Swiss Franc	0.298984	0.309984	
Australasia			
Australian Dollar	0.220116	0.232116	
New Zealand Dollar	0.202708	0.212208	
America			
Canadian Dollar	0.230116	0.239116	
US Dollars	0.298900	0.303300	
US Dollars Mint	0.299400	0.303300	
Asia			
Bangladesh Taka	0.002998	0.003780	
Chinese Yuan	0.046031	0.049531	
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036513	0.039263	
Indian Rupee	0.003761	0.004488	
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023	
Japanese Yen	0.002659	0.002839	
Korean Won	0.000270	0.000285	
Malaysian Ringgit	0.072532	0.078532	
Nepalese Rupee	0.002733	0.003073	
Pakistan Rupee	0.002003	0.002773	
Philippine Peso	0.005642	0.005942	
Singapore Dollar	0.220118	0.230118	
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001585	0.002165	
Taiwan	0.009983	0.010163	
Thai Baht	0.009107	0.009657	
Arab			
Bahraini Dinar	0.796932	0.805432	
Egyptian Pound	0.014600	0.020318	
Iranian Ryal	0.000084	0.000085	
Iraqi Dinar	0.000196	0.000256	
Jordanian Dinar	0.422755	0.431755	
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000	
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250	
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021220	0.045220	
Omani Ryal	0.780695	0.786375	
Qatar Ryal	0.078937	0.083877	
Saudi Ryal	0.079713	0.081013	
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504	
Tunisian Dinar	0.115679	0.123679	
Turkish Lira	0.059810	0.070110	
UAE Dirhams	0.081071	0.082771	
Yemeni Ryal	0.000985	0.001065	

Business

India state banks' bailout stumbles as losses mount

Thirteen state banks reported losses for year to March

MUMBAI: When the Indian government announced a surprise \$32 billion bailout plan for the nation's state-controlled banks last October, credit rating firms and the nation's central bank saw it as a huge step to getting the industry back to robust health - and lending more to businesses and consumers.

But their optimism may have been majorly misplaced judging by the latest numbers coming out of the banks. And that may in turn crimp economic growth in Asia's third-largest economy. Thirteen state banks have reported combined losses of \$8.6 billion for the year to March - including \$6.5 billion in the last quarter - and their non-performing loans have surged nearly a fifth from end-December levels. Two state banks have reported modest profits and six are still to report.

While many of the banks, including top lender State Bank of India, have said the worst is probably over, they still see one or two more quarters of pain. That means more bad loans getting disclosed and loss provisions shooting up as a central bank order will cause more debt defaulters to be dragged into bankruptcy. "The government capital is only going to just plug the hole, there is definitely no growth capital," said Udit Kariwala, an analyst at Fitch Ratings' India Ratings & Research. He said smaller state lenders with limited ability to raise capital from the market will have to curtail their lending. The 21 state lenders hold two-thirds of India's banking assets, and accounted for the bulk of the record \$150 billion of soured loans in the banking sector last year. The banks, which have

been blamed for indiscriminate lending to sectors such as metals and power that turned sour, can still be held responsible for much of the balance sheet carnage. A more than \$2 billion fraud at India's second-biggest state lender, Punjab National Bank, disclosed less than four months ago, not only left a hole but also underlined how weak the banks' grip on risk is.

Exacerbating the problems is a move in February by the Reserve Bank of India, the nation's central bank, to withdraw half a dozen loan restructuring schemes that banking experts said were helping banks to avoid disclosing dud loans. It also tightened other rules governing bad loan accounting.

In addition, the RBI this month banned Dena Bank, a loss-making smaller state-run lender, from making any new loans. Days later, Allahabad Bank, another smaller state-run lender, said it had been asked by the regulator not to increase the number of risky loans and costly deposits on its books due to its capital and leverage position. Bank analysts say more state banks could come under similar restrictions aimed at conserving limited capital. The RBI already has 11 state lenders under its "prompt corrective action" framework that restricts them from expanding.

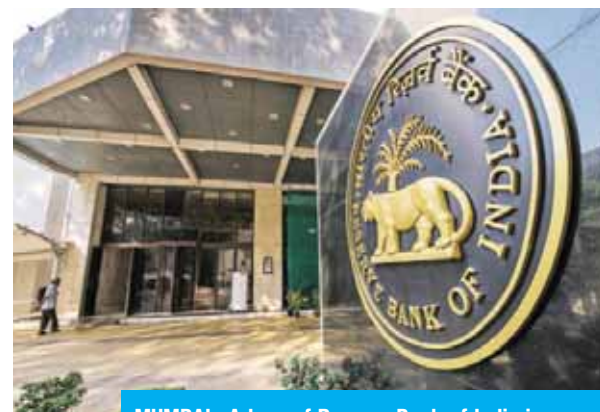
That is not all. Capital needs will also be exposed by global banking rules fully kicking in by March 2019. They mandate banks to have a minimum core capital ratio of 8 percent, and at least six banks, including PNB are short of that number. Under New Delhi's recapitalization plan - aimed mainly at driving credit

growth in an economy where bank loans are the main source of funding for everything from buying a car to building a port - the government has already injected about 880 billion rupees (\$13 billion) into 20 banks as of end-March. It has 650 billion rupees to inject in the current fiscal year, and the banks themselves were supposed to raise 580 billion rupees through share and asset sales. Some, including SBI and PNB, last year raised funds from share sales, but several others have postponed such plans. Kariwala at India Ratings estimates the banks now need 800 billion to 1 trillion rupees to fund soured-asset provisions and maintain minimum capital ratios alone, which means there will be little left from the bailout for lending growth.

Some bank analysts say the government may have to increase the size of the bailout. Certainly, bank lending - and its impact on growth - will be on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's agenda ahead of a general election that has to be held within a year. "Given how the stocks are doing, the nearly 0.6 trillion rupees banks need to raise looks difficult. So, the government may have to slightly increase the amount they are planning to inject," said Srikanth Vadlamani, vice president of the Financial Institutions Group at Moody's Investors Service. Moody's said this week that PNB alone would need 120-130 billion rupees of new capital in the year to March to achieve an 8 percent core capital ratio. At the end of the last quarter it was at just 5.95 percent.

Funding channel shut

Businesses, especially the smaller ones, are already complaining of not getting the loans they want. In February to March, lending to small businesses dropped 0.2 percent, though overall lending grew 5.9 percent. For importers, a major channel of funding - overseas credit through letters of undertakings from Indian banks



MUMBAI: A logo of Reserve Bank of India is seen outside the RBI headquarters in Mumbai.

- has been shut after the PNB fraud, forcing those businesses to depend more on domestic rupee loans. The Indian government will ensure that all state banks including the weaker ones meet the minimum regulatory capital ratio, said Rajeev Kumar, the top bureaucrat overseeing the banking sector at the finance ministry.

He also said with the planned recapitalization some of the banks will have room to grow, while bad loan recoveries in the bankruptcy process will further aid banks' bottomlines. He said he expects the banks woes to subside in a quarter or two. "Whenever you do the cleaning part, a bit of dust, a bit of pain, upfront is okay," said Kumar. "It's only one quarter that you have to just wait." — Reuters

Al-Raya United to promote real estate development in Kuwait: CEO

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Al-Raya United Company held a press conference on Wednesday at Al-Sanabel Tower in Kuwait City. Jassim Al-Fajji, CEO of Al-Raya company, said: "Al-Raya United has been established as a real estate and investment development company that supports the rapid economic development in Kuwait and the region and to stimulate the real estate and investment sectors by creating dynamic opportunities that are commensurate with the market situation.

Al-Fajji continued: "The company is focused on the religious tourism sector and it is working to provide its services in full compliance with Islamic law where our services are to provide visas for Haj and Umrah services to our customers and continue our expansion plans since its establishment.

"Al-Raya is responsible for running all of its projects and to provide better service," adding that the company has control over Jaddarah company to operate and market hotel rooms and units in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and abroad where Raya responsible for the ownership and construction of Jaddarah and its development, maintenance and operation of the processing of hotels, residential towers, and hotel apartments, and a high-quality staff were hired and they were selected carefully with a good experience in the hotels' operating



KUWAIT: Jassim Al-Fajji, CEO of Al-Raya United with Adnan Al-Salem, Executive Vice President speaking at the press conference. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

to follow up with hotels under the company's management worldwide.

As for the branches of the company, he said: "Our main branch is in Kuwait and we have a branch in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and a branch in the Arab Republic of Egypt and a branch in the Republic of Turkey and Hungary.

He added that they have plans to expand in East of Asia, Eastern Europe, and Morocco in Africa. "We will continue our vertical expansion by opening new branches and projects in the markets we are currently in. We have expanded our horizons into new markets with a safe investment potential as we target Georgia, Europe, and Asian markets."

As for the real estate market in Kuwait, he said: "We are looking forward to an

optimistic outlook based on the reality and the strength of its construction. Real estate investment has been and is still the sector that can grow and regain its role and strength after every crisis or disorder experienced by the national economy. "The vision of Kuwait 2035 is an example that included in many of its main plans and programs that depend in one way or another on the real estate market," adding that the rising index of ease of business will create competition domestically and attract foreign investment in real estate market.

Fajji revealed that the occupancy rates in Al-Madinah- KSA in the first half of 2017 reached 49 percent, second half 59 percent and in 2018, 75 percent till the end of April and hopefully the occupancy rates will reach 80 percent in Makkah.

Pakistan seeks economic lifeline with fresh China loans

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan expects to obtain fresh Chinese loans worth \$1-2 billion to help it avert a balance of payments crisis, Pakistani government sources said, in another sign of Islamabad's growing reliance on Beijing for financial support. Lending to Pakistan by China and its banks is on track to hit \$5 billion in the fiscal year ending in June, according to recent disclosures by officials and Pakistan finance ministry data reviewed by Reuters.

The ramp up in China's lending comes as the United States is cutting aid to Pakistan following a fracture in relations between the on-off allies. In February, Washington led efforts that saw Pakistan placed on a global terror financing watchlist, drawing anger in Islamabad amid fears it will hurt the economy. The new Chinese loans that are being negotiated will help bolster Pakistan's rapidly-depleting foreign currency reserves, which tumbled to \$10.3 billion last week from \$16.4 billion in May 2017. The talks come only weeks after a group of Chinese commercial banks lent \$1 billion to Pakistan's government in April.

The reserves decline and a sharp widening of Pakistan's current account deficit have prompted many financial analysts to predict that after the general election, likely in July, Islamabad will need its second International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout since 2013. The last IMF assistance package was worth \$6.7 billion. Beijing's attempts to prop up Pakistan's economy follow a deepening in political and military ties in the

wake of China's pledge to fund badly-needed power and road infrastructure as part of the \$57 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a key cog in Beijing's vast Belt and Road initiative. "I think this month we will get that \$1-2 billion," said a senior Pakistan government official, saying the funds will come from Chinese state-run institutions.

A second government official confirmed Pakistan was in "sensitive" talks with Beijing over extra funding for up to \$2 billion.

Pakistan finance ministry officials did not respond to a request for comment. China's finance ministry and central bank, who were faxed questions about the loans, did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Although Pakistan's economic growth has soared to nearly 6 percent, the fastest pace in 13 years, the structural problems with the economy are coming to the fore. It is similar to 2013, when foreign currency reserves dwindled and Pakistan narrowly escaped a full-blown currency crisis.

"The current situation appears to be a replica of what we experienced in 2013, albeit on a slightly larger scale," said Yaseen Anwar, who was the governor of the central bank, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), back in 2013.

The darkening macroeconomic outlook prompted the IMF earlier this month to downgrade its economic growth forecast for Pakistan to 4.7 percent for the next fiscal year ending in June 2019, way below the government's own ambitious target of 6.2 percent.

Over the past nine months Pakistan has enacted a series of measures to combat its ballooning current account deficit, including hiking tariffs on more than 200 luxury items and devaluing its currency by about 10 percent. In the six months to end of March, Pakistan took bilateral loans worth \$1.2 billion from China, according to the Pakistan Finance Ministry document reviewed by Reuters. — Reuters

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>iPhone 8 64GB 4.7" LTE</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 209 234 </div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">25% OFF</p>	<p>SAMSUNG Galaxy Note8 64GB 6.3" LTE</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 204 235 </div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">30% OFF</p>	<p>SAMSUNG Galaxy S9+ 64GB 6.2" LTE</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 219 285 </div> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">65% OFF</p>
---	---	---

Best AI YouSifi

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon 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)

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

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

Business

KFH-Bahrain launches 'Jazeel', a digital account opening platform

Jazeel' offers first-of-its-kind socially responsible features

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House-Bahrain (KFH-Bahrain), one of the leading Islamic banks in the Kingdom and an integral contributor to the evolution of Bahrain's Islamic Financial sector, has announced the launch of its brand new product, 'Jazeel'. 'Jazeel' is a digital account opening and community-based platform in the Kingdom of Bahrain and GCC countries.

In line with the Bank's FinTech strategy, Jazeel will allow customers across the Kingdom, and eventually in the GCC, to not only open a savings account, but also Libshara account, transactional features and many other facilities and services. With Jazeel, the Bank introduces a fully digitized E-KYC (electronic Know-Your-Customer) process where in all customer information validation will be done online via video conferencing through the application. Jazeel enables customers to open the account within minutes, without having to visit a branch.

Through its slogan 'Banking to do good', 'Jazeel' aims to reward its community members with first-of-its-kind socially responsible features, revolving around self-development, education and healthcare. The community features are part of the many additional exciting services that will be on offer in the near future.



The platform provides a number of specialized custom-made features including forensic documents analysis, digital documents scanning including signature, facial recognition,

selfie checks, create digital identity and many more. These features allow for the 'genuine verification' of the documents scanned by the customer, via the application, in the

real time mode and can immediately alert the Bank of any tampering with the same. 'Jazeel' is currently available in Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

Nestle, under pressure, combines key R&D units

LONDON: Food giant Nestle plans to combine its scientific research operations into a single unit in an attempt to speed up development of new products at a time when competition from smaller rivals is intensifying. The world's biggest packaged food maker, with brands including Nescafe coffee and Perrier water, has been struggling with slowing sales growth for years. Now it is also under pressure from activist shareholder Daniel Loeb to increase investor returns. To better compete, the Swiss company told Reuters it would merge its Nestle Research Center and Nestle Institute of Health Sciences (NIHS) into one organization called Nestle Research. The new entity, to be announced later on Thursday, will continue to be based in Lausanne, Switzerland and will employ around 800 people.

The reorganization, effective July 1, will not involve job cuts or the closure of facilities, a spokesman said. By linking the "blue-sky" research done at NIHS with the more commercially focused Research Center, it hopes to accelerate the translation of scientific discoveries into marketable products. It also hopes this will help it compete with smaller, nimbler rivals who have been eating away at the market share of Nestle and other big firms like Danone, Unilever, Kraft Heinz and Kellogg.

Nestle Chief Technology Officer Stefan Palzer acknowledged earlier this month that his company had to keep pace with rising demand for goods that are organic, gluten-free or vegan. "Big trends are embraced by smaller companies a bit more actively than the big companies," Palzer told Reuters before Nestle's streamlining plans had been finalized. "We are adjusting our portfolio, doing many innovations and renovations to make the portfolio more relevant and to address those trends, but smaller companies are more agile." In the United States - the world's biggest packaged food market - small challenger brands could account for 15 percent of a \$464 billion sector in a decade's time, up from about 5 percent last year, Bernstein Research predicted last year.

Speeding things up

The combination of research units is the latest move by Palzer aimed at speeding up development and ensuring research efforts are commercially viable. Palzer, who took over Nestle's innovation and research and development operations in January, is also supplementing long-

term research projects with incremental product launches made faster by experimenting with new ideas more quickly. Last month, for example, Palzer and colleagues got the idea for a vegetarian or vegan food product while on a business trip. "Thursday we had an idea, Friday we returned to Switzerland and Monday evening I was able to taste the first prototype," Palzer said. "Wednesday, this prototype was shown to the executive board, and Friday it was in the global pipeline."

He declined to give more details of the product, except to say it is currently being assessed by the operations team to see how long it will take to produce and on what machinery. Other steps include efforts to apply specific developments to more products, such as Nestle's recent designer sugar crystals launched in low-sugar Milkybars in March, which will go into other products in the future. The importance of agility was underlined by Nestle's recent struggle to capitalize on resurgent demand for frozen foods.

The company says it reformulates one third of its product portfolio every year. Nestle spent 1.72 billion Swiss francs (\$1.73 billion) on R&D last year, down slightly from 2016 but up 22 percent from 2012. The company's sales fell 2.6 percent over the same period.

As a percentage of sales, its expenditure has fluctuated only a little, but demands on the unit have increased. Wells Fargo analyst John Baumgartner said that across 10 large publicly traded U.S. food companies, median expenses for R&D and advertising have declined 20 percent over the past five years.

"As voids of ideas and marketing have emerged, start-ups have been more responsive to consumer needs, won the culture and created the emotional connections that drive sales," he said in a recent note. Palzer said some industry peers had been outsourcing innovation to cut costs, relying on acquisitions of small brands or partnerships with suppliers.

But he said it was critical for Nestle to maintain scientific expertise in-house to keep its own portfolio fresh and to be an attractive partner for collaboration with others. Nestle does R&D around the world, involving around 5,000 people.

Fundamental scientific research will remain key at Nestle, Palzer said, but he also highlighted the value of external partnerships and acquisitions that can bring in new research or capabilities more easily.

Scientific research and innovation itself is not necessarily the reason why big breakthroughs tend to be rare for multinational companies, said Shaun Browne, investment banker at Houlihan Lokey, who advises food companies on deals. "They often don't have the patience or passion that is really required," Browne said. "Often these things are one individual who is just totally determined and passionate about their product and sees it through." — Reuters

Alghanim Auto, Ford Middle East hold second Motorcraft appreciation event



KUWAIT: In collaboration with Ford Middle East, Alghanim Auto - the only Ford-authorized importer in Kuwait - held the second annual appreciation event for its Motorcraft genuine spare parts partners on the 13th of May 2018 in appreciation for their business and continued support in 2017. The event took place at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa and was attended by over 120 business partners, Alghanim management, and Ford Middle East management.

Opening the night, Amirthan Xavier Stephen, Aftersales General Manager - Alghanim Auto, said: "Through Motorcraft genuine spare parts, Ford is committed to providing the best quality spare parts and lubricants to better serve the large base of Ford customers in Kuwait and ensure the durability and long-life of their vehicles. We at Alghanim Auto are also committed to ensuring all Ford owners have reliable and convenient access to Motorcraft genuine spare parts, and this can only be achieved thanks to all of you, our trusted customers and partners here in Kuwait".

