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Fadhhl asks about citizenship of Hayef as bitter feud intensifies

Mutair enraged by 'divisive' query • Dallah slams embassies' interference in maid affairs

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: In a rare question, pro-government MP Ahmad Al-Fadhhl yesterday asked the interior minister about the type of citizenship granted to opposition MP Mohammad Hayef and his father. The two lawmakers recently exchanged harsh accusations around a proposed law to grant immunity to two opposition MPs who were handed jail terms for storming the National Assembly. Fadhhl asked the minister for a copy of the decree in which Hayef was granted Kuwaiti citizenship and enquired if proper legal procedures were followed in granting the cit-

izenship to Hayef and his father.

The lawmaker also asked the minister about the article under which Hayef and his father were granted Kuwaiti citizenship and demanded a copy of the decree. Fadhhl further asked if the status of Hayef's citizenship was upgraded to the first degree and demanded to know the reasons for such an action. Under Kuwaiti law, there are several degrees of Kuwaiti citizenship, as "original" Kuwaitis are granted a first-degree citizenship while naturalized Kuwaitis are granted other types. Also, under the law, only Kuwaitis who hold a first-degree citizenship are allowed to contest parliamentary elections.

MP Hayef has so far not made any comments on the questions, but opposition MP Mohammad Al-Mutair lashed out at the government and vowed to grill the prime minister. Mutair charged that the question was manipulated by the government, adding that it could create divisions within the Kuwaiti people. He reiterated his resolve to grill the prime minister over this and several other issues.

Hayef has also championed a campaign to press the government to return the citizenships that were revoked of a large number of opposition figures and former lawmakers. He vowed he will grill the prime minister over a variety of alleged violations including this one, adding that he will

file a non-cooperation motion against the premier. MP Majed Al-Mutairi said he will not rest before the revoked citizenships are returned.

In another development, MP Mohammad Al-Dallah strongly criticized the interference of some foreign embassies into the affairs of domestic helpers in the country, "which usually result in complicating their problems". He said some embassies are demanding a salary certificate from people seeking to recruit maids and that the Philippine Embassy for example has demanded employers have a salary of at least KD 2,000. He said such demands are complicating the problems faced by maids.

Australian PM's Jerusalem embassy move draws fire

SYDNEY: Facing a domestic backlash and the threat of foreign trade retaliation, Australia's prime minister yesterday appeared to slow-peddle a controversial decision to move the country's embassy to Jerusalem, saying he would first consult with allies. As Scott Morrison stood accused of ditching 70 years of Australian foreign policy and reports emerged that Indonesia may suspend a planned bilateral trade deal, the prime minister told parliament no firm decision had been taken.

Hours after first floating the idea, Morrison said he would "canvass views" from regional leaders about the decision to follow US President Donald Trump's lead and move the embassy from Tel Aviv "before the government forms a particular view on this issue". Jerusalem is claimed by both Israelis and Palestinians. Most foreign nations have avoided locating embassies there for fear of prejudging peace talks on the city's final status - until Trump unilaterally moved the US embassy there earlier this year.

Officials said the decision to move the Australian embassy has been under consideration for months. But Morrison's announcement was timed to coincide with a make-or-break moment for his fledgling premiership. On Saturday, voters in a key Sydney electorate will go to the polls, with Morrison's Liberal party candidate, a former ambassador to Israel, trailing in the final stretch. Defeat for Morrison's candidate - in a constituency with a sizeable Jewish population - would spell the end of his government's parliamentary majority and a bleak future for his months-old stint at the top of Australia's rough-and-tumble political heap.

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RIYADH: Saudi King Salman greets US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo yesterday. — AFP

Pompeo meets Saudi king on Khashoggi case

RIYADH/ISTANBUL: Saudi Arabia's crown prince agreed yesterday there must be a thorough investigation into the disappearance of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the United States said, after media reports that Riyadh will acknowledge his death in a botched interrogation. Khashoggi, a US resident and leading critic of the crown prince, vanished after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct 2. Turkish officials say they believe he was murdered there and his body removed, which the Saudis strongly deny.

Overnight, Turkish crime scene investigators entered the consulate for the first time since Khashoggi's disappearance and searched the premises for more than nine hours. US President Donald Trump, who dispatched

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to Riyadh amid strained ties with its close ally, speculated that "rogue killers" may be responsible. Pompeo met King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh to discuss the incident, which has caused international outrage and brought renewed attention on the kingdom.

He and Prince Mohammed "agreed on the importance of a thorough, transparent, and timely investigation", US State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in Washington. "The Secretary reiterated the President's concern with respect to Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance, as well as the President's desire to determine what happened," she said. Pompeo was expected to go on to Turkey after dinner with the crown prince.

While the message behind closed doors may have taken a different tone, Pompeo was full of smiles and exchanged pleasantries with leaders of the longstanding ally, with no ostensible sense of crisis.

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Iran missiles can travel 700 km; 11 troops seized on Pak border

LONDON/TEHRAN: Iran has extended the range of its land-to-sea ballistic missiles to 700 km, a senior Iranian military official said yesterday, amid rising tensions with the United States over Tehran's missile program. US President Donald Trump pulled out of an international agreement on Iran's nuclear program in May and reimposed sanctions on Tehran, saying the deal was flawed because it did not include curbs on Iran's development of ballistic missiles or its support for proxies in Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Iraq.

Iran, which says its missile program is purely defensive, has threatened to disrupt oil shipments through the

Strait of Hormuz in the Gulf if the United States tries to strangle Iranian oil exports. "We have managed to make land-to-sea ballistic, not cruise, missiles that can hit any vessel or ship from 700 km," Amirali Hajizadeh, head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' air space division, was quoted as saying by Fars news agency.

Hajizadeh said the Guards focused on extending the land-to-sea missile's range after Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei asked the military a decade ago about the possibility of "hitting ships" with ballistic projectiles. He did not give details on the previous range of the missiles. In 2008, Iran displayed a ground-to-sea missile that it said could travel about 290 km. On Monday, the US special envoy on Iran, Brian Hook, said that Tehran's ballistic missile program was exacerbating tensions in Yemen, Iraq and Syria. "We are accumulating risk of regional conflict if we do not do more to deter Iran's missile proliferation in the Middle East," Hook said.

The Islamic Republic's government has ruled out negotiations with Washington over its military capabilities and dismissed US assertions that its activities in the Middle East are destabilizing. Hajizadeh said some short-range Iranian missiles had been used over the past two

years in Syria's civil war, in which Iranian forces have fought in support of President Bashar Al-Assad against rebels and militants. He also said Iranian drones had carried out 700 attacks on Islamic State militant positions in Syria. Iran's Revolutionary Guards have sent weapons and thousands of soldiers to Syria to help shore up Assad during the more than seven-year-long conflict there.