The event entailed a product presentation by Neil Ross Business Development Manager at Ford Middle East, featuring the current Motorcraft line up of products available at Alghanim Auto in Kuwait. During the presentation, Neil Ross, spoke of the variety and high quality of Motorcraft products, saying: "Together with Alghanim Auto, we are committed to making all Ford and Motorcraft products and services available for customers in Kuwait. As you all know, Motorcraft genuine spare parts are recognized internationally for quality and reliability, enabling our partners to provide superior genuine spare parts and lubricants to their customers."

During the presentation, Alghanim Auto also introduced the latest carburetor cleaner from Motorcraft, the XC 52 B1 developed specifically for the region. Neil Ross, presented the new superior quality product formulated for a wide range of automotive applications, which dissolves and penetrates rust and corrosion along providing lubrication to help free metal fasteners, bushings and press-fit connectors. The revolutionary XC 52 B1 can be used as an effective degreasing agent as it removes gums and other deposits from air/fuel induction systems of gasoline engines. Additionally, it frees sticking valves and sluggish compression rings and purges excessive deposits from the combustion chambers. What distinguishes the new carburetor cleaner the most is its availability in a larger volume, yet at



a better value in comparison to other available competitive brands in the market.

In tribute to made efforts and accomplished sales during 2017, Ford Alghanim distributed 32 awards to Motorcraft's business partners for their support and generated business promising them to make the best out of 2018 through coordinated efforts and necessary support to allow mutual growth for all.

The award ceremony was followed by an assisted demonstration on the Motorcraft product stations that were set up on-site, allowing guests an opportunity to see and feel products such as lubricants, chemicals, batteries, brakes, filters. Motorcraft originated in the USA in the 1950s as the Ford Parts Division acquired assets from the Electric Autolite Co. in 1962 before officially becoming Motorcraft in 1972. The company has built its reputation

on the three pillars of safety, durability and value. Motorcraft offers more than 300,000 part numbers split over 24 major product categories including oils and chemicals, coolants, filters, wiper blades and batteries

Motorcraft parts are designed for all makes and model vehicles and manufactured to strict specifications; they undergo extensive laboratory and on-the-road testing. Designed and built to maximize the vehicle's performance, Motorcraft parts provide the customer with the confidence that repairs and maintenance will last a long time.

In Kuwait, genuine Motorcraft spare parts are available for retail and wholesale customers at Alghanim Auto. The Alghanim Auto Service and Parts Center is located in Shuwaikh Industrial Area opposite from the Classical Car Museum and Sirbb Circuit.



Win cash this summer with Gulf Bank

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is pleased to launch of an exclusive summer campaign for its credit and debit cardholders. Gulf Bank customers can use their cards locally and internationally to win cash prizes of up to KD 25,000. From May 1 until August 31, 2018, customers using their Gulf Bank credit or debit cards will get a chance to enter the draw to win cash prizes. For every KD 10 spent locally, Gulf Bank credit cardholders will get one chance in the raffle draw and for each KD 10 spent international-

ly, either on a credit or debit card, customers will earn three chances in the raffle draw, which will be held on September 23, 2018, in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Apart from earning chances to enter the draw during the summer, Gulf Bank customers can also use their newly designed cards with the "Tap & Pay" feature for making payments seamlessly worldwide.

This offer, exclusive to Gulf Bank, highlights the Bank's commitment to providing its customers with best financial solutions, products, and services, as well as the most exciting offers and promotions.

A total of five winners will win cash prizes in the summer campaign. The first prize winner will receive KD 25,000 cash, while the second prize is for KD 10,000 cash. The third prize, which will be given out to three customers, is KD 5,000 cash each.

Technology

In S Africa, a unique telescope link-up is scanning deep space

Set to be the world's most powerful radio telescope system

SUTHERLAND: Scientists in South Africa on Friday launched the world's first optical telescope linked to a radio telescope, combining "eyes and ears" to try to unravel the secrets of the universe. The device forms part of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project in the remote Karoo desert, which will be the world's most powerful radio telescope system.

The latest move combines the new optical telescope MeerLICHT-Dutch for 'more light'-with the recently-completed 64-dish MeerKAT radio telescope, located 200 kilometers away. "We are listening and looking at the sky at the same time-that is a completely novel concept in astronomy world-wide," Paul Groot, from Radboud university in the Netherlands, told AFP. "This is the eyes, with the MeerKAT being the ears as a radio telescope. It is fantastic to see what amazing views it produces."

Astronomers have previously had to wait for a cosmic incident to be picked up by a radio telescope and then carry out optic observations afterwards. But combining MeerLICHT, in the small town of Sutherland, with MeerKAT, also in the sparsely-populated North Cape province, will allow simultaneous study of cosmic events as they occur. The project has been six years in the making by a joint-team of South African, Dutch and

British scientists. "It is the first time you have a telescope that will track a radio telescope so that if there are discoveries that are made, you will be able to follow up," Phil Mjwara, director general in the South African ministry of Science and Technology, told reporters.

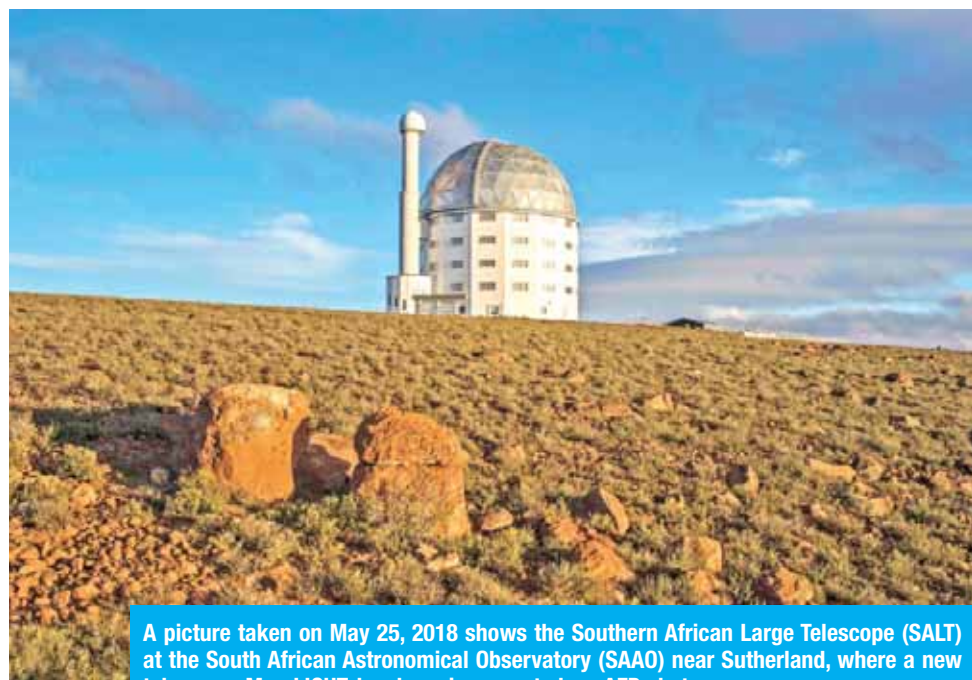
The optical telescope, built in the Netherlands

“A completely novel concept in astronomy”

and shipped to South Africa, uses a main mirror just 65 centimetres in diameter and a single 100 megapixel detector measuring 10 cm x 10 cm. It is housed in a white dome-shaped building made of carbon fibre to protect it against temperature fluctuations in the Karoo desert, which was chosen for its clear skies, dry climate and lack of pollution.

Among the priorities for MeerLICHT, which cost about \$1.1 million (940,000 euros), is the study of black holes, neutron stars and stellar explosions, which must be scrutinised quickly before they fade away. "The study of exploding stars across the universe will gain a whole new dimension," said University of Cape Town professor Patrick Woudt, a senior scientist working on the telescope.

MeerLICHT boasts of a huge field of view that allows astronomers to see an area 13 times the size of the full moon in exquisite detail, and pick up objects one million times fainter than is possible with the human eye. "The brilliant thing is that we are tracking at the same time with the two telescopes, so as soon as we see something in the radio we can look back in time," said Ben Stappers, an astronomer from Manchester University. "Flashes of radio emission known as Fast Radio Bursts may now be 'caught in the act'. Hopefully we can finally determine the origin of these enigmatic flashes." When fully operational in the 2020s, the SKA will comprise a forest of 3,000 dishes spread over an area of a square kilometer across remote terrain in several countries to allow astronomers to peer into space to an unparalleled depth. — AFP



A picture taken on May 25, 2018 shows the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) at the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) near Sutherland, where a new telescope, MeerLICHT, has been inaugurated. — AFP photos

Foxconn unit to raise \$4.2bn in China IPO

SHANGHAI: A unit of electronics manufacturing giant Foxconn said it will launch an initial public offering in China aimed at raising \$4.2 billion, in the biggest mainland debut for three years. Taiwan's Foxconn Industrial Internet, which makes electronic devices, cloud service equipment and industrial robots, will float 10 percent of its total shares, according to a prospectus filed late Tuesday with the Shanghai stock exchange.

Taipei-based Foxconn itself, which is also known as Hon Hai Precision Industry Co, is the world's largest electronics contract manufacturer, a major supplier of components and assem-

bler of products by international brands such as Apple and Sony. Foxconn Industrial Internet will issue 1.97 billion new shares at 13.77 yuan per share to raise 27.1 billion yuan (\$4.2 billion). The IPO would be the biggest in mainland China since a market crash in 2015 and one of the largest ever for the country's stock exchanges.

Foxconn said it will use the funds raised to upgrade its smart manufacturing, build internet platforms to connect factories and invest in cloud computing and fifth-generation communication technologies in its mainland factories. The IPO comes as Beijing is pushing to attract more listings on mainland markets by domestic Chinese technology companies. Analysts say that push is part of broader plans to become a global technology leader. Foxconn, which is one of China's largest single employers, has around a million workers at its factories across the country, plus operations in more than 10 countries including Vietnam, Brazil and Mexico. — AFP

Two sports car-sized satellites in orbit to measure Earth's water



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Space Launch Complex 4E at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. — AFP

WASHINGTON: A SpaceX rocket recently blasted off a duo of sports car-sized satellites built by the US and Germany to reveal changes in sea level rise, ice melt and drought on Earth. "Three, two, one, liftoff!" said a SpaceX commentator as the Falcon 9 rocket launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California at 12:47 pm Pacific time (1947 GMT).

The \$521 million payload, called the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-on (GRACE-FO), was successfully deployed into its planned orbit some 310 miles (500 kilometers) above the Earth about 10 minutes after liftoff. The mission picks up from GRACE, a satellite pair that launched in 2002 and tracked, among other things, precisely how much ice was lost each year in Greenland and Antarctica until 2017. Groundwater, oceans, lakes, rivers and ice sheets will be monitored by the twin satellites, a joint mission between the US space agency and German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ). The pair will fly 137 miles apart, or about the distance from Los Angeles to San Diego.

How they work

According to the laws of physics, the slightest variation in mass on Earth modifies the pull of gravity on satellites. When the lead satellite passes over a mountain, it will get slightly farther from its twin for a few instants because of the extra mass in this area and a slightly stronger pull of gravity. These variations in distance will be constantly recorded by the spacecraft, because each shift signals a change in mass on the planet underneath.

The satellites use a monthly reference point, because unless there is an earthquake or other unusual event, only water has the capacity to

change that fast. Water always has mass, whether it is in the form of liquid, solid or gas. When ice melts, the oceans' mass rises.

When it rains a lot in a certain region, the volume of the aquifers mounts. The satellites will pick this up, and the data will show that the mass in a certain area was higher than it was in the prior month, or year.

That is how the GRACE-FO satellites will establish a map of the water on Earth, every 30 days, showing which areas have more and which have less, whether above or below ground. They operate with a precision equivalent to a change of 0.4 inches (one centimeter) in water height across areas of about 211 miles in diameter.

Other satellites to deploy

After the SpaceX rocket sent off its first payload, GRACE-FO, its second stage continued its climb in order to deploy a series of commercial communications satellites for the Virginia-based company, Iridium. The five Iridium NEXT satellites are "part of the company's campaign to replace the world's largest commercial satellite network," said a statement.

A total of 75 satellites for Iridium are being sent to orbit as part of the upgrade, taking place over eight launches with SpaceX. "That is a clean sweep again for all the deployments today," said SpaceX commentator John Insprucker after the five satellites floated into orbit, one by one. He said SpaceX had tried but failed to catch the payload fairing, a nose cone used to protect the rocket, as it plunged into the ocean. The fairing recovery ship "came very close but not quite," he said on SpaceX's webcast. SpaceX did not attempt to land the first stage of the rocket after launch. — AFP

Heightened debate in US as EU privacy rules take effect

WASHINGTON: Amid a global scramble to comply with new EU data protections laws, the debate on privacy has intensified in the United States with some calling for similar measures for Americans, and others warning the rules could fracture the global internet. US tech firms, and virtually all companies with online operations, will need to comply with the rules if their sites are used in the European Union, or face hefty financial penalties.

Some American firms, including news sites like the Los Angeles Times and New York Daily News, blocked access in the EU because they were unable to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, which took effect Friday. Other US websites have shut down entirely, and some have hired consultants to help shut off access for any users in Europe. Large US tech firms have pledged compliance with the EU rules, and have in many cases promised to extend the same protections worldwide. But legal challenges filed in Europe accused Google and Facebook of failing to abide by the new law.

Why not in US?

Some US activists argue that the implementation offers an opportunity to give more privacy and data protection benefits to Americans. "We see no reason why US companies, as they strive to comply with the new European policies, cannot extend the GDPR standard to American consumers," said Katharina Kopp of the Center for Digital Democracy, one of 28 activist groups endorsing a letter in that vein to major US and global companies.

Senator Ed Markey and three fellow lawmakers introduced a resolution this week that would call on firms to offer the same protections of the European law in the US. "The American people are going to wonder why they are getting second-class privacy protec-

tions," said Markey. The law establishes the key principle that individuals must explicitly grant permission for their data to be used, and give consumers a right to know who is accessing their information and what it will be used for. Companies can be fined up to 20 million euros (\$24 million) or four percent of annual global turnover for violations.

Cumbersome, confusing

GDPR critics argue the law is confusing and cumbersome, and could lead to unintended effects on both sides of the Atlantic. Daniel Castro of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a Washington think tank, called GDPR "a confusing and impractical set of rules" that offers consumers little benefit. "Instead of hiring engineers, companies are hiring privacy lawyers," Castro said in a blog post with researcher Alan McQuinn.

Ryan Radia of the Competitive Enterprise Institute said that although GDPR was aimed at Big Tech, it is likely to strengthen the grip of large internet firms. "This will result in greater market concentration, as small firms and startups will find it difficult to comply with the increased regulatory cost burden," Radia said.

The scandals of Facebook

PARIS: As Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg pursues a tour of Europe to explain his company's shortcomings involving the use of data and fake news, here is a roundup of the scandals.

Cambridge Analytica

In Facebook's telling, everything goes back to 2013 when Russian-American researcher Aleksandr Kogan creates a personality prediction test app, "thisisyourdigitallife", which is offered on the social network. Around 300,000 people download the app, authorising access to information on their profile and also to the data of their Facebook friends.

In 2015 Facebook makes changes to its privacy policy and prevents third-party apps from accessing the data of user's friends without their consent. The same year the social network discovers Kogan has passed on the information retrieved via his app to the British company Cambridge Analytica (CA), which specialises in the analysis of data and strategic communication.

In 2016 CA is hired by Donald Trump's US presidential campaign. Facebook says it was assured by CA in 2015 that the data in question had been erased. But it estimates the firm could have had access to the data of up to 87 million users, most in the United States, without their consent, and used this information to serve the Trump campaign.

Cambridge Analytica, which denies the accusations, has since filed for voluntary bankruptcy in the United States and Britain.



Facebook is accused of having been lax in its protection of user data, slow to intervene and consistently vague on its privacy settings. In 2011 it signed a consent decree with US consumer protection agency the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) settling charges that it deceived consumers by telling them they could keep their information on Facebook private, and then allowing it to be shared and made public.

In March this year the FTC said it had opened an inquiry into Facebook's privacy practices, including whether the company violated the earlier agreement, which would incur hefty fines. Beyond the CA scandal, Facebook estimates the data of nearly all its users may have, at some time, been retrieved without their knowledge.

Political manipulation

Facebook and sites like Google, Twitter

Amy Webb, a fellow at Harvard's Nieman Foundation and founder of the Future Today Institute, warned the new law could lead to a "splinternet" with different kinds of data available in various regions of the world, and could be particularly cumbersome for news organizations. "It's plausible within a decade, we could find ourselves stuck in a new digital divide, where many disparate splinternets behave and function differently, depending on where in the world the net is being accessed," she said in a blog post this week. Webb said news organizations could find it especially difficult to comply because of the need for consent in organizing feeds and promoting content. "The business model for news, already tenuous, could be further weakened," she said.

Henry Farrell, a George Washington University professor who follows transatlantic relations, said the entire business model of the tech sector could be at risk from GDPR. "This is a fundamental attack on the 'two sided market' profit model that e-commerce companies have pioneered of providing services to individuals, while watching their behavior and feeding up access or data to advertisers," Farrell said in a tweet Friday. — AFP

and Tumblr are also accused of having allowed the spread through their networks of "fake news", including to manipulate public opinion ahead of the US election in favor of Trump. The sites have acknowledged finding on their platforms messages, accounts and pages associated with the Internet Research Agency, a Saint Petersburg operation that is alleged to be a "troll farm" connected to the Russian government.

It is accused of spreading disinformation and propaganda including via postings-often in the form of sponsored ads that target users based on their personal data-that could influence opinion, for example over immigration. Facebook is in particular accused of not having been vigilant enough on monitoring the content and authenticity of pages and political ads that it carries. It announced this year that it will require that the sponsors of political ads are identified and verified. — AFP

Mexico falls in race against a global obesity time-bomb

Struggling to cope with a future of soaring obesity levels

MEXICO CITY: Children at school already mock six-year-old Yatzry by calling her "fatty", fuelling her mother Ana Laura Martinez's worries about her daughter's health if does not lose about 16 kg. As Yatzry fidgeted with a large pink hair bow, Martinez explained that tests so far have shown no signs of the 38 kg child having the illness that plagues her family - and ranks as Mexico's biggest killer - type 2 diabetes.

"I'm diabetic. My dad died very young of diabetes at 39, my grandmother also died, my mother has it, my brother has it. It's something in the family," said Martinez, in the obesity clinic at the Federico Gomez Children's Hospital. "She needs to cut out some of what's causing her harm so she doesn't suffer from this ugly disease."

She hopes the clinic will develop a diet plan for Yatzry, who loves spaghetti, corn, and maize snacks sold on the street. As one of the world's fattest nations with over 70 percent of adults and a third of children overweight or obese, Mexico is acting as an early warning for countries around the world struggling to cope with a future of soaring obesity levels.

Stretched waistbands

Globally, around 40 percent of adults are overweight and 13 percent obese, says the World Health Organization (WHO), with the surge in obesity in the last three decades presenting a major public health epidemic in both poor and rich nations. While some Mexicans joke about their carbohydrate-heavy "Vitamin T" diet of tacos, tortas and tamales, the nation's waistbands are being stretched by an addiction to cheap and ubiquitous junk food and increasingly sedentary lifestyles.

Add its standing as one of the world's top soft drink guzzlers, and health professionals are bracing for a time bomb scenario with a high economic and social cost. "When you get to treat obesity, you're one day too late. The only way to solve this is prevention," said Salvador Villalpando, a specialist doctor who runs the child obesity clinic where the image of a chubby boy is drawn on his window. "There is no way of solving the problem of a population that is

already obese. Those kids are very, very unlikely to lose weight in their own hands."

While abuse or family breakdown are some of the many complex factors affecting obesity clinic patients, Villalpando said most Mexican children are eating adult foods by age two. Most of the children at the clinic, who largely come from low-income families, already show signs of insulin resistance, said Teresa Siliceo, paediatric nutritionist at the hospital. By the time they become teenagers, around a third are likely to develop preventable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, which can cause blindness, kidney failure and amputations.

Killing with kindness

The availability of junk food at schools and insufficient restrictions on advertising to children compound Mexico's weight problem, said those working to tackle obesity, highlighting the heavy influence of major food companies. Other culprits are found close to home with children growing up with extended families plied with treats by relatives. "It's a language of care, when we need to change or modify the habits, we have a lot of problems with the grandmothers or fathers," said Siliceo, in a consulting room at the hospital. Having money to eat at street stalls and buy snacks also carries a status value for many, said the nutritionist, who helped develop an app to aid obese children shed weight. Ramping up public health campaigns and education around nutrition is crucial, said those working to tackle obesity.

"A kilo of mandarins costs you the same as 600 ml (20 ounces) of Coca-Cola or a few grams of potato chips. It's education and access," said Alejandro Calvillo, head of consumer group El Poder del Consumidor. His group is taking the government to court over Mexico's food labelling system it claims is tricky to grasp, fails to meet WHO guidelines and violates the right to health. Unless Mexico sheds its excess weight, the nation faces hefty health bills in the future. The United Nations estimates the cost of dealing with an overweight population will be \$13 billion a year over the next six decades. — Reuters



PUERTO VALLARTA: People buy ice creams on the sea front. — Reuters

Walk and chew gum, it may keep you thin

PARIS: Still looking for the secret to effortless weight loss? It may be as simple as chewing gum while walking. Japanese researchers suggested yesterday. In experiments, they said, the heart rate of 46 people, aged 21 to 69, increased when they were given gum to chew while walking at a natural pace. And while masticating caused a measurable physical difference in participants of both genders and across all age groups, it was most pronounced in men over 40, the team reported at the European Congress on Obesity in Vienna.

"Combining exercise and gum chewing may be an effective way to manage weight," the researchers said-particularly in countries such as Japan where walking is the "most widely performed move-

ment". Previous research had found that gum chewing boosts heart rate and energy expenditure in people at rest. This was the first study dedicated to studying its effects in people while walking, its authors said. Volunteers completed two walking trials, each 15 minutes long. In one they chewed two pellets of gum that contained three kilocalories. In the other, for comparison, they walked after ingesting a powder containing the same ingredients as the gum. The team then measured participants' resting heart rate and walking heart rate in both legs, as well as the distance they covered at a natural pace, walking speed, and the number of steps taken.

In all participants, the mean heart rate was "significantly higher" in the gum trial, said the researchers. In men over 40, it also boosted the distance walked, number of steps taken, and energy expended. Though the study was not designed to explain the link, the team speculated it may have something to do with "cardio-locomotor synchronisation", a natural phenomenon whereby the heart beats in rhythm with a repetitive movement. —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 إستشاري 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

The Kuwait Women Voluntary Society is devoted to celebrating national heritage



Sheikhah Fadya Al-Saad AL-Sabah, Chairlady of Kuwait Women Voluntary Society for Community Services, stressed that celebrating national and religious anniversaries, reviving old

social traditions and habits and achieving optimal social communication within the society members were qualities the Kuwait Women Voluntary Society are most keen on maintaining.

Speaking during the Gurgai'an ceremony the society held recently, Al-Saad stressed that the holy month of Ramadan was a great opportunity to revive and celebrate

national heritage. She also expressed hopes that the people of Kuwait would maintain this annual celebration, which spreads joy amongst both children and adults.

Iftar meals daily throughout Ramadan in Ooredoo's tent



Keeping its yearly tradition of leading charitable and humanitarian initiatives, Ooredoo Kuwait started distributing Iftar meals to the needy, an initiative fully operated by members of its volunteer program for the fourth consecutive year. Members of the program this year, who exceeded 300, are distributing hundreds of meals in the company's Iftar tent opposite its head office in Kuwait City, and via a designated vehicle that goes to specific places to reach the biggest number of laborers and families in need, the initiative's target audience.

This annual initiative is in line with the company's core values of caring, connecting, and challenging. Through this initiative, Ooredoo aims to empower youth, a targeted segment of its corporate social responsibility strategy, to support underserved communities, which is one of the main pillars of the company's overall CSR philosophy.

Commenting on this, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub lauded the efforts of the participants in the volunteer program, thanking them for their dedication and commitment to charitable initiatives throughout the year and especially during the holy month of Ramadan. "We have been working with our volunteers for over four years now, and it is their passion and dedication that keep pushing us to do this year after year."

He also underscored the company's commitment to involving staff from its different departments in those charitable initiatives,



which include aside from meal distribution several visits to care centers of the elderly, the orphanage, children with special needs, and hospital wards, to share the festive spirit of Ramadan.

Ooredoo's volunteer program succeeded to attract hundreds of participants throughout the years, providing them with the necessary tools through training and workshops before matching them with volunteer opportunities in Kuwait. The program, which is co-managed by Spread the Passion non-profit organization, received an honorary award from the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs in 2015 for being a leader in youth volunteerism.

Happy Birthday!



Hurray! Princess Ngozichukwu is 1-year old. May God guide and protect you as you continue to be a blessing to your family Amen. Greetings from mom, dad, friends and well-wishers.

KIB sponsors graduation projects of KU's engineering students



Under the umbrella of its leading social responsibility program, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) offered its sponsorship to a number of graduation projects developed by students from the College of Engineering and Petroleum at Kuwait University. The Bank aimed at supporting students who are taking part in the University's 34th Engineering Design Exhibition, which will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in June.

Among the projects that KIB sponsored was the '3S - Smart Scaffolding System' project, spearheaded by engineering students Fatma Al-Salah, Badria Ahmed, Aisha Al-Kandari, and Hussah Al-Anazi. The project aims at developing a remote-controlled electronic scaffolding device, thereby saving a significant amount of time and effort in construction projects. Additionally, the Bank sponsored the 'Reverse Vending Machine' project which was developed by engineering students Fatma Al-Azmi, Wahj Al-Mutairi, Zainab Abbas, and Afrah Al-Shatti.

The project aims at creating a recycling mechanism that reuses water bottles and soda cans after they are no longer of any use. Another project the Bank sponsored was 'In Porous Media', which was led by Maha Al-Thaferi and Noura Al-Sharah. The

project focuses on injecting water in different reservoir layers to increase oil production and studying the water injected to avoid any deposition issues in rocks and pipelines. KIB also sponsored the 'Variable Absorber Device' developed by engineering students Halima Al-Felkawi, Mizan Al-Dabbous, Fatma Taqqi, and Shouq Hajji. The project aims at absorbing vibration motions in buildings.

On his part, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "We always strive to support projects and innovative ideas that contribute to the community's development. Accordingly, KIB is committed to sponsoring projects developed by youth and adopting their ideas and innovations whenever possible. This stems from our deep-rooted belief that youth are the cornerstone to the advancement of the community and the nation's future development across different areas."

Najia added that KIB continues to sponsor students' graduation projects at the annual Engineering Design Exhibition as part of its social responsibility initiatives aimed at supporting talented, ambitious youth. Each year, the Bank selects a number of graduation projects to sponsor, as part of its leading social responsibility program.

CROSSWORD 1919

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13	14
15				16								17			
18				19								20			
21			22		23					24	25		26		
			27				28			29		30			
31	32	33				34			35						
36				37	38			39				40	41	42	43
44							45					46			
47				48				49		50			51		
52			53				54		55			56			
57						58	59			60		61			
		62							63						
64	65					66	67					68	69	70	71
72				73	74		75				76		77		
78				79	80								81		
82				83										84	

ACROSS

1. Characteristic of a mob.
4. The capital and largest city of Venezuela.
11. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
15. Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
16. A city of east central Mexico (west of Veracruz).
17. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
18. Having leadership guidance.
19. To work at or to absurd length.
20. Decapod having eyes on short stalks and a broad flattened carapace with a small abdomen folded under the thorax and pincers.
21. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
23. (prefix) Indicating difference or variation.
24. A public promotion of some product or service.
26. A master's degree in business.
27. A lipoprotein that transports cholesterol in the blood.
28. The square of a body of any size of type.
29. A tributary of the Ohio River.
31. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
36. The middle of the day.
39. Black-and-white short-necked web-footed diving bird of northern seas.
40. A black colloidal substance consisting wholly or principally of amorphous carbon and used to make pigments and ink.
44. A chain of coral and volcanic islands in Micronesia halfway between New Guinea and Japan.
47. (of securities) Not quoted on a stock exchange.
48. (law) The seat for judges in a courtroom.
51. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
52. Impairment resulting from long use.
54. In a competent capable manner.
57. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
60. (of exocrine glands) Producing a clear aqueous secretion without releasing part of the secreting cell.
64. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
66. Make less active or intense.
68. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
72. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
75. A particular environment or walk of life.
77. The act of slowing down or falling behind.
78. A strong emotion.
79. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
81. 4-wheeled motor vehicle.
82. An insecticide that is also toxic to animals and humans.
83. A large estate in Spanish-speaking countries.
84. A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.

DOWN

1. A master's degree in library science.
2. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the

- sale of petroleum.
3. English monk and scholar (672-735).
4. Nut of any of several trees of the genus Corylus.
5. Of or relating to or involving an area.
6. A small stream.
7. Any of numerous ornamental shrubs grown for their showy flowers of various colors.
8. Alternatively, a member of the family Nymphaeaceae.
9. A dark-skinned member of a race of people living in Australia when Europeans arrived.
10. A region of Malaysia on northwestern Borneo.
11. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
12. A mountainous republic in southeastern Asia on the Bay of Bengal.
13. Infestation of the pubic hair by crab lice.
14. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
22. Russian pancake of buckwheat flour and yeast.
25. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
30. Having or denoting a low vocal or instrumental range.
32. A small chin beard trimmed into a point.
33. Spanish poet and dramatist (1898-1936).
34. A bluish shade of green.
35. General term for any insect or similar creeping or crawling invertebrate.
37. A light touch or stroke.
38. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
41. A Bantu language.
42. Relating to or concerned with a city or densely populated area.
43. 100 thebe equal 1 pula.
45. A fraudulent business scheme.
46. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
49. A hemoprotein composed of globin and heme that gives red blood cells their characteristic color.
50. Any of various butterflies of the family Lycaenidae.
53. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
55. Desk or stand with a slanted top used to hold a text at the proper height for a lecturer.
56. Acute lung injury characterized by coughing and rales.
58. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
59. The cry made by sheep.
61. Being ten more than one hundred forty.
62. Metal or plastic sheath over the end of a shoelace or ribbon.
63. A dress worn primarily by Hindu women.
65. Soft white semisolid fat obtained by rendering the fatty tissue of the hog v l.
67. Capital city of the Apulia region on the Adriatic coast.
69. Type genus of the Alcidæ comprising solely the razorbill.
70. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
71. A city in northern India.
73. The residue that remains when something is burned.
74. An accountant certified by the state.
76. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
80. A radioactive element of the actinide series.

Friday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

First impressions matter to you now and you make every effort to see that you make good ones! The finer things in life mean a lot to you and you intently pursue them. Creating an energy of abundance holds your interest as you attempt to pull to you what you want and feel that you need. Someone proves that we can create the kind of environment we want, and you're determined to do the same. Some accomplishment brings attention to your hard work and commitment; this appears to be something that helped more than one person. You could find that you want to go in a different direction than someone you're close to; this takes time and effort to work through, but you can if you want to. You can put a correct value on something you want to sell that you couldn't before; you're clearing old energy.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Breaking away from tradition feels good now, whereas before it didn't; this is due to growth and evolution of the spirit. Your belongings are important, but not as important as they have been in the past; you may feel that possessions are holding you back or trapping you instead of supporting a sense of security. You run the opposite way of pettiness and trouble-stirring for the "fun or excitement" of it; you may have to break away from someone you care for because of this. A change in the wind of a relationship signals changes happening now and changes to come. Knowing what choices to make never comes easy but an important decision you have to make now isn't bothersome at all. You receive an apology from someone surprising; you know you're not perfect and you may really feel humbled.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Unusual designs appeal to you the most and this can be in nature or made by man as long as they're unique. You don't want to spin your wheels or waste your time on unrealistic pursuits but you're not sure where to draw the line between being impractical and having ambition. Breaking out of the old mold could feel odd, but freedom supports your best interests. You could have a tendency to romanticize everything, even terrible situations; keep yourself in check when trying to justify making a decision that could have long-lasting, negative effects. You've been on the fence about something but the time's here to make a firm commitment either way; you know what's right on a soul-level. Being punctual could prove hard, but not impossible. You're good at making yourself look at things in a positive light.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You experience meeting people in a new way that amazes and impresses you. High-tech gadgets and innovations take up a good part of your time as you learn to apply them to your work or living environment. You could get some news you've been expecting for a while; if it's not what you wanted to hear, be patient because it really is for the best. Whatever you want, you want now and can become unpleasant when it doesn't happen that way. Working on raising your level of patience is part of your journey you don't care for now, but you're able to deal with it. Being practical is easy as you make plans to save for a large purchase. Home improvements are likely as someone returns to live with you. Having time to rethink a decision helps come to the final, correct conclusion that works for you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You expect things to happen quickly but they don't and when it's like this, you could suffer from a sour mood. Being sensitive to a certain situation proves tough, but you overcome it by counting your blessings. Your personality appeals to the masses and you do well with groups. New clothing or hair styles give your social status a boost, not to mention the mental charge you get. Feeling good about yourself if easy during this cycle, and the more positive vibrations you feel, the more you create. Thinking about what's best is exactly what you pull to you, it's clearly a choice you like. You pay close attention to how much money you make and how much money you spend. You don't appreciate someone until you lose them; this is a very hard lesson to learn, but you do learn it. Chin up, on to better times.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may want to play the victim during this time, but you catch yourself and don't allow it; you refuse to give anyone or anything power over you in any way. The heavens signal shifts and departures from your old ways and while this could feel unbalanced or out of kilter, you come out on the far better side. Keeping your eyes on the prize is necessary now to help you stay on track, and you do stay on it as you say no to failure. You take up for someone less fortunate who's ungrateful and probably undeserving; you don't hold grudges, but you don't throw good effort after bad, either. You crave a certain flavor from a foreign culture and either seek it out or prepare it yourself. You see how the circle of life works and the meaning it has to all those who live; we're all in the same boat here on planet earth.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Nursing Home 1

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 47 letters spell a Mother Theresa quotation.

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

ACTIVITIES
AIDES
ASPIRIN
BATHROOM
BEDRAIL
BEDS
BOARD GAMES
BULLETIN BOARD
CANE
CARE
CASE MEETING
CHARTS
COMFORT
DENTURES
DINING ROOM
DOCTOR
DRUGS
EXERCISE
FALLS
FLU SHOT
FRAIL
GLOUCESTER METER
HAIRDRESSER
HALLWAYS
HELP
INCONTINENCE
LAUNDRY
LINERS
MAGAZINES
MEDICAL GLOVES
MEMORY LOSS
MOISTURIZER
MUSIC
NAIL CLIPPERS
NEEDLE
NURSES
OUTINGS
PET THERAPY
PHYSIOTHERAPIST
PUZZLES
READING
RESIDENTS
ROUNDS
SCRABBLE
SCUBES
SENIORS
SHAVE
SHOWER
SING ALONG
SLEEPING PILL
STAFF MEETINGS
SUPPER
TABLES
TELEVISION
TRANSFER BELT
URINAL
VOLUNTEERS
WANDERING
WHEELCHAIR

Daily SuDoku

			4		9		2
5		2					1
				7			
		5			3	4	
2		1	9		4	8	7
		6	7			1	
		4					9
1					2		3
8		2		6			



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Someone who owes you some respect refuses to give it; you're able to blow this off because you realize what's important and what's not! Being at the right place brings unexpected rewards. Your taste buds are stuck on one certain thing and you have to have it! You inspire by the way you live your life and conduct your work. You have certain standards in life and you can't back down from them just because someone you care for doesn't agree. Someone turns to you for guidance. Close relationships could experience trials right now, but the tried and true ones take the hit and grow stronger. Your connection to equality and fairness could irritate you, but it's always right-on! Close attention to details is very likely throughout the rest of this cycle and this creates unimagined success for you and yours.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Self-discipline is your focus when it comes to work and your physical well-being. Paying close attention to details or scheduling could seem non-existent during this cycle and this could cause some problems you'd rather not have; you can change this vibration if you wish! You find ways to stop losses and inefficiencies; this creates abundance and gain. Others have to run just to keep up with the progress you make using a new product or invention. Old hobbies resurface and remind you of how enjoyable and sometimes profitable they were in the past. Picking up where you left off with an old friend seems completely natural, as though there was never an interruption. A child or sweetheart could seem challenging and uncooperative; this could also indicate that you're dealing with a smart child.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your chosen forms of self-expression could seem "way out there" to some people, but others see exactly how perfect this is for you. Regardless, you're not interested in what anyone else thinks, it's all about you right now, and it's about time! A shopping spree turns super fun when you run into an old friend who joins you. Being on time and punctual is very important to you as you've started something new that could promise a secure future. Risk-taking appeals to you during this time, and it's because the stars are aligned for success: make hay while the sun shines! The fun side of life is prominent and this could include romance and just plain old having good times: food, friends and entertainment for you! Listening to your intuition is strongly suggested when making an important decision.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

New ways of expressing your ideas make you more comfortable in certain groups or with one person in particular. Someone challenges your thinking but you're proven right very quickly. By listening well to your intuition, you're ahead of the game and prepared when something unexpected happens. Your thoughts are clear and problem solving seems like child's play; the energies surrounding you now support abundance and progress! You refuse to do something the hard way when the easy way is actually more profitable. Meeting deadlines is done like clockwork and your workload is perfectly balanced with your personal life. Subjects requiring deep thinking appeal to you now as you long to unravel some of the mysteries of life; attempting this stirs your hungry soul while challenging your eager mind.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Finding the answers to life is a priority now, and this could be due to a loss or a loss you're expecting. Finding ways to make things better seems easy just now when you need this particular energy the most. You manage to escape a legal matter that really has nothing to do with you; someone wants your input, but you refuse. You may delve deeper into an ethical situation that supports your beliefs and desires; you feel alive and effective! Seeking wisdom is predicted and, once found, you use it very well and for the good of more than one person. A need to share your life on a romantic level, a soul level, actually, demands your attention. You're drawn to an adventure you simply can't refuse: a broadening of mind and spirit are quickened here. Stepping into who you truly are sets you apart from others.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

One way or another you get your way on something you consider extremely important. Knowing right from wrong is one thing, convincing others is another but you succeed beyond your hopes! Following the right signs is crucial now as you make firm plans for the future. Creative energy abounds and you're off on an artistic tangent that could pay dividends. If there's tension between you and a loved one, this evaporates when you're honest with one another; you find that neither of you understood! Blending beauty into your environment is prominent at this time, and this lasts throughout the rest of this cycle. Exotic plants or furnishings reflect your new style and thinking as you come into who you truly are. Close knit relationships are the anchor in your life now as bonds deepen and take hold.