"Our bomber drones have carried out 700 military operations using smart bombs against Daesh," said Hajizadeh, using the Arabic acronym for IS. "They were used in eliminating tanks, personnel carriers, cars used for suicide attacks and 23-millimetre cannons - these were targets prized by Daesh and we significantly turned the tide of battle," he added. The Guards most recently used military drones against IS targets in Syria on Oct 1, in retaliation for a deadly attack in September on a military parade in Iran's southwest claimed by the militant group.

Separately, at least 11 Iranian security personnel, including Revolutionary Guards intelligence officers, were abducted on the southeastern border with Pakistan yesterday, state media reported. The Guards blamed "terrorist groups that are guided and supported by foreign

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Palestinian envoy praises Ghanem for IPU speech

KUWAIT: Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub hailed the speech that Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem delivered before the 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, through which he sent a message to all parliaments around the world and urged them to act on alleviating the injustice suffered by the Palestinian people.



Rami Tahboub

"Ghanem's strong belief in the Palestinian people and their just cause makes him the voice of Palestinians before the entire world," Tahboub said, adding that Ghanem had once more exposed the violations committed by the Israeli Knesset and confirmed that Kuwait has been and will always be concerned with Palestinians' sufferings until they obtain their independent state on their rightful lands.

Tahboub added that Ghanem's speech showed that the Palestinian cause will always remain a priority for Kuwait, HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, its people and its parliament. "We Palestinians will always be proud of Ghanem who has been appreciated by the Arab nation's sage - HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah," Tahboub emphasized, reminding that Kuwait has been supporting the Palestinian cause since the Nakba of 1948.

Female mechanic driving change in patriarchal Pak

MULTAN, Pakistan: Since picking up a wrench as one of the first female car mechanics in conservative Pakistan, Uzma Nawaz has faced two common reactions: shock and surprise. And then a bit of respect. The 24-year-old spent years overcoming entrenched gender stereotypes and financial hurdles en route to earning a mechanical engineering degree and netting a job with an auto repairs garage in the eastern city of Multan. "I took it up as a challenge against all odds and the meagre financial resources of my family," Nawaz told AFP. "When they see me doing this type of work they are really surprised."

Hailing from the small, impoverished town of Dunyapur in eastern Pakistan's Punjab province, Nawaz relied on schol-

arships and often skipped meals when she was broke while pursuing her degree. Her achievements are rare. Women have long struggled for their rights in patriarchal Pakistan, an Islamic republic, and especially in rural areas are often encouraged to marry young and devote themselves entirely to family over career. "No hardship could break my will and motivation," she says proudly.

The sacrifices cleared the way for steady work at a Toyota dealership in Multan following graduation, she adds. Just a year into the job, and promoted to general repairs, Nawaz moves with the ease of a seasoned pro around the dealership's garage, removing tyres from raised vehicles, inspecting engines and handling a variety of tools - a sight that initially jolted some customers. "I was shocked to see a young girl lifting heavy spare tyres and then putting them back on vehicles after repairs," customer Arshad Ahmad told AFP.

But Nawaz's drive and expertise has impressed colleagues, who say she can

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MULTAN: In this picture taken on Sept 1, 2018, Pakistani motor mechanic Uzma Nawaz fixes a car at an auto workshop. — AFP

Local

Amir meets Dr Suad Al-Sabah, receives book on evolution of Kuwait Radio



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a copy of a book chronicling the history and evolution of Kuwait Radio from Dr Suad Al-Sabah. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Director of the Environmental Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Dr Suad Al-Sabah, who handed him a copy of a book chronicling the history and evolution of Kuwait Radio. His Highness the Amir also met

Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, as well as the Director of the

Environmental Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Sultan Salman bin Hatheen. Furthermore, His Highness the Crown Prince received Kuwait's Ambassador to China Samih Hayat. — KUNA

Speaker meets with Chilean MPs in Geneva

GENEVA: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem met yesterday with head of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile delegation, and Chairman of Kuwaiti-Chilean Friendship Committee Ivan Flores Garcia on the sidelines of the 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) currently convening in Geneva. The two delegations discussed means of enhancing parliamentary cooperation and coordinating stances towards various issues at international parliamentary forums. They also addressed a number of issues of mutual interest and the latest regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by Kuwait Parliament Secretary MP Dr Awdah Al-Rowaie and Member of the Kuwaiti parliamentary caucus MP Dr Khalil Abul. Speaker Ghanem heading a parliamentary delegation arrived on Saturday in Geneva to participate in the 139th session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) scheduled on October 14-18.

Positive dialogue

Meanwhile, Rowaie said on Monday that the positive parliamentary dialogue is a 'civi-



GENEVA: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with head of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile delegation and Chairman of Kuwaiti-Chilean Friendship Committee Ivan Flores Garcia. —KUNA

lized' way to convey messages across, indicating that this is one of the basic principles of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). This came in a press statement by Rowaie after his participation in the meeting of the First Standing Committee on International Peace and Security as part of the 139th session of the IPU conference. He noted that the committee is discussing three issues: arms, the proliferation of weapons and how to combat different forms of armaments. The second issue concerns sexual violence by some in UN peacekeeping missions and the third is

mercenaries, who are as dangerous as terrorists but are covered by a treaty or agreement with the state concerned," he added.

Rowaie pointed out that the meeting of the committee was attended by a group of speakers and discussed the moral aspect, which is the common factor in all these issues. He said that the Kuwaiti delegation talked about how to confront the armaments in the Arab region, pointing out that the delegation called for moral constraint to increase the credibility of such dialogues and reduce malpractices. —KUNA

Deputy FM receives Qatari ambassador



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Bandar bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah. —KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah held talks yesterday with Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Bandar bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah. They both spoke about bilateral relations and ways to boost them as well as the latest regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's office Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar. —KUNA

Kuwait marks world poverty day

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait, along with many nations of the globe, mark today the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, boasting a long record of aiding the needy and soothing pain of people in hardships. According to the UN, this year marks the 25th anniversary of the declaration by the UN General Assembly, in its resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992, of 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The theme of this year's commemoration is 'coming together with those furthest behind to build an inclusive world of universal respect for human rights and dignity.'