Yesterday's Solution

New York City 2

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

APOLLO THEATER
BALLET
BROOKLYN ZOO
BROOKLYN BRIDGE
CARNEGIE HALL
CENTRAL PARK
CHRYSLER BUILDING
COLLEGES
DIVERSE
ELLIS ISLAND
ENTERTAINMENT
FDNY
HIGH LINE
LINCOLN TUNNEL
MADISON AVENUE
MEDIA
MEMORIALS
METS
MONUMENTS
MUSEUM MILE
MUSEUMS
NETS
NEWSPAPERS
NYPO
OPERA
PARADES
PIERS
PORT
PROSPECT PARK
RANGERS
ROCKEFELLER CENTER
SILICON ALLEY
STATEN ISLAND FERRY
STATUE OF LIBERTY
THE CYCLONE
TOURISTS
TV NETWORKS
UNIVERSITIES
VENDORS
WAVE HILL
YANKEES

The hidden message is: JOHN J FITZ GERALD POPULARIZED THE NICKNAME, THE BIG APPLE, IN HORSE RACING ARTICLES IN THE NINETEEN TWENTIES

Friday's Solution

8	4	1	6	9	7	2	3	5
9	2	3	1	5	4	7	8	6
6	5	7	3	8	2	9	4	1
3	6	2	7	4	5	1	9	8
4	7	8	2	1	9	5	6	3
1	9	5	8	3	6	4	7	2
5	1	4	9	6	3	8	2	7
7	3	9	5	2	8	6	1	4
2	8	6	4	7	1	3	5	9

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018



A boat sails on the Neva river in Saint Petersburg. — AFP

Project Q, the Californian genderqueer salon saving life

Nova-young, black, and a member of Los Angeles's homeless population-is sick of looking feminine and wants a part-shaved, mainly dreadlocked hairstyle that can appear a little more manly when the occasion demands. Mainstream hairdressers are often inadequate, unable to let Nova express a complex gender identity that falls outside of the traditional binary male-female classification.

Nova has come to Project Q, a mobile salon offering free haircuts to homeless "genderqueer" people across Los Angeles, as well as crucial support or advice on combating bullying and developing self-esteem. "Not a lot of barbers will want to work with someone that they perceive as a woman, to cut their hair short, because they don't know what they're doing," said 31-year-old Madin Lopez, Project Q's founder. "They try to leave it more feminine and try to make it pretty (around) the face."

Project Q's customers, like Lopez, mainly classify themselves as genderqueer or "non-binary"-meaning their gender identities are not exclusively masculine or feminine. Like many in the community, they prefer people to refer to them using gender-neutral pronouns-typically "they," "them" and "their." For black members of the LGBTQ community, finding a hairdresser who understands both their hair type and what they are looking for can pose a much greater challenge than for white people.



Hairdresser Madin Lopez works on the hair of a homeless client at her trailer studio in Silver Lake, Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Nova, who lives in a homeless shelter, says they want to be able to feel "like a princess" on certain days but, on others, put on chest-flattening gear for a more masculine look. In a caravan equipped with a large mirror, a swivel chair and a collection of brushes, scissors and razors, Lopez goes to work, guiding an electric razor to a background soundtrack of R&B.

Resistance

A paying customer could easily be asked to shell out upwards of \$700 for the complex cut Nova wants, but Lopez works free-of-charge and the equipment is covered by donations. "I look at Nova and I see myself. I've been

in their shoes. I've been someone that didn't have a place to stay," says the softly-spoken Lopez, face broadening into a smile. The stylist, who looks studious in circular-framed glasses, hair partly shaved, part cropped short, sees self-maintenance as a form of "resistance."

"Preservation is key to the longevity of our cause, our activism. I use hair as a form of activism," the crimper says. Lopez's goal is to be a role model for these young people, the kind of mentor figure that the hairdresser never had as a youngster. When Lopez was 13, their parents beat them, unable to accept their child's "queer" identity. One day, a teacher noticed Lopez had marks around their ears and the teenager was put in foster care.

"Sometimes it would take two to three weeks for me to even leave my room. And then I got my hair done, one of those times, and... something clicked. I just changed. I felt better about myself," Lopez explains. Before long the budding stylist was cutting schoolmates' hair in return for bus tickets, something to eat or tampons. High school was a breeding ground for violence, however-Lopez even recalls having friends suffer gunshot wounds-prompting a move to hairdressing school.

'You're going to hell'

Life remains difficult for LGBTQ youth, despite advancements like the legalization of same-sex marriage, and doubly so for those in minority racial groups. "We're still fighting bathroom laws," Lopez says-a reference to the ongoing controversy in the United States over access to gender-neutral and women's restrooms for trans people who identify as female.

Meanwhile, frequent headlines about black youth being killed by police and homophobic attacks such as the 2016 Pulse nightclub massacre only add to the suffocating sense of unease. "They are killing black men and they're killing gays, and I'm black and I'm gay. So you feel like a target and it's terrifying," Lopez said.

Another pressure, Lopez says, is the powerful influence of Christian evangelists in black communities, who are often intolerant of minority gender identity and sexuality. It was a bitter lesson that Lopez learned upon marrying a woman. "The night before my wedding my dad called and said, 'You're going to hell. I don't want to ever see you again,'" Lopez recalls. Many non-binary young people rejected by their families end up on the streets, a situation exacerbated by California's chronic housing shortage.

For Nova, Lopez's hair salon is not merely a place for haircuts, but a sanctuary from the realities of a world that can be harsh for people whose identity is not considered the norm. "It makes my life so much easier, especially going through my transition, especially when I have questions that I don't know how to answer myself," Nova said. "And having that person that you can connect with, because they understand what you're going through, is very vital. And I feel like... they are literally saving life." —AFP

Portuguese artist turns trash into animal sculptures

Broken crates and worn pipes pile up in the studio of Portuguese artist Bordalo II, who uses rubbish to create surprising animal sculptures to warn about the dangers of pollution. The bearded 31-year-old has decorated the Portuguese capital and other cities around the world with his colorful foxes, owls, monkeys and chameleons. In Lisbon, one of his best-known works is a four-metre (13-foot) high raccoon assembled from old tyres, car bumpers and electronic components that gazes down on pedestrians in the riverside Belem district.

"Animals are the characters which the public can identify most easily with when I want to show the ravages of our society on nature," said Artur Bordalo, who prefers the artistic name Bordalo II, a tribute to his late grandfather, painter Artur Real Bordalo. He uses materials in his work that are harmful to animals to raise awareness, he said, in an interview with AFP at his Lisbon studio, as he hand drilled a paw out of plastic cut from a rubbish bin lid for a rodent sculpture.

Bordalo II, who wore a grey hoodie and jogging pants that revealed his tattooed calves, collects the trash he uses to make his sculptures from Lisbon's rubbish dumps and curbsides. When he is not travelling abroad, he works on his sculptures in his tiny studio on the ground floor of a building in a working class northern Lisbon neighborhood while listening to electronic music. "I have a busy schedule for the next few years. The problem is going to be finding time!" the artist said, smiling.



Portuguese artist Artur Bordalo who goes by the artistic name Bordalo II poses in his studio in Lisbon.

Lisbon to Los Vegas

Born in Lisbon in 1987, he took his first steps as an artist in the studio of his grandfather, a painter known for his watercolors of Lisbon who died last year. Bordalo II went on to study art at the University of Lisbon but he decided to focus on his passion-graffiti. He said he got the idea to make sculptures from trash while doing graffiti.

"One day I started to assemble objects I had put aside to create a stand to paint on and then I realized I could use these objects to create something aesthetically interesting, while giving them meaning," he said. "My productions depend a lot on wherever in the world I find myself," said Bordalo II, whose works have decorated streets in Berlin, Paris, Las Vegas and Baku in Azerbaijan. The message he wishes to convey though is always the same. "We must be interested above all in the state of the world and nature," he said. Art in public spaces is an ideal way to change mentalities because "it has the power to mark spirits," he added.

Plus for city

In a sign of Bordalo II's mainstream success as an artist, Lisbon's prestigious Gulbenkian Foundation, one of Europe's richest collections, is displaying one of his works in its garden until the end of the month. The statue of a bear and her cub "draws attention to the ecological damage we are leaving to future generations," said the museum's spokeswoman, Ines Rapazote.

Bordalo II is part of a growing group of artists such as Vhils and Pantónio who have used Lisbon's streets to display their works, thanks to municipal policies that favour street art. "Lisbon is one of the first world capitals to have created a legal framework that allows artists to paint on walls," said Pedro Farinha, of Estrela d'Alva Tours, which has since 2014 staged tours of the city's street art. Bordalo II said Lisbon "understands that urban art is a plus for the city." "Grey walls have nothing to tell," he added. —AFP



Artwork by Portuguese artist Artur Bordalo — AFP photos

Weinstein charged with rape, sex crime in New York

Disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein was charged with rape and a sex crime in New York on Friday, in what was hailed a landmark for the #MeToo movement, nearly eight months after his career imploded in a blaze of accusations of misconduct. The former mogul-once the toast of Hollywood, whose films won scores of Oscars-smirked as he was escorted into a Manhattan courtroom in handcuffs to face the first criminal charges lodged against him.

Weinstein, a 66-year-old twice-married father of five, was charged with rape in the first and third degrees, stemming from an attack on a woman in 2013, and a criminal sex act against another woman in 2004. Neither victim was named. "Today's charges reflect significant progress in this active, ongoing investigation," said Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance, thanking "brave survivors" for coming forward and urging others to call a sex crimes hotline.

“We, the women, finally have real hope for justice”

Standing alongside his defense attorney, the former Tinseltown powerbroker looked glum during the brief arraignment, agreeing to post bail at \$1 million cash, surrender his passport and be fitted with a GPS monitoring device. Weinstein's career went down in flames in October over sexual assault allegations following explosive articles in The New York Times and New Yorker, which sparked a sexual harassment reckoning across the United States, in multiple industries.

Nearly 100 women have now accused Weinstein of crimes ranging from sexual harassment to assault and rape going back decades. New York authorities have been investigating the disgraced producer for months, under growing pressure from Hollywood actresses to bring him to justice, and their probes are ongoing. Weinstein

already faces a slew of civil lawsuits, is reportedly under federal investigation, and his former studio has filed for bankruptcy.

But these were the first criminal charges against Weinstein. Defense attorney Ben Brafman told reporters that his client would plead not guilty and still denied any non-consensual sexual activity. "We intend to move very quickly to dismiss these charges," Brafman said. "Bad behavior is not on trial," he added. "Mr Weinstein did not invent the casting couch in Hollywood." His case was adjourned until July 30.

Handcuffs

The former studio boss surrendered to police shortly before 7:30 am (1130 GMT) wearing a white shirt, pale blue sweater and dark blazer, as dozens of television cameras and photographers mobbed the street outside. He walked into the station clutching several books, apparently including the Rodgers and Hammerstein biography "Something Wonderful" and a volume on late director Elia Kazan.

He left handcuffed, without the books, after his mugshots and fingerprints were taken. Police said he was "arrested, processed and charged with rape, criminal sex act, sex abuse and sexual misconduct." Out on bail, Weinstein's travel will be restricted to New York and the neighboring state of Connecticut.

Inevitable descent to hell

Former actress Lucia Evans, who said Weinstein forced her to perform oral sex on him in 2004, is thought to be one of the women whose cases triggered the New York charges. New York police previously confirmed another credible rape allegation after "Boardwalk Empire" actress Paz de la Huerta accused the former producer of raping her twice at her New York apartment in late 2010.

Salma Hayek, Gwyneth Paltrow and Angelina Jolie are among more than two dozen actresses who say they were sexually harassed by the producer. A few, including Asia Argento and Rose McGowan, said they were raped. "I have to admit I didn't think I would see the day that he would have handcuffs on him," McGowan told ABC television. "Today Harvey Weinstein will take his first step on



Harvey Weinstein, center, signs documents as he attends his arraignment at the Manhattan Criminal Court in New York.

his inevitable descent to hell. We, the women, finally have real hope for justice," tweeted Argento.

The Time's Up anti-harassment movement-launched on January 1 — said the producer "shattered the lives of an untold number of women," adding that it looked "forward to seeing justice prevail." The #MeToo movement has seen people around the world come forward with cases of sexual mistreatment, leading to the downfall of powerful men across industries, including Oscar winner Kevin Spacey. Weinstein has reportedly spent months in treatment for sex addiction. His fashion designer wife, Georgina Chapman, has left him.

But for all the media circus, experts warn that

any trial-let alone a criminal conviction-would still be a long way off. Sexual assault cases, particularly those that allegedly happened years ago, are notoriously difficult to prosecute and often lack substantive forensic evidence. Weinstein's lawyer is one of America's most celebrated criminal defense attorneys. His past clients include former IMF boss Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who escaped criminal prosecution for alleged sexual assault in 2011.—AFP

From Hollywood 'God' to #MeToo pariah: The disgrace of Weinstein

For decades, he was the kingmaker lording it over Hollywood who Meryl Streep famously called "God." But on Friday, Harvey Weinstein was arrested and charged with rape, the most famous pariah of the #MeToo cause. It's been nearly eight months since the Oscar-winning mogul was hit by bombshell articles in The New York Times and New Yorker magazine accusing him of decades of sexual harassment, assault and rape.

Since then, nearly 100 women have come forward alleging 40 years of impropriety that sparked a sexual harassment watershed, ending the careers of powerful men and spawning the global #MeToo and Time's Up movements. "I came of age in the '60s and '70s, when all the rules about behavior and workplaces were different," the 66-year-old said in a bizarre statement in October that apologized for yet appeared to justify his behavior. "That was the culture then," said Weinstein.



Harvey Weinstein turns himself in to the New York Police Department's First Precinct after he served with criminal charges by the Manhattan District Attorney's office in New York City. — AFP

While he denies any non-consensual activity, he disappeared from public life, surfacing occasionally from reported sex addiction treatment, his name toxic and his reputation destroyed. The one-time Democratic Party donor, who hobnobbed with Hillary Clinton and once had a personal fortune estimated at \$150 million, was hit Friday for the first time by criminal charges, following an avalanche of civil lawsuits.

He turned himself into a New York police station before being charged with first and third degree rape in 2013, seemingly in a Midtown Manhattan hotel, and a criminal sex act in the first degree in 2004. His lawyer Ben Brafman said the former Hollywood legend, who for decades produced box office and critically claimed hits, would plead not guilty. "Bad behavior is not on trial in this case," Brafman told reporters.

Terribly naive

"Mr Weinstein did not invent the casting couch in Hollywood and to the extent that there is bad behavior in that industry, that is not what this is about." But whether or not he ever goes on trial or is criminally convicted, his career is over. He has been expelled by the Oscar-awarding Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and sacked by his own studio, The Weinstein Company, which has since filed for bankruptcy.

His British fashion designer wife is divorcing him, his homes are being sold and he must now suffer the indignity of surrendering his passport and being fitted with a GBC monitor out on a \$1 million cash bail. Salma Hayek, Gwyneth Paltrow and Angelina Jolie are among more than two dozen actresses who say they were sexually harassed by the producer. "There was a part of me that was terribly naive," Georgina Chapman, his estranged wife and mother of two, told Vogue magazine recently.

"I had what I thought was a very happy marriage. I loved my life," she said. Asked if she had ever been suspicious, Chapman replied: "Absolutely not. Never." Born in Queens on March 19, 1952 the son of a diamond cutter, he studied at Buffalo University and initially produced rock concerts until he and his younger brother, Bob, struck out into the movie business. They co-founded Miramax Films, a small distribution company named after his mother Miriam and father Max, in 1979.

The punisher

Miramax hits include 1998's "Shakespeare in Love," for which Weinstein shared a best picture Oscar. But the company was sold to Disney in 1993 and the brothers left in 2005 to start up their own studio, The Weinstein Company. In February, New York's attorney general, who has since resigned in his own cloud of abuse allegations, sued the brothers and studio for failing to protect employees from alleged sexual misconduct despite multiple complaints.

Over the years, Weinstein's films received more than 300 Oscar nominations and 81 statuettes. The films he steered to Academy Awards glory include "The Artist," "The King's Speech" and "The Iron Lady"-which won best actress for Streep as former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. His more than 300 projects included the Cannes-winning "Pulp Fiction" (1994), "The English Patient" (1996) and "Gangs of New York" in 2002.

Through it all, the burly executive was famous for his hard-nosed approach to work and Oscars campaigns. Streep-who is fiercely protective of her family life-was apparently made to earn every penny of her fee on the promotion circuit for "The Iron Lady." "I just want to thank my agent and God-Harvey Weinstein," she told the 2012 Golden Globes. "The punisher. Old Testament, I guess," she added. The triple Oscar winner has since said she was "appalled" and had no idea about the "disgraceful" allegations.—AFP

Kenyan filmmakers rise up against archaic 1960s restrictions

Kenyan filmmakers have urged authorities to revamp a 1960s law that threatens them with jail if they do not pay for a license and impose other restrictions they say are stifling their resurgent industry. Directors and producers poured onto social media this week to protest after the regulator printed adverts in newspapers reminding them of the terms of the legislation, which dates back to British colonial rule.

The Kenya Film Classification Board - which has to check scripts before filming begins under the law and classifies movies - said it had placed the ads as part of a crackdown on unregistered producers and makers of pornography. But the notices touched a raw nerve in a growing industry that has expanded alongside the growth of new media.

"It is a colonial law, created to keep Africans from making films and expressing themselves, so it is not in keeping with the times, it is faulty, we need to fight it, it has to be modified," veteran director, producer and writer Cajetan Boy said on Friday. The classification body's chief executive, Ezekiel Mutua, said it planned to step up checks that film were properly licensed. "We are now coming to a crackdown, we are starting raids

and it's not because we want to criminalize creativity. It's because there are bad apples within the industry," he told Reuters.

An old law

The body had a duty to protect the public, he added. "Films must reflect the dominant values of the people. Films must promote morality in society." But filmmakers said the restrictions had not kept track with changing tastes and technology. Last month the board banned "Rafiki", a film about two women falling in love, on the grounds that it promoted lesbianism - in violation of another colonial-era law.

"It's archaic ... it's an old law. We need to now sit down and look at the situation and circumstances that are now in 2018 and see how best that law can work for us," director David Gitonga said. His latest film, "Disconnect" is a romantic comedy about young Kenyans exploring relationships and sexuality in Nairobi. "I'm all for paying for our licenses but let's look at what are we paying for. You know that young upcoming kid who wants to make a film with his phone, let him be free to go shoot even in the city," he added.

The law, which was created just before Kenya gained independence at the end of 1963, allows the government to "control the making and exhibition" of audio visual material including films. Kenya's film industry was worth \$2 billion in 2016, up from 600 million in 2007, according to a study by the Kenya Film Commission.—Reuters

Filmmaker, AIDS orphan Carla Simon on Spain's 'lost generation'

Catalan filmmaker Carla Simon remembers little of the day that, aged six, she joined the ranks of countless orphans left behind by Spain's "lost generation" of AIDS victims. Her parents were among 50,000 Spaniards who contracted HIV from 1981, when the virus first appeared, until its peak around 1997, with needle-sharing by drug addicts the largest cause of transmission.

"As a kid, when something like that happens to you it's like the memory erases or blocks and I don't remember specific things," the Catalan director said. "I remember emotions, like I remember that I didn't cry the day that my mom died and this made me feel very bad." Simon went back to that traumatic period for her feature directorial debut "Summer 1993," looking through old photographs and piecing together half-remembered images and snatches of conversation.

Premiering at Berlin's annual festival and winning best debut feature, the Catalan-language movie made a respectable \$1.2 million in Spanish box offices. It has been gaining momentum in recent months, picking up prizes for best feature, director

and writing as well as awards for its cast at festivals around the world ahead of its US release on Friday.

The movie follows a six-year-old Simon reimagined as the fictional Frida, who looks on in silence as the last objects from her recently deceased mother's apartment in Barcelona are placed in boxes. Her aunt, uncle, and three-year-old cousin, Anna, welcome her with open arms-but it is only very slowly that Frida begins to get used to her new home in the countryside.



New liberties

Critics have raved about the performances of Laia Artigas as Frida and Paula Robles as her surrogate sister Anna, who make for the film's emotional heart despite being too young to learn their lines. "I talked a lot during the takes. I would tell them what to do or what they had to say and they would repeat," Simon said. "They got used to just hearing my voice, not looking at me and following instructions. And then in post-production we took my voice out."

By 1997, Spain had 120,000 HIV/AIDS cases in an adult population of around 21 million-the highest rate in the European Union and triple the average. The virus spread rapidly during years of heavy heroin use, a manifestation of the new liberties enjoyed by Spaniards after the downfall of the Franco dictatorship in 1975. "Democracy started and everyone was very happy to get their freedom finally. Some of the young people brought this freedom to the extreme," says Simon.—AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Visitors look at paintings by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso during the presentation of the exhibition 'Picasso's Kitchen' at the Picasso Museum in Barcelona. — AFP photos

Picasso's ties to the kitchen explored at Barcelona show

A deformed bottle of beverage, a colander in the place of a woman's head or a ceramic plate with inlaid fish bones: For the first time, the intimate connection between Pablo Picasso's work and gastronomy is on display in his Barcelona museum. "It's a new vision of Picasso," Emmanuel Guigon, director of the

exhibition is like making one's way through a multi-course meal, with more than 180 works of art—some of them borrowed from other museums or private collections—scattered in 10 rooms.

Cherry on the cake—one room has been designed by Spanish gastronomy's Picasso, molecular gastronomy

died in 2016, were his "two creative references".

"To be here is a dream, twenty years ago this would have been impossible," he said. "But today in art there are people who are interested in what we are doing, an entire generation of chefs who want to be on the forefront." "In a 100 years my dishes can't be shown in any museum," Adria joked. "But to understand his system of creation and how he worked helps us to analyse and compare it to ours."

Metaphor of creation

The exhibition, which will run until September 30, "is not a catalogue of ingredients...it is a metaphor of creation", of how an everyday objects becomes art or a memory, said the curator of the show, Androula Michel. Everyday objects such as a bottle of wine, a roasted chicken or fish are depicted by Picasso as disfigured still lives in his cubist style.

A colander represents the head of a woman in one sculpture while a painting of two leeks next to a skull depict the hardships in Paris during the Second World War. The exhibition has borrowed works from around 30 museums and private collections, including some of Picasso's most famous creations such as his 1914 sculpture "Glass of Absinthe" and his 1914 painting "Restaurant". Also on show is his "Bullfight and fish" ceramic plate in which Picasso incrustated the fish bones of a sole.

It is displayed alongside a photo taken by David Douglas Duncan of Picasso while he ate the fish in Cannes. The relationship between Picasso's work and the kitchen "is something obvious that has never been explored before," said Guigon. "I hope people will enjoy this menu a great deal," he added.—AFP

"It's a new vision of Picasso"

Picasso Museum in the Mediterranean seaside city, said at Wednesday's inauguration of the exhibition "Picasso's Kitchen."

"It seems weird but it isn't. Cooking is a theme that is in all Picasso's work and in all formats: paintings, sculptures, pottery and even poetry." Strolling through the

chef Ferran Adria, who has imposed his vision of the creative process in the kitchen with diagrams and photos of his dishes. Adria, founder of the El Bulli restaurant which was voted world's best five times before closing in 2011, said Picasso and former FC Barcelona player and coach Johan Cruyff, one of football's most visionary figures who

VENICE BIENNALE SHOWS HUMAN FACE OF ARCHITECTURE



Chapel by Terunobu Fujimori

In an era when many countries are putting up border walls and barbed wire fences, the International Architecture Exhibition in Venice aims to showcase a "sense of humanity" through its displays, organizers said ahead of its opening yesterday. The world's most prestigious architecture festival—which is part of the Venice Biennale—has chosen the title "Freespace" for its 16th edition in the picturesque Italian city.

"The architect's creativity must be at the service of the community," Irish architect Shelley McNamara—who curated the vast exhibition with colleague Yvonne Farrell—said. McNamara said "Freespace" aims to highlight collective spaces, "generosity of spirit" and the "sense of humanity" that architecture must place at the heart of its agenda. Sixty-five different countries and one hundred architecture studios have been invited to display their interpretation of the theme in the vast 3000 square meter Venetian Arsenal and gardens.

Vatican newcomer

Several installations are minimalist but intricate, such as "The Dream," created by studio RCR, winners of the 2017 Pritzker prize—considered to be the Nobel of architecture. "The Dream" displays a kind of cave with moving lights achieved through the use of 6,000 magnifying glasses. The exhibition which runs until 25 November sees seven countries — Antigua and Barbuda, Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Mongolia, Pakistan and the Vatican — participate for the first time.

The Vatican pavilion displays ten chapels, each one designed by a renowned architect, including the Brit



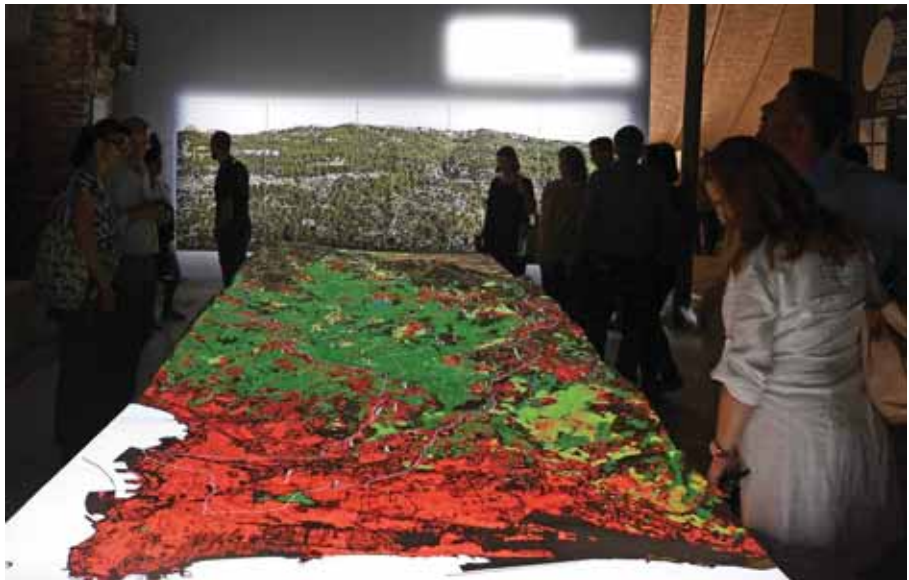
Bamboo Stalactite by Vietnamese architect Vo Trong Nghia

Norman Foster and the Portuguese Eduardo Souto de Moura, both Pritzker prize winners. "Each Biennale focuses on a specific aspect, in this case common space that is free and for everyone", said Paolo Baratta, president of the exhibition.

Breaking down barriers

Many participants have used the term "Freespace" to reflect on hot political topics such as migration and isolationist policies. The British pavilion named "Island" hosts a huge rooftop platform which looks out over the lagoon. The idea is to reflect on "tomorrow, yesterday, isolation and even our political situation," architecture firm Caruso St John explained in a description, alluding to the UK's planned departure from the European Union.

Meanwhile the German pavilion chose to focus on the theme of "Unbuilding Walls". Walls are also the inspiration for the Israeli installation. Under the title "In Statu Quo" their exhibition looks to explore the negotiation of sacred space—an issue which has been thrust into the spotlight after the US controversially moved their embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem earlier this month. The United States exhibition looks at the concept of contemporary citizenship and how architecture relates to societies through five videos discussing migration, travel, and challenging societal norms.—AFP



People visit Lebanon's pavilion, at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice.



Chapel by Norman Foster part of the Holy See pavilion. — AFP photos



Chapel by Ricardo Flores and Eva Prats



Nordic Countries' pavilion



Spain's pavilion



Milan S. Milosavljevic, member of the Partizan fan supporter group called GTR (Grobarski Trash Romantizism) draws a mural showing Ljuba Popovic, a French painter of Serbian origin, in Belgrade. — AFP

Serbian street artists make football the beautiful game

Graffiti or street artists in Belgrade are playing out a football rivalry on the city's walls in a development far from the image of ultranationalism and violent Balkan fans. Fan groups attached to Partizan Belgrade go by the nickname 'the Gravediggers', and include the graffiti artist Derox, who is also part of 'the Grobarski (gravediggers) Trash Romantizism' (GTR) art group. When AFP meets him Derox has been working without break repainting 35 highly impressive mural paintings with the acronym GTR.

They had been vandalized during an overnight operation likely conducted by fans of bitter city rival Red Star. The two giants of Yugoslav and Serbian football were founded at the end of World War II. Some people believe Red Star draw support from the middle classes and Partizan traditionally from the working classes. GTR art group co-founder, 31-year old Ivan Lovric, is not so sure about the traditional divisions but says Partizan is also the club supported by the intellectual elite.

Derox, 33-year-old Milan Milosavljevic, is finishing the portrait of surrealist Franco-Yugoslav painter Ljuba Popovic. "I love Partizan not only for the football," he says, insisting GTR is an "artistic movement linked to football". He says what he does is a poke in the eye for those to whom "people who watch football are described as idiots". And "there is the word ART in the name: pARTizan", he says.

Orwell, Morrissey, Strummer

On his drying mural Ljuba Popovic claims that he has been "supporting Partizan since 1942". The club was founded three years later in fact. Other GTR works feature the British writer George Orwell and musicians Morrissey, Joe Strummer and Eddy Grant. "Eddy Grant is really a Partizan supporter," says Lovric who is studying English literature. He recalls a song, where the reggae singer offers to put on an "invisible hat" to "visit Belgrade": "Relax and I'll take you to where it's at."

As for Strummer, continues Lovric, before becoming the frontman of the Clash he was a gravedigger. Morrissey was chosen because GTR liked his lyrics contained in a Smiths song: "To die by your side is such a heavenly way to die". What about Orwell? Lovric is convinced that "he had everything needed to be a Partizan fan". Also he contributed to the American Trotskyists magazine "Partisan", he says.

Launching GTR in 2012 "we did not have any doctrine or plan. We just wanted to do something for the love of our club," says Ivan Sarajcic, a bearded 47-year old IT programmer. He co-founded the movement after reading a post on Facebook, a line of Lord Byron, amended by Lovric: "She walks in beauty, like the night. And I live for Partizan and fight". The group's preoccupation with romantic art clashes with the violent image often attributed to local supporters.—AFP



Horse-riders perform during the 2019 Dior Croisiere (Cruise) fashion show at the domaine de Chantilly, near Paris. — AFP photos



Christian Dior turned the runway into a Mexican-inspired rodeo on Friday at France's sumptuous Chantilly chateau, unveiling its latest mid-season "cruise" collection alongside a horse-riding spectacular. Under driving rain, riders decked in full white skirts put on a galloping display in the grounds of the chateau just north of Paris, famed for its equestrian traditions, from horse breeding to races.

Models in full, embroidered riding skirts with sturdy leather belts later took to the runway around the ring, while some wore equestrian-style jackets, leather corsets and even helmets. Dior designer Maria Grazia Chiuri said

the collection was also inspired by a touch of magic realism, and the novel by Chilean author Isabel Allende, "The House of the Spirits." Delicate dresses in black and white, with details made from Chantilly lace, rounded off the collection.— Reuters



Italian fashion designer Maria Grazia Chiuri for Christian Dior acknowledges the audience.



Models present creation for Dior during the 2019 Dior Croisiere (Cruise) fashion show at the domaine de Chantilly, near Paris.

Meghan's coat of arms pays tribute to California roots

Prince Harry's wife Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, received a new tailor-made official coat of arms on Friday that pays homage to her Californian roots. The crest has a blue background that "represents the Pacific Ocean off the California coast," Kensington Palace, the couple's residence, said in a statement. Two golden rays on the shield "are symbolic of the sunshine of The Duchess's home state" and three quills "represent communication and the power of words".

"Beneath the shield on the grass sits a collection of golden poppies, California's state flower, and wintersweet, which

grows at Kensington Palace," it said. The coat of arms includes a songbird "with wings elevated as if flying and an open beak"—also a symbolic representation of the power of communication. "The Duchess of Sussex took a great interest in the design," Thomas Woodcock, whose official title of "Garter King of Arms" represents the most senior role in British heraldry, said in the statement.

Meghan's tradition-defying wedding to Harry last Saturday included elements of her African-American heritage and she walked part of the way up the aisle on her

own in what was seen as a feminist statement. In her biography on the royal family's website, Meghan emphasized her commitment to women's empowerment and stated: "I am proud to be a woman and a feminist". Meghan Markle was born in Los Angeles on August 4, 1981 and attended Hollywood's Immaculate Heart High School before studying at Northwestern University and launching her film career.—AFP



Classifieds

Sunday, May 27, 2018



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

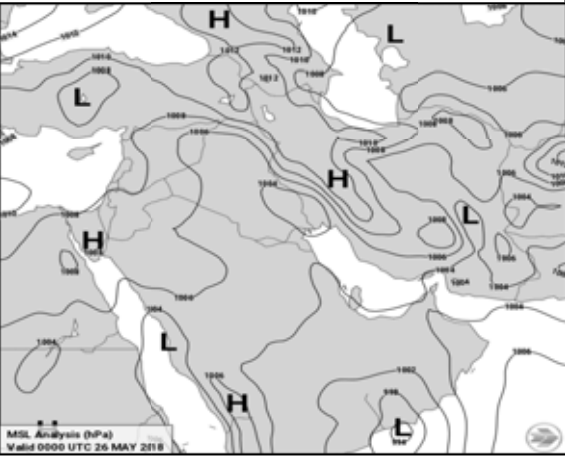
BY DAY: Hot with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h .

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind to north easterly wind, with speed of 10 - 32 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

WEATHER WARNING	No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	43 °C	31 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	42 °C	26 °C
ABDALY	42 °C	25 °C
BUBYAN	34 °C	00 °C
JAHRA	43 °C	28 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	38 °C	28 °C
SALMIYAH	34 °C	29 °C
AHMADI	36 °C	31 °C
NUWAISIB	43 °C	27 °C
WAFRA	43 °C	24 °C
SALMY	40 °C	26 °C

SFC. CHART


26/05/2018 0000 UTC



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	05/27	Hot and and some high clouds will appear	45 °C	28 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 32 km/h
Monday	05/28	Hot and some high clouds will appear	45 °C	29 °C	VRB-NW	08 - 32 km/h
Tuesday	05/29	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with a chance for carried dust over open areas	44 °C	27 °C	NW-SE	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	05/30	Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas and some scattered clouds will appear	44 °C	28 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 32 km/h


PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:18
Sunrise	04:51
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:20
Sunset	18:39
Isha	20:08

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	42 °C
MIN. Temp.	30 °C
MAX. RH	27 %
MIN. RH	08 %
MAX. Wind	W 43 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm



NOTICE

May 14, 2018



Mr. Jamaludeen Hasan Mohamed, son of Mr. Hasan Mohamed, resident of 0 No. 11, New No. U7 11, Bismi Nagar, Saramedu Road, Karumbukadai, Coimbatore 641008, Tamil Nadu and Ms. Nandhini Muthu, daughter of Mr. Muthu, resident of 47/2, Vengadalakshmi Nagar, Housing Unit Smganallur, Coimbatore 641005, Tamil Nadu 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@indembkwt.org, welfaresection@indembkwt.org) / letters / telephonic calls (00965 - 22550171, 00965 - 22533125).

(Sanjeev-Sakani)

Attache (Consular) and

Marriage Officer.

Embassy of India, Kuwait.