Celebrations in 2018 also marks the 30th anniversary of the Call to Action by Father Joseph Wresinski — which inspired the observance of October 17 as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty — and the recognition by the United Nations of the day as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Fight against poverty

Kuwait on its part continues to encourage the global community to contribute to the fight against poverty as an integral part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Since its independence in 1961, Kuwait has sought to aid those in need for a hand of mercy, both at official and grass-root levels, providing support, tangibly, for those who need help around the globe, and backing relevant UN resolutions. The GCC member-state has a prolific record in eradicating poverty and providing humanitarian and financial aid to several world countries.

The Kuwaiti government relief efforts, since His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, was proclaimed Amir in 2006, have intensified to aid the



Kuwait's humanitarian aid distributed to Syrian refugees.

poor, with emergence of a unique theme 'humanitarian diplomacy.' The government has hurried relief aid to peoples stricken with catastrophes throughout the globe, basing its campaign for relieving the cash-strapped people on the conviction that poverty is a fertile ground for wars, violence, and conflicts, as well as communities' disintegration.

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), the state's philanthropic arm, has been active since more than half a century ago, helping nations cope with poor resources or other menaces such as unemployment. According to KFAED's records, up to 106 nations have witnessed the incoming Kuwaiti aid, which financial contributions backed those countries' development projects in agriculture, industry, transport, communication, power, energy, education, and health fields. Kuwait is also a main contributor to the World Food Program, in addition to its support for the jobless youth, establishing the \$2 billion small enterprise fund, with a Kuwaiti contribution amounting to half a billion dollars.

Moreover, Kuwait has launched several initiatives since era of the late Amir, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber

Al-Sabah, who acted globally to relieve debts' burden afflicting poor nations. In 2008, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah launched the honorary living fund, contributing with \$100 million, to help peoples cope with soaring necessities' prices. KFAED confirms that up to 22 states have benefited from this fund. The endless wave of Kuwaiti charities in local, regional, and international arenas have prompted the UN in 2014 to designate His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad as the world's number-one 'Humanitarian Leader,' along with Kuwait, named as 'Humanitarian Center' of the globe. During the UNESCO executive board's 196th session in Paris, held in April 2015, Kuwait called anew on the international community to coordinate efforts for fighting the scourge of poverty.

War-torn countries

Kuwait's philanthropic societies and individuals have also given substantial aid to war-torn countries around the world, including Arab states such as Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Yemen, and Sudan, with the aim of helping those affected by crises or natural disasters.



Humanitarian aid from Kuwait for the Yemeni people.

The societies rush to help people suffering from hunger, providing them with shelter and establishing educational and vocational projects to pave way for their development and to depend on themselves.

Recently, Kuwaiti charities focused on helping the Syrian refugees in neighboring countries like Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan, as well as assisting the Yemenis, Iraqis and Palestinians. They are also funding projects in African and Asian countries. Alongside government efforts, Kuwaiti charitable societies and relief aid organizations also took part in helping the Syrians to overcome their dire situation.

In 2016, His Highness the Amir took part in the humanitarian summit in Turkey, during which he highlighted Kuwait's contributions to humanitarian causes around the world. During the conference, His Highness has indicated that Kuwait had offered over \$1 billion in the last five years to support global humanitarian efforts. He also mentioned that most of the allocated sums were delivered to the needy suffering from wars in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and Yemen.

In Yemen, Kuwait announced in 2015 a generous donation of \$100 million for the

Yemeni people suffering from the ills of civil war. In 2016, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) provided relief aid to the people who were affected by the catastrophic floods and torrents that struck wide areas in Sudan. While on the level of the Palestinian cause, Kuwait always support the rights of the Palestinian people.

UNRWA operations

In 2009, Kuwait donated \$34 million to cover the expenses of operations carried out by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The Gulf country also offered \$15 million in 2013 to help the Palestinians and launched in 2014 a relief aid campaign for the Gaza Strip, which was hit by a brutal Israeli operation in July of that year. In Iraq, Kuwait continued to offer aid there, giving in 2015 a sum of \$200 million to displaced Iraqis. Kuwait pledged \$176 million during an Iraqi aid conference held in Washington. Kuwait also proposed in 2017 to host an international conference on reconstructing Iraqi liberated cities from the grip of the so-called Islamic State (IS). —KUNA

Local

Expatriate teachers to resume work despite pending degrees' accreditation

Non-oil exports reached KD 5.9 million in September

By A Saleh by Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) agreed to allow expatriate teachers who were newly hired by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and already approved by CSC to proceed with their recruitment procedures pending accreditation of their degrees by the ministry of higher education. Informed sources said MoE had earlier inquired about the possibility of allowing the new teachers to start work after signing affidavits to have their degrees accredited by the ministry of higher education, which usually takes 6 to 12 months. "Both CSC and MoE agreed to allow the teachers to work to cover shortages in some public schools," the sources added, noting that teachers whose degrees will not be accredited by the end of this period will be terminated.

Meanwhile, MoE announced a scholarship program in the US for ninth and tenth grade students in 2018-2019. A directive circulated by MoE to various educational zones explained that the scholarships are part of the YES exchange program and that applicants should not be older than 17 by the beginning of 2019-2020. The ministry explained that applicants will have to fill special forms, get recommendation letters from their English teachers and apply at AMIDEAST along with grades of the past three years and copies of their passport and ID by Dec 4, 2018.

Non-oil exports
The value of Kuwait's non-oil exports reached KD 5.9 million in September compared to KD 7.4 million in the same month last year, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI) announced yesterday. MOCI added that



Increased energy tariffs reduced consumption

the value of exports to GCC states was KD 3.3 million compared to KD 2.9 million last year; exports to Europe were KD 1.3 million compared to KD 3.3 million last year. The report also showed that the total value of exports to non-GCC Arab states was KD 1.5 million compared to KD 2.1 million last year. The report also showed that Iraq was the largest importer of Kuwaiti products.

Energy tariffs
Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) Undersecretary Mohammed Boshetri said the ministry is currently working on electronic connection with other government bodies to prevent any transactions unless applicants pay their overdue bills. Boshetri added that the new electricity tariffs had contributed in reducing consumption rates, although the bills of some consumers in the investment and commercial sectors jumped from KD 200 to KD 500. "MEW does not plan to increase tariffs for the time being," he underlined, noting that new rates will continue for at least three years before any reconsideration. Boshetri added that smart meters would be installed and operated by the first quarter of 2019 and stressed that MEW had stopped cash payments since 2016 because some corrupt employees had been manipulating bills by writing lower amounts than what they actually collect from elderly consumers.

Fiber optics
Telephone services manager at Hawally's department in the Ministry of Services Ahmad Babajan said traditional copper landlines can at most handle 1 to 5 megabytes of Internet, while fiber optic ones in Salwa and Rumaithiya can provide faster Internet speeds of 15-20

megabytes. Babajan added that a project is currently underway to replace copper cables with fiber optic ones.