Ph.00965- 22550171 - 00965-22533125

Fax: 00965 - 22573910

Email: attachecons@indembkwt.org

welfaresection@indembkwt.org

CHANGE OF NAME

It is hereby informed to the general public that, I, Dronamraju Padma Srinivasa Krishna Rao hereby declare that my daughter's name as per Passport No: P1096673 is Pratyusha Krishna Rao Dronamraju and she will henceforth be known as Dronamraju Lakshmi Pratyusha. 27-5-2018

I, **Kulwinder Singh S/O** Malkit Singh, Passport No. M5721744, hereby changed my name to Kulwinder Singh Dhindsa. (C 5399) 25-5-2018

For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL

HOTLINE 128

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

FOR RENT 1000 M² MODERN 2 FLOOR VILLA HAVING BIG TERRACE & GREEN GARDEN SUITABLE FOR AMBASSADOR OR EXECUTIVE HOUSE
Rumaithya Face to 5th Ring Road next to City Center
Rent price: 2500 KWD including water & electricity

- ◆ 6 Spacious bedroom
- ◆ 6 Bathroom
- ◆ 2 Spacious living hall
- ◆ 2 Spacious kitchen
- ◆ 2 Maid bedrooms with attached toilet

Facilities include:

- ✳ Parking space for 12 cars, with
- ✳ 4 Parking shading by umbrella,
- ✳ Garage for 2 cars
- ✳ Men dewaniya
- ✳ Women dewaniya
- ✳ Toilet & kitchen of dewaniya
- ✳ Drivers bedroom
- ✳ Auto self watery of garden



Call: 50803050

YIELD 4 FINANCE

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

1. LETTERS OF CREDIT AT SIGHT
2. STANDBY LETTERS OF CREDIT
3. USANCE LETTERS OF CREDIT
4. BANK GUARANTEE
5. PERFORMANCE BOND
6. ADVANCE PAYMENT GUARANTEE
7. PROOF OF FUND (POF) MESSAGES
8. 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



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 27/5/2018				Departure Flights on Sunday 27/5/2018				JZR				Jeddah				12:05			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	WAN	312	Madinah	13:40	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	FEG	341	Sohag	13:50	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30	KAC	504	Alexandria	13:50
KAC	102	London	00:50	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	KAC	417	Manila	00:25	JZR	144	Doha	13:55	JZR	573	Mumbai	14:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	516	Tehran	14:20	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15	KAC	677	Dubai	14:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	364	Colombo	14:20	KAC	677	Dubai	01:30	FEG	442	Asyut	14:50	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	14:55
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	JZR	751	Madinah	14:30	THY	773	Istanbul	01:45	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	14:55	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
JZR	267	Beirut	02:10	KNE	537	Jeddah	14:35	KAC	363	Colombo	01:50	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50	JZR	502	Luxor	01:55	KNE	538	Jeddah	15:25	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:45	KAC	701	Jeddah	15:55	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	304	Mumbai	15:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:55	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	562	Amman	15:20	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	JZR	142	Doha	03:20	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	KNE	531	Jeddah	15:35	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30	KAC	563	Amman	16:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	502	Beirut	15:35	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15	KNE	532	Jeddah	16:35
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	JZR	534	Cairo	16:10	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20	SAW	710	Latakia	17:00
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:25	KNE	532	Jeddah	16:35	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
JZR	551	Alexandria	04:05	FDB	051	Dubai	16:20	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	KAC	118	New York	16:20	JAI	571	Mumbai	05:05	SAW	710	Latakia	17:00	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	KAC	542	Cairo	17:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:15	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:25
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:35	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	KAC	103	London	05:45	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	JZR	145	Doha	17:35	JZR	702	Taif	06:05	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35	JZR	786	Riyadh	06:05	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	JZR	177	Dubai	17:40	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55	KAC	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	WAN	976	Baku	17:40	JZR	1770	Jeddah	06:35	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	JZR	555	Alexandria	18:05	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
BAW	157	London	06:10	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	RJA	649	Amman	07:00	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	RJA	640	Amman	19:00	WAN	311	Asyut	07:25	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30	WAN	135	Doha	18:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	JZR	778	Jeddah	08:00	JZR	240	Amman	18:30	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:35	BAW	156	London	08:20	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:35	KAC	165	Rome	08:25	WAN	135	Doha	18:40	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:40	KAC	791	Madinah	09:00	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
QTR	8511	Doha	08:20	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	KAC	117	SNN/New York	09:05	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	104	London	20:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:05	RJA	641	Amman	20:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:05	WAN	133	Doha	09:30	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05	KAC	561	Amman	09:40	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:00	KAC	620	Doha	20:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:20	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	KAC	166	Rome	20:25	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:45	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	JZR	535	Cairo	09:45	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	172	Frankfurt	20:45	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:00	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	KAC	101	London	10:00	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:20
SAW	703	Damascus	10:30	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:15	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	676	Dubai	21:35	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	564	Amman	21:50	IRC	529	Ahwaz	10:10	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	KAC	617	Doha	10:10	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
JZR	703	Taif	11:00	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	WAN	873	Istanbul	10:15	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
JZR	1771	Jeddah	12:05	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	JZR	750	Madinah	10:15	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25	KAC	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:15	QTR	8512	Doha	10:20	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00	KAC	1083	Doha	23:20
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	WAN	136	Doha	22:30	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:25	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00	QTR	1071	Doha	10:40	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	THY	764	Istanbul	23:15	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:25	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30	IAW	158	Al Najaf	11:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	JZR	554	Alexandria	11:20	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
WAN	134	Doha	13:20	JZR	241	Amman	23:40	SAW	704	Damascus	11:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00				
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	PIA	205	Lahore	23:40	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:15				
								MEA	405	Beirut	11:55	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20				



JERUSALEM: Palestinian worshippers pray in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound on the second Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. — AFP

Scientists use DNA to trace origins of the Inca emperors

LIMA: Researchers in Peru believe they have traced the origins of the Incas – the largest pre-Hispanic civilization in the Americas—through the DNA of the modern-day descendants of their emperors. From their ancient capital Cusco, the Incas controlled a vast empire called Tahuantinsuyo, which extended from the west of present-day Argentina to the south of Colombia. They ruled for more than two hundred years before being conquered by the invading Spanish in the 16th century.

The empire included the mountain-top citadel of Machu Picchu in modern-day Peru-now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a major tourist attraction. After becoming fascinated by the Inca culture, their organizational skills and their mastery of engineering, researchers Ricardo Fujita and Jose Sandoval of Lima's University of San Martin de Porresit became interested in the genetic profile of their descendants. They said the aim of the study, the first of its kind, was to reveal whether there was a unique Inca patriarch. "It's like a paternity test, not between father and son but among peoples," Fujita told AFP.

The scientists wanted to verify two common legends about the origin of the Incas. One attributes them to a couple from around Lake Titicaca, in Peru's Puno region. The other identifies the first Incas as the Ayar

brothers from the Pacaritambo mountain in the Cusco region. DNA samples were taken from inhabitants of both places. "After three years of tracking the genetic fingerprints of the descendants, we confirm that the two legends explaining the origin of the Inca civilization could be related," said Fujita.

Genetic similarities

"They were compared with our genealogical base of more than 3,000 people to reconstruct the genealogical tree of all individuals," said Fujita. "We finally reduced this base to almost 200 people sharing genetic similarities close to the Inca nobility." The study released some preliminary results in April, in the review Molecular Genetics and Genomics. "The conclusion we came to is that the Tahuantinsuyo nobility is descended from two lines, one in the region of Lake Titicaca, the other around the mountain of Pacaritambo in Cusco. That confirms the legends," said Sandoval.

But it also confirms that the two legends were linked. "Probably the first migration came from the Puno region and was established in Pacaritambo for a few decades before heading to Cusco and founding Tahuantinsuyo," he said. But the work of the researchers does not stop there. Now they want to go further back in time. For that, they have to test the DNA of ancient relics, such as mummies, "to form the most complete picture of the origin of the most important pre-Hispanic civilization," said Fujita.

The task looks complicated because the Spanish Conquistadores, who arrived 1532, destroyed Inca mummies that families venerated, as they sought to convert people to Christianity. — AFP



LIMA: Peruvian genetics specialist Ricardo Fujita works at his lab in the San Martin de Porres University in Lima on May 11, 2018. — AFP

3 parts of Ramadan...

Continued from Page 1

While fasting for a whole month may seem like a lot, it becomes easier when it is divided into three parts, as above, or even into 30 separate days. If we fast one day at a time, or one third at a time until we complete the entire month, it will seem easier. The benefits of each third are so worthwhile, that nobody who is aware of

them can purposefully forfeit them. Wishing all our readers the benefits of Ramadan – mercy, forgiveness, and release from Hellfire.

Courtesy of the TIES Center, whose mission is to 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.

2 killed as Cyclone Mekunu hits...

Continued from Page 1

Five Yemenis and two Indian sailors were confirmed dead when Mekunu hit Socotra in war-torn Yemen on Thursday, causing heavy damage, Yemen's fisheries minister Fahad Kafin said. The government declared the island in the northwest Indian Ocean, part of a UNESCO-protected archipelago for its rich biodiversi-

ty, a "disaster" zone. Rescue teams on Friday found alive four Indian sailors who were among 17 who had been reported missing when the cyclone hit Socotra's port, and search operations are continuing for eight Indian sailors.

In Salalah, the heavy rain had almost stopped on Saturday, an AFP photographer said, but many streets were still under water and nearby valleys were flooded. Material damage was mostly limited to agriculture, with many farms swept by winds blowing at up to 170 kilometers, he added. Oman's civil aviation meanwhile decided to reopen on Sunday Salalah Airport, which had been closed for the past three days. Authorities said however that schools would remain closed until Monday. — AFP

GCC crisis threatens East African peace...

Continued from Page 1

For some, there would be many economic benefits to

throwing Mogadishu's support behind Saudi Arabia or the Emirates in a development which has put pressure on already fraught internal relationships in a country already fraught with violence. Rondos also expressed concern that the Gulf crisis could exacerbate tensions between East African nations working together on efforts to solve regional crises, notably South Sudan and Burundi, as well as in Somalia. — AFP

Leaders of two Koreas hold...

Continued from Page 1

One of the photos released by the presidential Blue House yesterday showed Moon and Kim hugging each other after their meeting at Tongilgak, the North's building in the truce village. The previous summit was held at the southern side of the border. They were accompanied by South Korean intelligence chief Suh Hoon and his North Korean counterpart Kim Yong Chol, who is in charge of inter-Korean affairs. Another photo showed Moon shaking hands with Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong.

Trump hails 'productive talks'

Trump said on Friday that Washington was having "productive talks" with Pyongyang about reinstating the June 12 meeting, just a day after cancelling it. Politico magazine reported that an advance team of 30 White House and State Department officials was preparing to leave for Singapore later this weekend.

Reuters reported earlier this week the team was scheduled to discuss the agenda and logistics for the summit with North Korean officials. The delegation was to include White House Deputy Chief of Staff Joseph Hagin and deputy national security adviser Mira Ricardel, US officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Trump said in a Twitter post late on Friday: "We are having very productive talks about reinstating the Summit which, if it does happen, will likely remain in Singapore on the same date, June 12th, and, if necessary, will be extended beyond that date."

Trump had earlier indicated the summit could be salvaged after welcoming a conciliatory statement from North Korea saying it remained open to talks. "It was a very nice statement they put out," Trump told reporters at the White House. "We'll see what happens - it could even be the 12th." "We're talking to them now. They very much want to do it. We'd like to do it," he said. The comments came just a day after Trump cited Pyongyang's "open hostility" in canceling the meeting.

Threats, insults

After years of tension over Pyongyang's nuclear

weapons program, Kim and Trump agreed this month to hold what would be the first meeting between a serving US president and a North Korean leader. The plan followed months of war threats and insults between the leaders over North Korea's development of missiles capable of reaching the United States.

Trump scrapped the meeting in a letter to Kim on Thursday after repeated threats by North Korea to pull out over what it saw as confrontational remarks by US officials demanding unilateral disarmament. Trump cited North Korean hostility in cancelling the summit. In Pyongyang, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan said North Korea's criticisms had been a reaction to American rhetoric and that current antagonism showed "the urgent necessity" for the summit.

He said North Korea regretted Trump's decision to cancel and remained open to resolving issues "regardless of ways, at any time." Kim Kye Gwan said North Korea had appreciated Trump having made the bold decision to work toward a summit. "We even inwardly hoped that what is called 'Trump formula' would help clear both sides of their worries and comply with the requirements of our side and would be a wise way of substantial effect for settling the issue," he said.

North Korea also went ahead with a plan to destroy its only known nuclear site on Thursday, the most concrete action yet since pledging to cease all nuclear and long-range missile tests last month. Dozens of international journalists left North Korea yesterday after observing the demolition of the underground tunnels in Punggye-ri, where all of the North's six nuclear tests were conducted including its latest and largest in September. Trump's latest about-face sent officials scrambling in Washington. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told reporters diplomats were "still at work" and said Trump had just sent a note out on the summit, which could be back on "if our diplomats can pull it off."

US State Department spokeswoman Katina Adams declined to give details of any diplomatic contacts but said: "As the president said in his letter to Chairman Kim, dialogue between the two is the only dialogue that matters. If North Korea is serious, then we look forward to hearing from them at the highest levels." White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders told reporters Trump did not want a meeting that was "just a political stunt." "He wants to get something that's a long-lasting and an actual real solution. And if they are ready to do that then ... we're certainly ready to have those conversations," she said. — Reuters

Late penalty gives Highlanders win over Reds as Chiefs down Waratahs

Crusaders outmuscle Hurricanes to tighten grip on top spot

WELLINGTON: Lima Sopoaga kicked a penalty with two minutes remaining to give the Otago Highlanders a narrow 18-15 win over Queensland in their Super Rugby clash in Brisbane yesterday.

Earlier, the Chiefs downed the Waratahs 39-27 in Hamilton in another good day for New Zealand Super Rugby sides. The Reds and Highlanders were locked at 15-all after a torrid arm wrestle between two evenly matched sides when lock Izack Rodda was penalised for a high tackle right in front of the posts.

Sopoaga stepped up and made no mistake to give the visitors their first win in Brisbane in five matches.

“In phases we did some good stuff but we also did some stuff that let us down, as we’ve done all season, but I’ll take that win any day of the week,” Highlanders captain Ash Dixon said.

“The message was to keep it simple, be direct and hold on to the ball as much as we could.” In a match that failed to reach any great heights as a spectacle, the Highlanders’ superior kicking game proved the difference between the two teams.

Sopoaga and scrum half Kayne Hammington put the Reds under enormous pressure with their kicking from general play whereas the Queensland kicking lacked penetration and accuracy. Both sides scored two tries apiece, one in each half, with Sopoaga’s late penalty proving the difference.

“I think we did everything we could to lose that in the back end of the match,” a frustrated Reds captain Scott Higginbotham said. “It was just a case of too many simple errors.” The Reds led 10-8 at the break and then skipped away to a 15-8 lead when fullback Hamish Stewart crossed five minutes after the restart.

But All Blacks flanker Liam Squires barged over with 20 minutes remaining to level the scores. The Highlanders launched a wave of attacks but Queensland

“It was just a case of too many simple errors”

looked like holding on for a draw until Rodda’s clumsy tackle.

Canterbury Crusaders outmuscled Wellington Hurricanes in a top-of-the-table Super Rugby clash Friday for a 24-13 win that puts them in pole position to qualify in top spot for the finals.

Meanwhile, Jaguares defeated Coastal Sharks 29-13 in Buenos Aires for a sixth straight win and Melbourne Rebels triumphed 40-13 at home to Sunwolves in other round 15 matches.

Crusaders scored three tries to one in driving rain, with the conditions forcing two of the competition’s most potent attacking sides into an arm-wrestle.

“We knew what the conditions would be and we had a plan for it. Credit to the boys—they stuck to it and were disciplined,” Crusaders captain Matt Todd said.

Hurricanes and Crusaders have traded the New Zealand conference lead all season, but the reigning champions’ victory in Christchurch could prove decisive.

It snaps a 10-match winning streak for the Hurricanes and extends Crusaders’ run to nine consecutive victories, putting them on 50 points to Hurricanes’ 45. “It wasn’t pretty at times but we just did what we had to, looking after the ball and keeping the scoreboard ticking over,” Todd said.

Hurricanes skipper Brad Shields said the Wellington team’s season was far from over after only two losses in 12 matches. “This could be a turning point for us, maybe it’s something that we needed,” he said. “We’ll go back to the drawing board and make sure we do better next week.” Scott Barrett made the breakthrough for Crusaders in the 23rd minute, forcing his way over from a lineout drive, with Richie Mo’unga adding the conversion. Jordie Barrett hit back for the Hurricanes with a long-range penalty, then Beauden Barrett kicked another



BUENOS AIRES: Jaguares full back Emiliano Boffelli (R) eludes South Africa's Sharks prop Tendai Mtawarira (L) during their Super Rugby match at Jose Amalfitani stadium in Buenos Aires, on Friday. — AFP

er just before half-time to make it 7-6 to the home side at the break.

A Mo’unga penalty opened the second-half scoring and he converted tries by Michael Alaalatoa and Heiden Bedwell-Curtis as the hosts took control at 24-6.

CHIEFS DOWN WARATAHS

In Hamilton, a late try by Damian McKenzie sealed a 39-27 bonus-point victory for the Chiefs over the Waratahs. The crucial McKenzie try, his second in the match, came after the final hooter when the Waratahs were desperately trying to haul in a five-point deficit.

There were nine tries in the high-paced game, six to

the Chiefs who led 19-14 at half-time and now move to fifth on the overall ladder.

The Waratahs, denied a bonus point by McKenzie’s late try, were left clinging to a one-point lead in the Australian conference.

A week ago the Waratahs were celebrating after snapping a 40-match losing streak by Australian sides against New Zealand rivals when they thrashed the Otago Highlanders 41-12. The confidence flowed into their start in Hamilton when they chalked up 14 points in quicker than even time with Bernard Foley converting tries by Cam Clarke and Curtis Rona which were both the result of Kurtley Beale’s vision. —AFP

Japan end 37-year drought with Uber Cup win

BANGKOK: Japan’s women clinched the Uber Cup yesterday, breezing by surprise finalists Thailand 3-0 in Bangkok to end a 37-year wait to regain the title. With a team stacked with top ranked players in both the singles and doubles, Japan made light work of the hosts, who entered the finals for the first time after stunning China in the semis.

It ends an Uber Cup drought for Japan that stretches back to 1981 and is a major confidence boost ahead of the Olympics which they will host in two years’ time. The Uber Cup is second in prestige only to the Olympics as a national team event.

World singles number two Akane Yamaguchi got Japan off to a flyer, dulling the boisterous partisan home crowd with a 21-15, 21-19 win over Ratchanok Intanon, blending deft touches at the net with patience in the rallies and power shots.

Ratchanok, world number four and Thailand’s favourite athlete, conceded that she lost concentration after bickering with the umpire early in the second set over his refusal to grant a review. Doubles pair Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota stormed to the second point of the match winning their tie 21-18, 21-12.

The writing was on the wall for the hosts and Nozomi Okuhara made light work (21-12, 21-9) of a visibly tired Nitchaon Jindapol to seal victory. “Thirty-seven years ago Japan was very strong... we are happy to make his-



BANGKOK: Japan’s women team captain Ayaka Takahashi holds their winning trophy as she poses with her teammates after defeating Thailand in their final match at the Uber Cup badminton tournament in Bangkok yesterday. — AFP

tory again,” a beaming Okuhara told reporters.

The win caps four years of effort to push the players up through the world rankings while knitting together the national team, coach Park Joo-Bong said. “I was worried about the atmosphere, but the team took the pressure and were hungry to win,” the South Korean coach said, adding the team are on the right track for the Olympics.

Thailand, who registered the shock of the tournament by beating perennial winners China in Friday’s semis, celebrated the runners-up medal as a sign of progress for a young side growing in confidence as the

Asian Games approaches.

“We are strong contenders to win gold,” said coach Rexy Mainaky. “Skillwise our players are world-class, but to go to the next level we have to do more. We will come back on this and evaluate what we need to add,” he told reporters. China, absent from the women’s final for the first time ever after Thailand’s thrilling 3-2 win in the semis, have a chance to redeem national pride in the Thomas Cup on Sunday when they play Japan. But Japan are eyeing a clean sweep led by singles star Kento Momota who swatted away world number one Viktor Axelsen in their final four matchup on Friday. — AFP

Verstappen crashes in final Monaco practice

MONACO: Max Verstappen crashed his Red Bull in final practice for the Monaco Grand Prix yesterday while team mate Daniel Ricciardo smashed the lap record for the third session in a row. Ricciardo’s best lap of a sunny session was one minute 11.786 seconds, compared to his Thursday best of 1:11.841 and Kimi Raikkonen’s 2017 pole position time for Ferrari of 1:12.178.

The two Red Bulls were separated by next to nothing, Ricciardo a mere 0.001 quicker than Verstappen and setting the time after the 20-year-old Dutchman had hit the wall. Verstappen, who had said earlier in the week that he was prepared to take risks in Formula One’s show-case race, brought out the red flags after the accident at the exit to the swimming pool section.

The impact, littering debris

across the track, left the Red Bull mechanics with plenty of work before qualifying and dented Verstappen’s hopes of becoming the youngest polesitter. The youngster has a chequered record in Monaco, crashing in 2015 and 2016, and has had a series of incidents already this season.

This time he made contact with the barriers at the entrance to the second Swimming Pool chicane, broke the front suspension and went into the wall at the exit. Ricciardo, meanwhile, continued to cement his status as favourite. Runner-up in 2016 after starting on pole, and third last year, the Australian dominated both practice sessions on Thursday.

Sunday’s race will be Red Bull’s 250th start in Formula One and all the signs are that they will be able to celebrate it in style. Ferrari’s Sebastian Vettel was third fastest behind the Red Bulls while championship leader Lewis Hamilton, who leads the German by 17 points after five races, was fourth fastest for Mercedes and Raikkonen fifth.

Finland’s Valtteri Bottas, Hamilton’s team mate, needed a rear wing change after hitting the barrier at Sainte Devote early in the session. He ended up with the sixth fastest time. — Reuters

Patrick road to retirement ends at Indy 500

INDIANAPOLIS: As far as retirement parties go it is doubtful there has been one bigger than the bash that will be thrown for Danica Patrick when the ‘Queen of Speed’ ends her career today at the Indianapolis 500.

As many as 300,000 plus spectators are expected to fill the grandstands of the sprawling 2.5 mile oval for the ‘Greatest Spectacle in Racing’ and many of those will be there to say goodbye to motorsport’s most celebrated woman driver.

The only woman to win an IndyCar race and start from pole at the Daytona 500, the 36-year-old American announced last November that she had reached the end of the road and would bring the curtain down on her ground-breaking career with the “Danica Double” contesting the Daytona and Indy 500s.

As far as swansongs go, February’s Daytona 500 was a bust, ending in a wreck, but the Indy 500 holds out the promise of something special. During a 14-year

career, evenly split between IndyCar and NASCAR, it was the Indy 500 that provided most of the material for Patrick’s career highlights reel and made her one of North America’s most recognisable athletes.

Her third-place finish in 2009 remains the best result by a woman in the Indy 500 while her resume also includes coming fourth in 2005 on her rookie debut and sixth in 2006. A fierce and fearless competitor, Patrick has also led 29 laps at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway another high water mark for women drivers.

“What I will remember most will be my first Indy 500 and, God, I hope I will remember my last one even more,” Patrick told Reuters, rating her Indy 500 debut ahead of her 2008 win at Motegi. “That would be my goal. “But the first Indy 500 is what I will remember most, the most defining time in my career and the most fond memories.”

GIRL POWER

For a time Girl Power was all the rage at the Brickyard, with four women sprinkled through the 33-car starting grids in 2010, 2011 and 2013. But this year Patrick, back in her trademark GoDaddy electric green Chevrolet, will carry the flag alone.

While standard bearer is a familiar role for Patrick, it is not one she embraces. Rather than being an advocate for women’s causes, Patrick prefers to inspire. She says when it came to racing she never sought out

mentors nor does she want the job.

“I’ve never been a driver that wants a mentor,” said Patrick. “But I am always encouraging people to find what it is they are passionate about and love and that is what is going to give them the ability to persevere through the hard times and have that chance for greatness.

“Whether they are a guy or girl, whether they want to be a race car driver or an astronaut, it’s about finding what it is that you love.” Patrick understood early on what it would take to survive in the high-testosterone macho world of motorsport.

She did not want to be labelled a “woman” driver but did not want people to forget it either. For a while Patrick’s racy photo shoots, including appearances in two Sports Illustrated swim suit editions, drew as much attention as her driving.

PATRICK’S STORYLINE

From the start Patrick had a firm grasp of exactly what her storyline was and used it to build her brand. “I’m here largely because I am woman,” she said. “I don’t want people to forget that I am a girl, I don’t think they really can, and I don’t want them to because it is part of my story.

“It’s what put me here in this position today and has given me all the opportunities I have had, at least in part.” Just 5-foot 2-inches and 100 pounds, the diminutive



Danica Patrick

tive driver asked for no quarter and offered none.

At the 2007 Milwaukee Mile, unhappy about a late race encounter with the late Dan Wheldon, Patrick climbed out of her car and marched down the pit lane where she confronted the Briton, grabbed him by the arm and then shoved him.

“You can’t be a pushover in your job and I can’t be a pushover in mine,” said Patrick. “If you want to climb the ladder and do great things you have to believe in you and get people to believe in you. — Reuters

Gleyber Torres sets New York Yankees home run mark in win over LA Angels

Betts hit a two-run blast for his 17th home run

NEW YORK: Rookie Gleyber Torres homered for the fourth straight game Friday night when he hit a tiebreaking solo home run with two outs in the bottom of the seventh inning, lifting the New York Yankees to a 2-1 win over the Los Angeles Angels at Yankee Stadium. Torres electrified a sellout crowd when he lifted a 3-1 fastball by Jim Johnson (2-2) into the right-center field seats. It was his fifth homer in six games and ninth since making his major league debut April 22. At 21 years, 163 days, Torres became the youngest player in American League history to homer in four straight games and fourth youngest in the majors to do so, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. Torres drove in both runs for the Yankees, who won for the 23rd time in 29 games and for the 14th time in their last 16 home games. Mike Trout homered for the Angels, who fell to 16-6 on the road. Shohei Ohtani, who spurned the Yankees to sign with the Angels in the offseason, heard boos before each plate appearance and went 0-for-3, though he narrowly missed hitting a go-ahead two-run homer off Aroldis Chapman in the eighth.

PIRATES 8, CARDINALS 1
Joe Musgrove, making his Pittsburgh and 2018 debut, pitched seven shutout innings and Francisco Cervelli hit a three-run double in a win over visiting St. Louis. Josh Harrison was 2-for-5 with two RBIs for Pittsburgh, which had lost five of its previous six games. St. Louis fell to 4-8 in its past 12. Musgrove (1-0) had been on the disabled list because of a right shoulder strain dating to spring training. He was part of a trade that sent Gerrit Cole to Houston in the offseason. In his seven innings, Musgrove scattered five hits and needed just 67 pitches, 50 of them strikes.

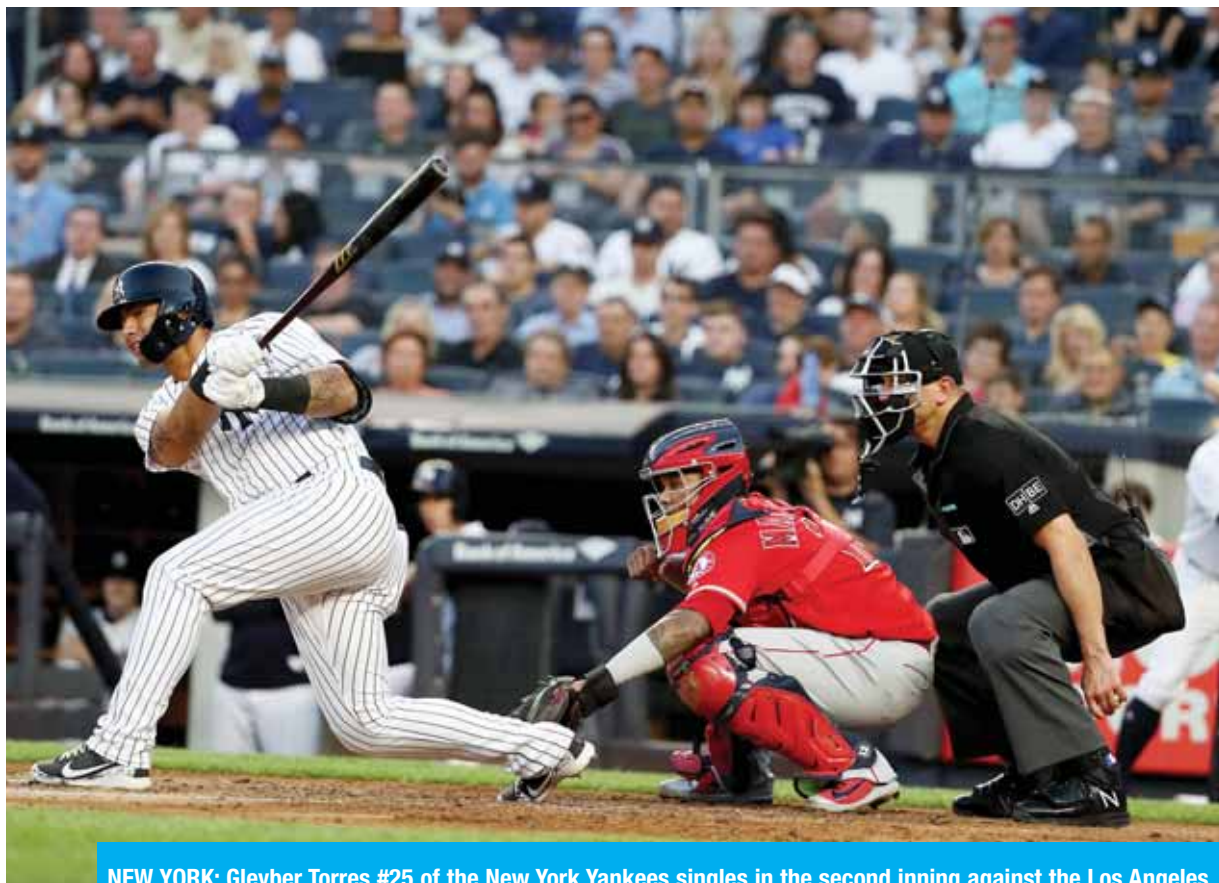
RED SOX 6, BRAVES 2
Mookie Betts hit a two-run blast for his major league-leading 17th home run and Eduardo Rodriguez struck out seven over 5 2/3 innings of two-run ball as host Boston beat Atlanta. J.D. Martinez, Xander Bogaerts and Mitch Moreland added solo homers for Boston, which has won seven of its last nine games. Martinez's fourth-inning homer tied him with Betts before he went deep in the seventh. Nick Markakis drove in two runs for the Braves, who have lost two

straight after dropping two of three games at Philadelphia. Atlanta's three-game weekend series against Boston marks its first trip to Fenway Park since 2016.

ASTROS 11, INDIANS 2
What started as a matchup of recent Cy Young winners Corey Kluber and Dallas Keuchel was determined by the bullpens as Houston rallied in a big way to trounce host Cleveland at Progressive Field. Held scoreless by Kluber and reliever Andrew Miller for seven innings, the Astros erupted for four runs in the eighth and seven more in the ninth. The American League West-leading Astros won their fifth in a row and their 10th in 12 games. The Indians remained in first place in the AL Central, although they dropped one game below .500. The Astros also improved to 4-1 against the Indians this season, with two more games to play in this weekend's series.

NATIONALS 9, MARLINS 5
Max Scherzer earned his major league-leading eighth win as Washington defeated Miami at Marlins Park. Scherzer (8-1) allowed season highs with seven hits and four earned runs while striking out just four as his ERA rose from 1.78 to 2.13. Fortunately for the Nationals, their offense came through with two-run homers by Michael A. Taylor and Matt Adams. Bryce Harper hit a two-run double in Washington's game-winning seventh-inning rally. Marlins starter Jose Urena earned a no-decision but continued his misery. After going 14-7 in a breakout 2017 season, Urena (0-7) leads the majors in losses, and the Marlins are 0-11 when he starts.

BREWERS 4, METS 3 (10 INNINGS)
Travis Shaw capped a big night by drawing a bases-loaded walk in the 10th inning as host Milwaukee earned a win over New York at Miller Park. Shaw had three hits and reached base four times in five plate appearances for the Brewers. He hit a second-inning homer and a third-inning RBI single that scored Milwaukee's final run until the 10th inning. The Brewers have won seven of nine. Michael Conforto and Amed Rosario hit solo homers for the Mets while Asdrubal Cabrera had three hits but was



NEW YORK: Gleyber Torres #25 of the New York Yankees singles in the second inning against the Los Angeles Angels during their game at Yankee Stadium on Sunday in New York City. — AFP

thrown out trying to extend his 10th-inning single into a double. The Mets lost for the third time in four games.

ROCKIES 5, REDS 4
Nolan Arenado homered, Noel Cuevas had a go-ahead pinch-hit triple and Colorado overcame an early deficit to beat visiting Cincinnati at Coors Field. Jon Gray (5-6) survived a shaky start to get his first win in three outings and Wade Davis pitched the ninth for his 18th save, tied for tops in the majors. The Rockies rallied from three runs down early to take the lead in the sixth. Tony Wolters led off with a walk and Cuevas hit a one-out triple into the right field corner to give Colorado the lead. Eugenio Suarez homered among his two hits for the Reds, who had won two of their last three.

TIGERS 5, WHITE SOX 4
Nicholas Castellanos had three hits and scored the go-ahead run during a three-run eighth as host Detroit edged Chicago. Castellanos scored two runs and knocked in another during his fifth consecutive multi-hit game. Leonys Martin had two hits, two runs scored and an RBI. Jose Iglesias added two hits, a walk and a run scored. Buck Farmer (1-3) pitched an inning of scoreless relief to get the win. Shane Greene pitched the ninth for his 12th save. Tim Anderson had three hits, including a solo home run, and drove in two runs for Chicago. Jose Abreu supplied two hits, a run scored and an RBI. White Sox starter Reynaldo Lopez gave up two runs on five hits over seven innings. — Reuters

Afghan teenager Rashid earns praise after superb show

MUMBAI: Afghan spin sensation Rashid Khan saw cricket fans in India pleading for him to be awarded citizenship after the 19-year-old single-handedly carried Sunrisers Hyderabad into Sunday's Indian Premier League final.
Rashid smashed an unbeaten 34 off 10 balls to lift Hyderabad's innings to 174 for seven before leaving the Kolkata Knight Riders spellbound with his fast leg-spinners, claiming three for 19 in his four overs. If that was not enough, Rashid was also involved in a run out and then took two catches while fielding close to the boundary rope in the last over as his team won by 14 runs and advanced to the final against Chennai Super Kings at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.
His performance left many impressed fans in the cricket-mad nation demanding on social media that he was awarded Indian citizenship, though the comments got a swift response from Afghanistan president Ashraf Ghani.
"Afghans take absolute pride in our hero, Rashid Khan," he said on Twitter tagging Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "I am also thankful to our Indian friends for giving our players a platform to show their skills. "Rashid reminds us what's best about Afg. He remains an asset to the cricketing world. No



KOLKATA: In this photograph taken on May 25, 2018 Sunrisers Hyderabad cricketer Rashid Khan celebrates after taking the wicket of Kolkata Knight Riders cricketer Andre Russell during the 2018 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 second Qualifier cricket match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Sunrisers Hyderabad. — AFP

we are not giving him away @narendramodi," Hyderabad paid 40 million rupees (\$590,580) at last year's auction to land the leg-spinner from Afghanistan, where cricket is highly popular but sporting facilities are pitifully inadequate after decades of war.
An intense bidding war erupted for his services in the auction this year before Hyderabad exercised their right-to-match option for a staggering 90 million rupees (\$1.33 million). He has made rapid strides since making his international debut in October 2015 as a 17-year-old, in February becoming the youngest to top the International Cricket Council's rank-

ings for bowlers in the Twenty20 and 50-overs format.
Hyderabad coach Tom Moody had predicted the leg-spinner to have a major impact on this year's IPL. He has taken 21 wickets with an economy rate of less than seven and earned a glowing tribute from former India batting great Sachin Tendulkar on Friday.
"Always felt @rashidkhan_19 was a good spinner but now I wouldn't hesitate in saying he is the best spinner in the world in this format," Tendulkar said on Twitter. "Mind you, he's got some batting skills as well. Great guy." — Reuters

ICC probes pitch-fixing involving Sri Lanka

COLOMBO: The International Cricket Council said yesterday it was investigating allegations that a Sri Lankan groundsman had agreed to tamper with the pitch to alter the result of an upcoming Test match against England.
The ICC said it took the allegations reported in an Al Jazeera documentary "very seriously" and urged "all evidence and supporting material" to be shared with the investigators. An advance report on the documentary, which will be broadcast on Sunday, said two Sri Lankans and a former Indian player were caught discussing how to rig England's opening Test against Sri Lanka in November. "We have already launched an investigation working with anti-corruption colleagues from member countries based on the limited information we have received," the ICC said in a statement.
It also called for the immediate release of any evidence and support-

ing material to enable the anti-corruption unit to "undertake a full and comprehensive investigation". The London-based Daily Telegraph said late Friday that the Al Jazeera footage seen by the newspaper featured Robin Morris, a former professional cricketer from Mumbai, India, Tharindu Mendis, a player from Colombo, and Tharanga Indika, an assistant manager at Galle International Stadium. The newspaper reported that the footage showed the men talking about doctoring pitches during a meeting with an undercover reporter. The men were reportedly discussing ways to prepare the pitch to ensure that the first Test at the Galle ground would not end in a draw and would yield a result in less than four days.
Sri Lanka's cricket board said it was aware of the allegations and was planning on issuing a statement. The former curator of the Galle International Stadium, Jayananda Warnaweera, is already under an ICC ban for three years until January 2019 for failing to cooperate with an anti-corruption investigation. Warnaweera, a former Test player, had failed to attend interviews with the ICC's anti-corruption unit. He had been previously handed a two-year ban by the local board over the same allegations. — AFP

T20 needs eight runs for a big hit: Jones

MUMBAI: Dean Jones, in his day one of the biggest-hitting batsmen in cricket, has called for fresh innovation in Twenty20 by creating a new eight-run shot if the ball goes more than 85 metres.
T20 has already brought about a revolution and the Australian legend told AFP the traditional five-day Test faces a fight for its survival as crowds move to the 120-ball game.
Rules must change to make the game even more

relevant to today's fans, according to Jones — one of the most recognisable television commentators in cricket with his cry of "going, going, goooooone" each time a batsman hits a six. "The only innovation I'd like to see is that we are very good with technology, so every six hit over 85 metres should be an eight," Jones said on the sidelines of the Star Sports Select Dugout programme as he prepared for Sunday's Indian Premier League final.
Jones' case is that big-hitters can increase the spectacle of T20 if the added incentive is there.
"They love Chris Gayle and all these boys that hit (the ball) miles. Same in golf, they love Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy who hit 350 meters," said Jones.
"If the game is on the line and they want eight and hit it over 85 metres, and you are hoping Gayle, (Andre) Russell or (Kieron) Pollard is there, it goes for eight."