Operation Turtles
In collaboration with the Japanese society in Kuwait, government bodies and volunteers, the Kuwait Environmental Protection Society (KEPS) announced plans to organize a cleanup operation at Shuwaikh beach on Saturday, Nov 10 under the title 'Operation Turtles'. KEPS Treasurer Yousif Al-Kous said the society received a delegation from the Japanese Society to coordinate efforts for this annual event that is being held since 2000. Kous said KEPS has also prepared a 'green schools' program and many other voluntary projects sponsored by many local companies including Rasameel Investment Company (RIC).

Rulings ignored
Chairman of the Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (KGOC) employees' syndicate Faleh Hindi Al-Ajmi criticized the company, saying that it had ignored some final court rulings concerning paying employees working in Khafji according to fixed currency rates. Ajmi also said KGOC's deputy CEO for financial and administrative affairs had ignored another ruling concerning urgent leaves and building a nursery for employees' children.

Muezzin molested sorcery-seeking women

KUWAIT: A muezzin used to lure women and sexually molest them with claims of helping them achieve their goals using sorcery, in exchange of money. Investigations revealed the suspect is a bachelor and carried out his acts at his residence. He charged between KD 200 - KD 300 for each act. The man was put under surveillance for months. Policemen, armed with a warrant, went to his residence and he was arrested red-handed. Police also found sorcery tools. The suspect will be deported.

Sexual harassment

A Filipina woman who works in a restaurant accused a customer of sexual harassment, saying that he touched her while serving him. She said the man touched her in front of others, so she admonished and screamed at him. The man then left the place.

Drug dealer arrested

Policemen arrested a laborer who worked in a Hawally mosque for pushing drugs. Police investigated tips about his activities and found them to be true, so his residence was raided and a large quantity of illicit material was found. He was sent to concerned authorities.

Parking lot brawl

An Egyptian man suffered broken teeth after a compatriot hit him using a steel pipe following a dispute over a parking spot. The two were involved in a fight when one of them picked a pipe and hit the other on the mouth, then escaped. The victim was able to take a photo of the suspect's car's license plate and lodged a complaint. Police are looking for the suspect.

Fugitive caught

Criminal detectives arrested a citizen wanted on 10 felony, misdemeanor and financial cases after fierce resistance. Detectives summoned the suspect following a complaint, but he refused to go to them, so an arrest warrant was issued. He was located and arrested. The suspect claimed the complaint against him was malicious. Detectives are checking into the cases against him. — *Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa*

Gulf Bank AJYAL program staff earn int'l experience

KUWAIT: As part of the Gulf Bank AJYAL program, which is in its fourth edition, the top five achievers from the six-month staff training program earned the opportunity to travel to Frankfurt and attend an intensive Financial Modeling course at the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management.

The Frankfurt School of Finance and Management is a top 50-ranked globally renowned Business school that focuses on delivering high caliber business training and research, and over the years has graduated over 100,000 students across its programs.

During their international experience, the AJYAL 4 trainee-staff had the opportunity to interact with colleagues from the global financial industry by attending the

course titled, Leading with Impact. The program exposed the participants to the challenges and risks faced by the banking landscape and displayed best practices on how to overcome such obstacles by incorporating scientific learning to their work.

Over the past four years, the AJYAL program has graduated over 60 staff covering a gamut of educational and professional backgrounds. Upon completing the program, employees go on to develop rewarding careers at the Bank in areas as diverse as Risk, Corporate Banking, Investments, Treasury, and Human Resources to name a few. What makes this program unique is the design and objective of developing holistic bankers that will deliver exceptional performance for the bank.

Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager Human Resources at Gulf Bank said: "We are proud to see the rise of a new caliber of holistic Kuwaiti bankers who are at the focus of the bank's long-term growth strategy." Further adding, "The AJYAL program has seen many internal success stories with more nationals going into areas that in the past lacked their presence in the banking realm." Gulf Bank's AJYAL program comes in-line with the Bank's vision to become the leading employer of choice for Kuwaiti nationals.



KUWAIT: AJYAL International Graduates with Jennah Al-Mattar - Assistant General Manager of Learning and Development.

Roads authority holds meetings

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Roads and Transportation (PART), in cooperation with the traffic department, held a coordination meeting with Kuwait Oil Company

(KOC) to find solutions to the traffic problem at the entrances and exits surrounding Ahmadi and Magwa fields.

Meanwhile, another meeting was held between PART officials, the traffic department and the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) to discuss emergency plans for the rain season to safeguard motorists' wellbeing.



Kuwait wants end to Palestinian water crisis

CAIRO: It is imperative to provide the Palestinian Water Authority with the financial aid needed to address water shortages, said a Kuwaiti official yesterday. The Kuwaiti Ministry of Water and Electricity's Assistant Undersecretary for Water Maintenance and Service Khalifa Al-Furaj made the remarks during the 'Cairo Water

Week' conference, an endeavor that raises awareness over global water scarcity. He revealed that an ad hoc committee dealing with water issues in Arab and Islamic nations, including Saudi Arabia and Turkey, among others, would soon be formed.

The committee is also tasked with drawing up plans to make sure that water-related sustainable development goals come to fruition, the Kuwaiti official explained. He went on to say that the Palestinians have expressed their gratitude for Kuwait's support, particularly in the water sector. The Egypt-hosted conference brings together officials from more than 70 nations, along with a number of international organizations. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Director General of Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Ali Al-Mudhaf received a delegation from the National Guard General Command, headed by Undersecretary Lt Gen Hashim Al-Refal. The visit comes as both sides realize the importance of scientific and technical cooperation to reach the sought after goals.

News in brief

Philippines Embassy waives salary certificate condition

KUWAIT: The Philippines Embassy agreed to waive the condition of the sponsor's salary certificate for domestic help offices, because it is not legal in the country, Al-Qabas reported yesterday quoting an informed source. The sources said the embassy sent a circular in which it mentioned its agreement, after informing the Philippine labor minister who visited Kuwait earlier and met foreign ministry officials, that this condition must be struck out. — Al-Qabas

Domestic help offices

KUWAIT: The domestic help division at the residency affairs department carried out several inspection campaigns against domestic help offices in Jahra governorate, resulting in the discovery of several violators, the Relations and Security Information at the Interior Ministry said yesterday. They also issued several citations to some offices for harboring absconding helpers. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

Lebanese products

KUWAIT: Head of the Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies Khaled Al-Hudhaiban said prices of commodities arriving from Syria and Lebanon, particularly fruits and vegetables, should be reduced after opening the 'Jaber-Naseeb' border crossing between Syria and Jordan. The opening of the crossing serves Lebanon which had suffered during the past three years from the closing of the only land outlet that links it to the Arab world. Hudhaiban said prices should drop by at least 25 percent as there is a difference between air and land cargo. Head of Lebanese farmers gathering Ibrahim Al-Tarshishi sent a message to Kuwait, saying that Lebanese products will return to Kuwaiti market for lesser prices and higher quality. — Al-Rai

Breast cancer

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti specialists confirmed yesterday that early detection of breast cancer will ensure that the disease is cured by up to 95 percent. In a statement to the press, Head of Al-Babtain Center of Plastic Surgery and Burns Dr Qutaiba Al-Kanderi said that breast tumors are the most common diseases in women, 90 percent of breast tumors are benign and 10 percent of tumors are cancerous. Causes of the disease are unknown although heredity, diet, radiation and medicine plays a role, he added. Symptoms of breast cancer includes painless presence of mass in breasts, therefore periodic examination is required and if detected the Center rehabilitates and removes the tumor then plastic surgery specialists can surgically reconstruct the breasts, he explained. — KUNA

Solar power plant to cost \$1.5 billion: KISR

KUWAIT: The estimated total cost of Kuwait's Dibdibah solar power plant is \$1.5 billion, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) said yesterday. A single photovoltaic unit produces 630,000 megawatts per year, which is roughly equivalent to the energy consumption of 8,070 households, KISR research assistant Mohammad Al-Khayat said during a seminar organized by Kuwait's oil ministry. He said that the solar power station is one of Kuwait National Petroleum Company's marquee projects, revealing that the first phase of the project combines wind, thermal concentration and photovoltaic powers. KISR and the ministry of electricity and water are collectively devising a plan over what types of technology are most appropriate for the Dibdibah power plant, the research assistant explained. The mega solar power plant, which the Kuwaiti government hopes will help slash carbon monoxide emissions in the country by around 1.3 million tons, is located 100 kilometers west of Kuwait City. It is also part of the Gulf state's plans to lessen its dependency on oil for power generation, ensuring 15 percent of its domestic needs come from renewables by 2030. — KUNA

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A child plays with a fountain at Al-Safat Square. — Photo by Tarek Al-Hussaini (KUNA)

KU's College of Social Sciences hosts Women's Forum Oct 22

Two-day event organized by Women's Research and Studies Center

KUWAIT: Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences Dr Hamoud Fahad Al-Qashaan announced yesterday that the eighth annual Women's Forum will be held on October 22, 2018. The two-day forum will be held at Kuwait University (KU) under the patronage of Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh and organized by Women's Research and Studies Center. It aims to highlight the college's mission in supporting development in Kuwait and activating Article 5 of the State Development Plan on supporting women.

In this regard, Qashaan praised Kuwaiti women's efforts, which exceeded the regional boundaries and reached the global efforts, pointing to the distinguished women's award entitled 'Role Model' in order to strengthen the role of women leaders and their pioneering achievements in society. Meanwhile, Head of Women's Research and Studies Center at Kuwait University Dr Lubna Al-Qadi said that the Center is organizing the forum in cooperation with the General Secretariat of Supreme Council for Planning and Development (UNDP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Commission on the Status of

Woman, and Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

The forum will shed light on the role of women in political, social, economic and educational leadership in order to benefit from the experiences of women who have

worked in leadership and the challenges they face, and to highlight the importance of integrating women into decision-making for sustainable development. The forum will include five themes, namely the leadership of women in various fields, the positive impact of women in

society and its development, women's axis, political and economic leadership, women's leadership and in volunteering alongside the axis of human capital development and women's participation. Al-Qadi explained. Two workshops will be held during the forum; the first of which was the Women's Leadership Dialogue Program, to support their communication and empowerment in society. — KUNA



Kuwaiti women's efforts praised



KUWAIT: Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences Dr Hamoud Fahad Al-Qashaan (center) attends a press conference yesterday to announce that the eighth annual Women's Forum will be held on October 22, 2018. — KUNA

Arab ministers thank Kuwait for new cultural reform plan

CAIRO: The Arab ministers of culture applauded Kuwait on Monday for adopting the amendment of the comprehensive plan for Arab culture and allocating funds for the budget of the plan. During their 21st conference, the ministers appreciated the efforts made by the Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) to prepare the plan in 1985 and update it in 2011.

The two-day conference was held under the auspices of Egyptian President Abdulfatah Al-Sisi in collaboration with ALECSO. The final communique of the gathering recommends more cooperation among the regional and international government and non-government cultural organizations to curb the phenomenon of extremism and promoting the culture of peace and moderation.

It calls on ALECSO to prepare for the Arab cultural summit, themed "Arab cultural security," in collaboration with the Arab League Secretariat and the concerned departments in the Arab countries. Regarding the Arab award for creative youth, the conferees

decided to allocate it to three categories in each session with each cash award amounting to at least \$15,000. They designated Mahmoud Darwish, a late Palestinian poet, as icon of Arab culture 2018, and called on ALECSO to prepare an order of merit for future icons, according to the communique.

The ministers welcomed the ALECSO initiative to celebrate the Arab day of poetry at its Headquarters on a regular basis, calling for honoring the Saudi poet Ghazi Al-Qosaibi at the coming fifth Arab day of poetry. They called on the organization and the concerned departments in the Arab countries to speed up the development of a charter for protection of cultural heritage in the Arab countries.

They approved the recommendations of the 23rd session of the conference on antiquities and cultural heritage in the Arab homeland, hosted by Jordan in April 2018, and the two meetings of Arab experts on world cultural heritage, hosted by Kuwait in June 2017 and June 2018.