The 57-year-old, who once hit an epic 210 for Australia in India, used his encyclopaedic knowledge of cricket history to show how scores for big shots have changed since the sport started.
"If you cleared the pickets in the 1870s or early 1880s it used to be a five and to get a six you had to clear the ground proper," said Jones. "Australia's Joe Darling hit the first six in a Test in 1898. He cleared the ground."
The law was changed in around 1910 to make it six runs if the ball crossed the boundary line rather than went out of the ground. "So every law in the game has been changed, tweaked and manipulated except one and that's the length of the pitch (22 yards)."
Jones, who has travelled the cricket world for his coaching and commentary stints, has a special place for the IPL, whose huge salaries draw the best players from around the world.

A five-year \$2.55-billion broadcast deal made with Rupert Murdoch's Star India last year strengthened the IPL's standing further.
"It's the third most watched sport in the world after the English Premier League and the NFL (National Football League)," said Jones.
"In terms of players it's the best by miles. In terms of viewership, it attracts the biggest numbers."
Jones said traditional Tests will have to fight for their survival against T20's runaway success as a growing numbers of players specialise in the format.
"Test doesn't get your arousal levels up as (much as) a T20 match," said Jones. "Come down to the wire, 15 off the last over, how many times does that happen in Test cricket?"
"How many ties are there in the limited-overs version? So it's coming down to what television wants and TV is demanding T20 cricket." — AFP

Southampton boss Mark Hughes signs new three-year deal

‘Now it is vital that we take the unbelievable support’

LONDON: Southampton manager Mark Hughes has signed a new three-year contract after keeping them in the Premier League last season, the south-coast club said on Friday. The 54-year-old Welshman arrived at his former team in March on a short-term deal until the end of the campaign and was handed the task of rescuing them from the threat of relegation.

He was an unexpected choice in many people's eyes, having left his previous club Stoke City in a similar predicament, yet Saints picked up two wins and a draw from their final four matches to secure top-flight safety with a 17th place finish.

"Mark and his team had a massive impact from the first day on the players, staff and fans alike, and was able to pull together everyone involved with the club to deliver the results needed," Southampton said in a statement on their website <https://southamptonfc.com/news/2018-05-25/mark-hughes-new-contract-southampton-first-team-manager>.

"It is important now, under Mark's leadership, for everyone to move into the new season with a renewed



He was an unexpected choice

focus and energy alongside the continued and valuable support of our fans." Things had initially looked bleak for Hughes after he began his spell in charge with three straight league defeats, but he managed to steady the ship in the final weeks of the season.

A 2-1 victory over south-coast rivals Bournemouth was followed by a 1-1 draw at Everton before a nervy 1-0 win away to Swansea City effectively sealed their Premier League status, while condemning the Welsh club to the second tier.

Southampton said assistant first team manager Mark Bowen and first team Coach Eddie Niedzwiecki had also signed new deals. "Mark, Eddie and I are thrilled to have signed long-term contracts with the club. It was the only option we considered, having spent the last eight weeks with the club," Hughes said.

"Now it is vital that we take the unbelievable support we received from the fans during the last few games into next season," he added. "The staff and the players will work hard every day to deliver the success this club deserves, and with everyone pulling together we will achieve our goals." — Reuters



Mark Hughes

Al-Anbaa wins Al-Nahar trophy



Al-Anbaa soccer team with the cup

KUWAIT: Al-Anbaa soccer team won Al-Nahar Ramadan Soccer Tournament for newspapers, magazines, satellite channels and websites by defeating Kuwaitia team 2-1 in the final match played on Friday at the PAAET sports Complex.

The final match was attended by Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, Al-Nahar Editor-in-Chief Dr Emad Bukhamseen and KJA Secretary Adnan Al-Rashed.

Minister Al-Jabri said the state spares no effort to support the media and provides all facilities to allow it carry out its educational, awareness, and development role.

He said that the objective media is what distinguished our country through the years, and he lauded Al-Nahar for introducing this tournament which strengthens relations between those in media.

The match started with each side feeling the other until Juan Carlos scored for Al-



Anbaa ending the first half with that score. In the second half, Mohammad Khalid scored the equalizer following several attempts for Al-Kuwaitiya, only to have Juan Carlos score again for Al-Anbaa, giving it the cup and championship.

James dominates as Cavs down Celtics to stay alive

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James produced another epic playoff performance Friday as the Cleveland Cavaliers stayed alive in the NBA playoffs with a 109-99 victory over the Boston Celtics.

Trailing the Celtics 3-2 and facing elimination in the Eastern Conference finals, the Cavaliers triumphed in a bruising encounter on their home floor to knot the best-of-seven series at 3-3 and force game seven in Boston today.

In order to punch their ticket to a fourth straight NBA Finals, the Cavs will have to be the first team to win on the road in the series, and the first to beat Boston at home in this post-season.

"It feels good just to be able to play for another game," said James, who has been to seven straight NBA Finals with Miami and Cleveland.

"Game seven" is the best two words in sports and for us to be on the road in another hostile environment where we've had no success up to this point, we should relish the opportunity."

James poured in 46 points with 11 rebounds and nine assists. It was his seventh 40-point performance of the 2018 playoffs, tying Chicago Bulls great Michael Jordan

(1989) for second-most 40-point games in a single post-season behind the eight of Jerry West in 1965.

James also passed Karl Malone for sixth place all-time in playoff rebounds. "Greatness," Cavs coach Tyrone Lue said simply of James. "Championship pedigree, giving it his all."

James scored 25 points in playing every minute of the first half, when the Cavaliers absorbed the blow of losing Kevin Love to a possible concussion and then out-scored the Celtics 34-18 in the second quarter to take control of the game.

Cleveland led by as many as 16 in the third quarter, but the advantage was down to seven with 2:47 to play when James unleashed back-to-back three-pointers and converted a layup to push the Cavs lead back to 109-96.

He departed the game with less than a minute remaining to a frenzied ovation. "Best player in the game," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said of James.

Of the late three-pointers that doomed his team, Stevens said there was little more the Celtics could have done.

"Great defense by (Jayson) Tatum, great shots by LeBron," Stevens said. "Tremendous. I thought the second was wasn't quite as contested maybe as the first one. The first one, that was ridiculous."

FIGHTING THROUGH

George Hill scored 20 points for Cleveland. Jeff Green added 14 off the bench, Larry Nance had 10 and Kyle Korver and Jordan Clarkson chipped in six apiece as the Cavs reserves helped fill the void left by Love's early exit.

Love, who missed a game in March with concussion symptoms, banged heads with Tatum and dropped to the court in the first quarter. He had to be helped to the sideline and at halftime the Cavaliers said he wouldn't return.

"Guys really chipped in and helped in the absence of Kevin, and LeBron brought us home as usual," Lue said. "We needed him to be big and he was big."

But the Cavs got scare in the fourth when James went down hard on a drive tangling with Nance and clutching his right leg in obvious pain.

After a few moments he rose gingerly and continued.

"He just fought through everything tonight," Lue said. Terry Rozier scored 28 points to lead the Celtics, who are trying to return to the NBA Finals for the first time since 2010. Jaylen Brown scored 27 for Boston, who led by five at the end of a spirited first quarter but finally had no answer for James.

Although they're unbeaten at home in the playoffs, Rozier said the Celtics can't afford to be complacent. "We've still got to come out aggressive and play Celtics basketball," he said. "We can't just rely on being at home for an excuse that it's going to be easy. It's not."

The winner of the series will take on either the reigning champion Golden State Warriors or Houston Rockets in the championship series. The Rockets lead the Western Conference finals 3-2. — AFP

Rehman eyes leadership role as Pakistan return

HONG KONG: Former Premier League defender Zesh Rehman has set his sights on becoming a future Pakistan national team coach as he prepares to lead the country on their return to international football later this year.

Rehman, who made his debut in the English top flight for Fulham in 2004 before playing for Queen's Park Rangers and Bradford City, will link up with the Pakistan team for the first time in almost five years for September's South Asian Championships in Bangladesh.

The regional tournament, which also features India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, will mark the country's return to the international scene from a FIFA ban. The Pakistan Football Federation had a ban for third-party interference lifted by the world governing body in March following a tumultuous three-year period.

"I played in this tournament in 2005 and in 2013 and it was a good experience

and I really enjoyed playing against the other countries in South Asia," Rehman, currently on the books of Hong Kong side Southern District, told Reuters.

"The fact there was no football in Pakistan for three years was a blow for the local players and also for me because I'm signed here as an Asian player and as an international, so it's good to have the opportunity to play again internationally."

"Any player, regardless of your country, wants to play and if you've experienced it before you know the feeling and the impact it can have for a lot of people and it's great that it's back again." The 34-year-old centre half was born in England and represented the land of his birth at youth level, but qualified to play for Pakistan through his parents.

He played for Pakistan for the first time at the South Asian Championships in 2005 and his last appearance came in October 2013 at the Peace Cup tournament in the Philippines. As a result of the ban and other off-field issues, Pakistan have slipped to 203rd in the FIFA rankings and Rehman is hoping he can play a role in undoing some of the damage inflicted on the sport caused by their absence from the international arena.

"Any association, if they stop playing for three years it's going to damage the FIFA rankings and I think it's the lowest it's ever been," he said. — Reuters

Platini says FIFA must now end his ban, but probe goes on

PARIS: Former UEFA president Michel Platini said yesterday FIFA must now lift his ban over a 1.8-million-euro payment after Swiss prosecutors said they had found no evidence so far to bring charges against him. "I hope that FIFA will have the courage and the decency to lift my suspension," Platini told AFP in a telephone interview. Platini was suspended from all football-related activities, later reduced on appeal to four years, by FIFA following a \$2 million payment he received from the body in 2011 for work he did a decade earlier, with no contract to show for the deal.

The payment was authorised by FIFA's then chief, Sepp Blatter. The disgraced Blatter is also now banned following the scandal that rocked world football. Swiss prosecutors have been investigating the payment and French newspaper Le Monde reported that Platini had been cleared. The Swiss public prosecutor's office said Saturday that although no evidence had been found "so far" to bring charges against Platini, the investigation "is not completely over".

Platini could still be required to appear before a judge if "new evidence" is found in the case, a spokesman for the prosecutor's office said. The Swiss investigation con-

cerns the activities of Blatter during his 17-year presidency of FIFA.

Platini's lawyer Vincent Solari insisted the case was now effectively over. "There are no charges, he will not be prosecuted," Solari told AFP. FIFA dismissed the claims from Platini's legal team, saying in a statement that Platini had been suspended for breaching its "Code of Ethics", not because of the Swiss probe.

"Mr. Platini was suspended for breaching the FIFA Code of Ethics. The decision was upheld by CAS (the Court of Arbitration for Sport), which confirmed the charges but reduced the length of the suspension," the statement said. "It has always been very clear to FIFA and CAS that Mr. Platini had never been the target of a criminal investigation in Switzerland." But Platini, who was one of France's highest-profile players before moving into football administration, told AFP he believed he was now in the clear. "My legal advisers will take all the necessary measures to ensure the FIFA suspension is lifted," he said.

"It has been very difficult for me... I've really had a lot thrown at me." Platini said he believed the suspension had one aim: "Everything has been done to prevent me becoming FIFA president." In the wake of Blatter's removal, Gianni Infantino, an Italian who was previously UEFA secretary general under Platini, took over as FIFA president. —AFP



Michel Platini

25 Late penalty gives Highlanders win over Reds as Chiefs down Waratahs



26 Torres sets NY Yankees home run mark in win over LA Angels



27 Southampton boss Mark Hughes signs new three-year deal



Super Bale sinks Liverpool

Real Madrid make it three in a row



KIEV: Real Madrid's Spanish defender Sergio Ramos (C) holds the trophy after winning the UEFA Champions League final football match between Liverpool and Real Madrid at the Olympic Stadium in Kiev, Ukraine yesterday. — AFP

KIEV: Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale scored a jaw-dropping overhead kick and a long distance strike to give them a 3-1 win over Liverpool in the Champions League final yesterday, delivering a remarkable third consecutive title for the Spaniards.

Substitute Bale, who also scored in Real's 2014 final win over Atletico Madrid, had only been on the pitch for three

minutes when he rose to meet Marcelo's cross in the air from outside the box, sending it flying into the net to restore Real's lead in the 64th minute at the NSC Olympic Stadium. French forward Karim Benzema had put Madrid ahead in the 51st minute by sticking out a leg as Liverpool's German keeper Karius attempted to throw the ball to a team mate, sending it trickling over the line, but

Sadio Mane levelled from close range in the 55th for Jurgen Klopp's side.

Bale then sealed Madrid's record-extending 13th European Cup win and piled more misery on Karius with a long-range strike in the 83rd minute which went straight through the hands of the hapless goalkeeper.

Real became the first side since Bayern Munich in 1976

to win the trophy three years in a row and Zinedine Zidane the is the first coach to win three back-to-back titles. Liverpool's talismanic forward Mohamed Salah was forced off in the first half with a suspected dislocated shoulder after tangling with Madrid captain Sergio Ramos, while Real defender Dani Carvajal also left the pitch in tears after getting injured before halftime. — Reuters

Buttler and Bess keep England alive at Lord's

LONDON: Jos Buttler and Dom Bess shared a spirited century stand to save England from a humiliating innings defeat by Pakistan in the first test at Lord's yesterday. The pair came together with the hosts reeling at 110 for six, 69 runs behind the touring side and heading for their first loss in a May Test at the home of cricket inside three days.

Buttler, recalled to the side, and debutant Bess calmly added 125 runs in the evening sunshine to put England 56 runs ahead and take the match into a fourth day, although Pakistan should still complete a deserved victory today.

They added 13 runs to their overnight 350 for eight to extend their lead to 179 and quickly started running through England's brittle batting line-up. Alastair Cook, who top-scored with 70 in the first innings, was trapped lbw by Mohammad Abbas for one and Mark Stoneman, under severe pressure for his place in the team, made a scratchy nine before he was bowled by leg-spinner Shadab Khan before England limped to lunch at 37 for two.

Captain Joe Root batted patiently,

content to defend and take advantage of the rare loose balls served up by a disciplined Pakistan attack. He reached his 50 before Mohammad Amir took centre stage with two wickets in one over.

Pakistan's left-arm seamer found the edge of Dawid Malan's bat to dismiss him for 12 and two balls later Amir produced a brilliant inswinging delivery to bowl Jonny Bairstow and leave England in deep trouble at 91 for four.

Ben Stokes clipped his first ball through square leg for four and followed up with another crisp boundary but, on nine, he tried to hit Shadab through the leg-side and was well caught at short mid-wicket.

The packed crowd was stunned into silence as Buttler walked out to the middle and Root was next to go, snared lbw by Abbas for 68 and failing to get the decision overturned on review.

It was the 10th time in a row that Root has failed to convert a Test fifty into a century and his dismissal ended England's realistic hopes of winning the match. Buttler and Bess clung on till tea, however, and played sensibly in the final session. — Reuters

Cairney goal sends Fulham back into Premier League

LONDON: Fulham returned to the Premier League after a four-year absence as Tom Cairney scored the winner in a 1-0 victory over Aston Villa in the Championship play-off final at Wembley yesterday, the richest game in world football.

Cairney's first-half goal was decisive as Fulham, owned by US billionaire Shahid Khan, held on to their narrow lead despite having defender Denis Odoi sent off after 70 minutes as tempers began to fray on a sultry afternoon.

The win secures the west London club a windfall of at least 160 million pounds (\$212.91 million) as they look forward to joining Championship title winners Wolverhampton Wanderers and second-placed Cardiff City in the top flight next season.

Fulham, who failed to claim automatic promotion when losing to Birmingham City on the final day of the regular season as they finished third in the table, celebrated with their joyous fans as they sealed a lucrative place among the elite.

"After we missed out on promotion (in the playoffs) last season, a lot of people wrote us off. We got a lot of stick. But football won today. Football was the winner," Cairney said.



LONDON: Fulham's players celebrate with the trophy on the pitch after the English Championship play-off final football match between Aston Villa and Fulham at Wembley Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

With the stakes so high it was no surprise that the match was a frenetic affair in the opening stages.

Fulham, whose style of play under Serbian manager Slavisa Jokanovic earned plaudits this season, were the first to settle and scored from the game's first piece of quality football. Teenager Ryan Sessegnon received the ball midway inside Villa's half, evaded a tackle, and turned to play a through ball that Cairney calmly slotted past keeper Sam Johnstone.

Villa, led by former England and Chelsea defender John Terry, were dreadful in the first half but they revived after the break. Jack

Grealish suddenly got involved in the game and he forced a save from goalkeeper Marcus Bettinelli after a superb slaloming dribble through the Fulham defence.

Villa also had a penalty appeal turned down but Grealish was lucky to escape a red card with a reckless tackle on Cairney. Odoi's clumsy attempt to win the ball off Grealish earned him a second yellow card and left Fulham to survive the last 20 minutes and five minutes of stoppage time with 10 men. Villa threw everything forward in the nail-biting closing stages but Fulham held on without too many alarms. — Reuters