They stressed the need of Palestinian participation in Arab cultural activities and holding cultural weeks in Arab cities to highlight the Palestine question. The ministers agreed to adopt a single stance on the Arab identity of Jerusalem at the meetings of UNESCO's Executive Board and World Heritage Committee and highlight the status of the holy city as an occupied territory. Kuwait was represented at the gathering by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Mohammad Al-Jabri. — KUNA

Cinema contributes to building cultural bridges: Official

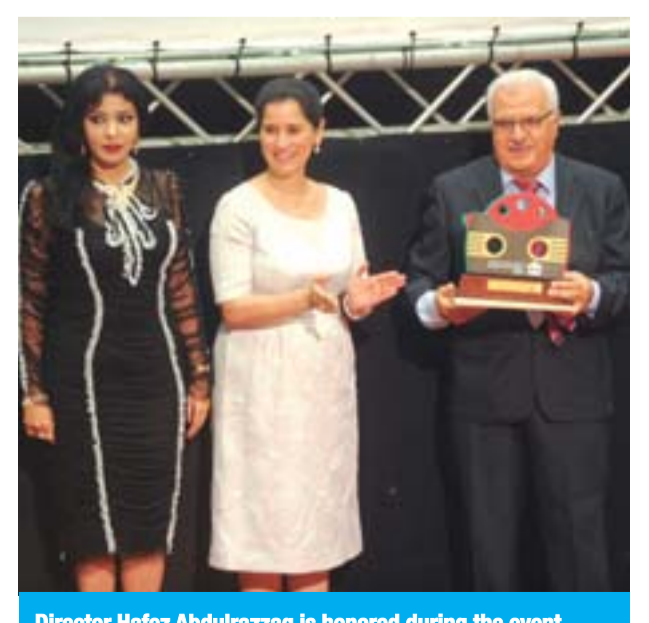
KUWAIT: Cinema is one of the most important means that contribute effectively and forcefully to building cultural bridges among people, the Secretary-General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Ali Al-Youha said, in the inauguration of the second Kuwait Film Festival.

Sheikha Intisar added NCCAL is working to build a purposeful cinema based on professional crews to bring audience back to the big screen after a noticeable drift toward smart phone

screens. Sheikha Intisar pointed out that the festival aims to create an opportunity to exchange experiences, ideas among different generations working in the field of cinema, and hopes that the festival will be an opportunity to develop this industry, taking into account the rapid conditions and developments in the film industry. — KUNA



Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah



Director Hafez Abdulrazzaq is honored during the event.

Local

Kuwait keen on executing economic deals with China

Relevant departments assigned to remove obstacles facing implementation



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf meets with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic Miguel Vargas. —KUNA

Finance Minister, Dominican FM discuss cooperation

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf discussed yesterday with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic Miguel Vargas issues of mutual interests. During the meeting, both sides reviewed a number of topics including ways to strengthen bilateral economic and trade relations between Kuwait and the Dominican Republic, the ministry said in statement. The meeting came during the official visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic to Kuwait to discuss various aspects of cooperation between the two countries. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's government is keen on transforming recent economic agreements with China into reality, assigning relevant departments to implement them and remove all obstacles facing execution. The cabinet held a meeting chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah Monday night, during which it assigned the foreign ministry to implement a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) over encouragement of investment, and tackle all obstacles, Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement. The cabinet, he said, assigned Kuwait's Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) to explore implementation of a vision by China's Huawei company to establish a fully-integrated smart port at Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port.

The government, asserted Saleh, regretted the unjust media campaign against Saudi Arabia over the missing Saudi citizen Jamal Kashoggi. Kuwait, he added, rejected this campaign and affirmed fully solidarity with Riyadh against any attempt undermining its reputation. Saudi Arabia, said Saleh, has been playing a great role to supporting peace and stability at Arab, Islamic and international levels.

The cabinet, meanwhile, approved a trade cooperation agreement with Turkmenistan, senior officials' consultations agreement with Canada, youth and sport deal with Senegal, and a sport accord with Portugal. The government condemned Houthis' firing of ballistic missiles against Najran, Saudi Arabia, and extended support to Saudi Arabia's measures to maintain the Kingdom's security and stability. The government, said Saleh, followed



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting. — KUNA

with concern hurricanes in Oman and the US, as well as condemning an attack against voters in northeast Afghanistan. On the other hand, Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-

Sabah briefed the cabinet about a recent visit by Romanian Minister of State for bilateral affairs to discuss promotion of economic, defense industries, cultural, academic and health cooperation. — KUNA



IFE Expo kicks off in Abu Dhabi with Kuwaiti participation

ABU DHABI: The sixth edition of the International Franchise Exhibition (IFE) kicked off in Abu Dhabi yesterday with participation of Kuwait Business Council as a sponsoring partner. Kuwait's participation in this event comes as part of its continuous efforts to enhance the presence of the Kuwaiti business community in the UAE and open up promising prospects for commercial growth, the council said in a press statement. "It will give small and medium enterprises from Kuwait the opportunity to expand and cooperate with foreign companies to identify the best practices and experiences in the field (Franchise) world", the statement added.

In light of the cooperation agreement concluded between the Kuwaiti Business Council and the Arabic version of the Harvard Business Review, the Board delegation will take part in a panel discussion today under the title 'Lab Management: How Business Leaders Run Their Time'. The seminar will discuss the results of a scientific study conducted on about 27 global executive heads whose diaries were carefully monitored over a period of more than 60,000 thousand hours. The Kuwaiti Council has also concluded a cooperation agreement with the International Economist magazine, which will be a supporter of the International Summit to Combat Illicit Trade, which will be held on October 30 in Abu Dhabi as representatives of the public sector, private sector and civil society, the statement noted.

The summit will address effective solutions to the legislative and technological challenges facing the business sector, including forgery, intellectual property rights and the protection of trademarks from tradition, information security and others. Kuwait Business Council in Dubai and the Northern Emirates was established in 2016 under the umbrella of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry as a non-profit organization, the first of its kind for business communities outside the State of Kuwait. The Council welcomes all Kuwaiti companies, businesspersons and employees in the UAE or those wishing to expand in order to enhance the expertise, opportunities and relations of its members.

The IFE exhibition, organized by Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, includes feature participants from local and international companies specialized in a variety of fields. It is targeting more than 5,000 foreign companies and those interested in entrepreneurship. The two-day exhibition, held at Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company's (ADNEC) headquarters, aims at giving the opportunity for local and international companies to expose their brand to the booming UAE economy and expand their business in the Middle East. — KUNA



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China rolls out PR push on Muslim internments

'Price of democracy': Afghans risk their lives to vote

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ADAWNAB, Oman: Photo shows flooded streets in the Adonab valley near Salalah, in the Southern Omani province of Dhofar, during the tropical storm Luban. — AFP

Tropical storm kills 3 in Oman, Yemen

33 injured by widespread flooding; homes washed away

ADEN: At least three people have been killed and 33 injured by flash flooding in Yemen and neighboring Oman caused by Tropical Storm Luban, the UN and local authorities have said. Mahra province in the far east of Yemen and the neighboring Dhofar region of Oman are the only parts of the Arabian Peninsula that have a monsoon climate governed by the tropical weather systems of the Indian Ocean.

Mountains rising to 1,300 meters separate a fertile coastal strip from the infamous Empty Quarter in the vast desert interior. Most of the Luban's casualties were reported in coastal districts of Mahra, where two people were killed and 33 injured by widespread flooding, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) said. In Oman, the civil defense said one man was found dead in Dhofar.

Mahra governor Rajeh Bakrit said on Monday the province had been devastated by the storm. "The situation is catastrophic in the province and beyond the capabilities of the local authorities," he said, accord-

ing to the government-run Saba news agency. Yemen President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi cited the "failure" of the government's efforts to respond to the "catastrophic" storm as one of the reasons for dismissing prime minister Ahmed bin Dagher late on Monday. UNOCHA said more than 2,000 families had been significantly affected by the flooding in Mahra with many finding emergency shelter in displaced public buildings.

It warned there were expected to be more casualties and homes washed away in areas that had yet to be reached by emergency teams. In May, Cyclone Mekunu smashed into southern Oman and the Yemeni island of Socotra, killing at least 11 people. Residents of Mahra and Socotra have long complained of being left to fend for themselves as Hadi's beleaguered government focuses on wars against Houthi rebels, who have controlled the capital Sanaa and much of the north since 2014, and against jihadists, who have a major presence in neighboring Hadramawt province. — AFP



SALALAH: A Omani man takes a picture as waves crash on the shore of the southern city of Salalah. —AFP

Macron seeks second wind with cabinet reshuffle

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron reshuffled his cabinet yesterday, appointing new interior, agriculture and culture ministers after a weeks-long search for new talent to try to revive his government's flagging fortunes. Two weeks after political veteran Gerard Collomb abruptly resigned as interior minister, Macron appointed the ultra-loyal head of his Republic on the Move party, Christophe Castaner, to replace him. The centrist also dismissed his agriculture and culture ministers, seen as weak links in his cabinet, which is a blend of experts in their field and experienced politicians from the left and right.

The prime minister, foreign and economy ministers all kept their jobs in the cabinet, in which women have exactly half the positions. Presenting a "renewed, dynamic team with a second wind", the presidency said it would continue on the same track of reforms. Collomb's departure on October 2 was a blow to Macron and coincided with a slump in the president's popularity after a summer overshadowed by a scandal involving a close aide, several verbal gaffes and disap-

pointing economic data. His resignation came hot on the heels of that of popular environment minister Nicolas Hulot in August, creating a sense of disarray in the government.

Macron's delay in carrying out the reshuffle, caused in part by his difficulty in convincing people to join his team, has added to the sense of a loss in momentum after a fast-paced first year in office, analysts say. The pro-business 40-year-old is hoping to rebound with his revamped team, without deviating from his cost-cutting agenda. "Gone is the glitter and glamour of the campaign, we're wising up and getting into the political nitty-gritty," said Philippe Moreau-Chevrolat, a professor of political communications at Sciences Po university.

In Macron's shadow

Christophe Castaner, a gregarious 52-year-old former Socialist MP, had been widely tipped to replace Collomb, who is returning to his home town of Lyon to serve as mayor. A central figure in the president's inner circle, Castaner, who hails from southern France, was a rebellious youth who played poker with members of the criminal underworld in Marseille before entering politics.

He has little experience of national security issues but yesterday vowed to be "at your service, ladies and gentlemen, 24 hours a day." He resigned his leadership of Macron's party to take up the job. The current head of France's domestic intelligence agency, Laurent

Nunez, was named as his deputy at the interior ministry. Didier Guillaume, a former Socialist, was named agriculture minister, replacing Stephane Travert, while centre-right former Republicans lawmaker Franck Riester took over from publisher Francoise Nyssen in culture.

Macron also appointed a new minister for relations with local government, with Jacqueline Gourault taking over the tricky portfolio at a time of budget cuts that have caused deep discontent among rural mayors. Macron, a former investment banker, shook up the staid world of French politics in 2016 by founding his own pro-business, pro-EU grassroots party, which he presented as neither of the left nor the right. Analysts say his ministers have struggled to emerge from the shadow of a president with a top-down, highly centralized style of governing.

He suffered the first major scandal of his presidency in July when footage emerged of one of his most trusted security aides hitting a protester while apparently posing as a policeman at a May Day rally. Macron was accused of covering up for Alexandre Benalla, who was fired from his Elysee Palace job after Le Monde newspaper revealed the affair. Slowing economic growth and a series of public gaffes seen as evidence of arrogance have also served to undermine his popularity. His polling numbers have slumped to their lowest level since his electoral victory in May 2017, with surveys showing that only around 30 percent of French voters have a positive view of his presidency. —AFP

Russia press warns of 'Orthodox war' over Church split

MOSCOW: Russian media yesterday warned of one of the gravest crises in the history of the Orthodox Church after the Moscow branch announced it would break ties with the Istanbul-based Ecumenical Patriarchate. The rupture on Monday came after the Istanbul-based clerics ruled to grant independence to the Ukrainian Church, a move Russia has long campaigned against. Constantinople's decision last week ended more than 300 years of Moscow's control over Orthodox churches in Ukraine and affects millions of believers in Russia and Ukraine.

The religious split comes amid deep political tensions, with Ukraine fighting a Moscow-backed uprising in its east. RBK business daily warned of a "war between (Holy) Synods" on its front page, referring to the Churches' ruling bodies. A Russian expert on religion, Roman Lunkin, told RBK that Moscow's move has created "two warring Orthodox worlds". Izvestia, a Kremlin-

loyal daily, quoted the Moscow Church's warning of a threat "of the destruction of the unity of global Orthodoxy".

Monday will enter Orthodox history as "one of its darkest days," wrote Izvestia. The newspaper said the split between the Constantinople and Moscow Churches — the highest-status and largest Orthodox Churches respectively — followed on from the two greatest upheavals in Christian Church history. The front-page article referenced the Protestant Reformation of 1517 sparked by German theologian Martin Luther, and the schism between the Eastern and Western Christian Churches in 1054. Now each of the branches of the Orthodox Church "will have to choose with whom to be - Constantinople or the Russian Orthodox Church," Izvestia wrote.

Media including government newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta wrote with regret that Russians will no longer be able to go to pray at Mount Athos in Greece, a major destination for pilgrims and tourists that is under the jurisdiction of Constantinople. The Ukrainian president and lawmakers have backed independence for the country's currently divided Orthodox Church and see it as striking a blow against Moscow's influence in Ukraine. Relations broke down during the Maidan uprising of 2014 followed by Moscow's annexation of Crimea and the subsequent separatist conflict in the east. —AFP

International

China defends anti-extremism measures as scrutiny mounts

Beijing rolls out PR push on Muslim internments

BEIJING: China yesterday issued an ardent defense of the alleged mass internment of minorities in its far west Xinjiang region, with a regional official insisting that authorities are preventing terrorism through "vocational education" centers. Beijing has sought to counter a global outcry against the facilities with a series of op-eds and interviews and a roll out of new regulations that retroactively codify the use of a system of extra-judicial "re-education" camps in Xinjiang.

Up to one million ethnic Uighurs and other mostly Muslim Turkic minorities are believed to be held in such centers, according to estimates cited by a United Nations panel. Former inmates have said they found themselves incarcerated for transgressions such as wearing long beards and face veils or sharing Islamic holiday greetings on social media, a process that echoes the decades of brutal thought reform under Mao Zedong.

The program has come under increasing fire from the international community, receiving particular censure from the United States and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Chinese authorities initially denied the existence of the facilities. But they have changed their tune as satellite imagery and documents issued by their own government have made that position

untenable. In recent weeks the story has shifted from outright dismissal to acknowledgement that the camps exist, with the caveat that they are being used primarily for



Beijing seeks to counter a global outcry

"vocational education" in a bid to halt separatist sentiments and religious extremism.

'Safe and stable'

In a rare interview with China's official Xinhua news service published yesterday, the chairman of Xinjiang's government, Shohrat Zakir, defended the use of the centers, saying

that the region was now "safe and stable". The official did not say how many people were being held in the centers. "Through vocational training, most trainees have been able to reflect on their mistakes and see clearly the essence and harm of terrorism and religious extremism," he said.

Zakir said the facilities were intended to improve job skills and Mandarin abilities among minorities with "a limited command of the country's common language and a limited sense and knowledge of the law". Those who struggled to find work as a result, he added, were "vulnerable to the instigation and coercion of terrorism and extremism." He said that the "free" programs were limited in duration, "trainees" signed a contract with the centers that laid out a clear plan of study and included a stipend. Asked about the future of the programs, Zakir said "some trainees" were "expected to complete their courses successfully by the end of this year."

'Eradicating extremism'

The comments follow weeks of efforts by Chinese officials and state media to defend China's actions in Xinjiang, where riots and attacks led to hundreds of deaths in recent years. Op-eds by Chinese diplomats have appeared in newspapers around the world, arguing that the program is

an effective means of eliminating the threat posed to the region by religious extremism.

An editorial in the nationalist tabloid the Global Times warned foreign governments on Tuesday not to meddle in Xinjiang's affairs. "Obviously vocational education is a periodic and temporary plan aimed at eradicating extremism," it said, adding that criticism was "just messing up the whole thing and creating a narrative against China." Taking to Twitter—a social media platform that is blocked in China—the paper's editor-in-chief Hu Xijin said officials had told him the official figures for the number of people in "vocational education" were "much fewer than the 1 million or so" speculated by the outside world.

"Chinese officials didn't reveal the true number to avoid falling into the stats trap, giving Western media another excuse to hype up the issue," he added. The positive image of the centers portrayed in the PR drive is belied by testimonies from former detainees who describe harsh treatment in the facilities. Large numbers of families outside of China say their relatives in Xinjiang were spirited away by police never to be heard from again. Critics have warned that mass incarcerations and forced cultural assimilation of China's western Muslim minorities risk further inflaming and perpetuating separatist anger. — AFP

Iraq's Mosul logs civil records lost to years of IS rule

MOSUL: When Shahed was born in 2015 her father tried to notify Iraq's civil registry. The problem was, their city of Mosul was held by Islamic State group jihadists and the office had been shut. Three years later, 39-year-old Ahmed Aziz has yet to officially register his daughter's birth, the certificate for which bears the seal of the so-called caliphate. Under the late summer sun, the taxi driver braves a long queue outside Mosul's reopened civil registry, hoping that by the end of the day Shahed's name will finally appear in state records. The little girl was born just a year after IS jihadists swept across the country, seizing swathes of territory including Iraq's second city Mosul.

"The civil registry was closed," said Aziz, holding the IS-stamped document issued by a hospital in Mosul. But since Iraqi forces ultimately regained control of the city in July 2017 after a bloody months-long campaign, residents have flooded the city's reopened offices. Thousands of children like Shahed had been born under IS rule, and the jihadists had systematically blown up civil offices and archives. "I saw this massive rush to get to the public offices, so I preferred to wait a bit before going there too," said Aziz. As a result, his daughter does not yet officially exist.

Wedding in black

During the jihadists' reign, thousands of Iraqis who lived in areas controlled by IS virtually disappeared from state registers. Some lost their identity documents as neighborhoods turned into battle zones, others as they fled the violence. Many of those who remained were given documents from IS's proto-state-ministries and courts created by the jihadists to register births, marriages,



MOSUL: Iraqis check lists of names at the Nineveh governorate building in Iraq's second city of Mosul to resolve issues related to their identity documents. — AFP

deaths and trade agreements alike. None of that paperwork has been recognized by Iraqi authorities. When Zein Mohammed got married in 2014, he and his soon-to-be wife had to present themselves at an IS court to seal the deal. What should have been the best day of the now 29-year-old civil servant's life was instead a test. "I appeared in front of the judge with my fiancée—she was covered head-to-toe in black," he told AFP.

Under IS rule, Mosul's residents were forced to bow to the jihadists' ultra-conservative demands. Women were compelled to fully cover themselves in black veils and long robes, and civil cases were heard by courts that dealt out death sentences and corporal punishment for "sins". "The judge issued us a marriage certificate bearing the IS seal," said Mohammed. When Iraqi forces retook the city and courts reopened, he and his wife rushed to sign a new marriage contract. Now, packed in amongst the crowd outside Mosul's civil registry, Mohammed is hoping to finally regularize their marital status. — AFP

The battle for Raqqa

BEIRUT: On October 17, 2017, a US-backed Arab-Kurdish coalition captured the city of Raqqa in northern Syria from Islamic State group jihadists who had made it their de facto capital. Here is a timeline:

'Wrath of the Euphrates'

On November 5, 2016, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces launches an offensive dubbed "Wrath of the Euphrates" to take Raqqa, which has been in IS hands since early 2014. The SDF, a Syrian anti-IS coalition dominated by the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), are 30,000-strong. The first phase consists in isolating Raqqa, cutting its main links with the outside world.

American armored vehicles

In January 2017, the SDF says the US has delivered to it armored vehicles, which US officials stress have gone to certain Arab units. NATO member Turkey opposes the Kurdish YPG because it fears the group could push for a Kurdish homeland incorporating Turkish territory. In March SDF troops backed by international aircraft cut the main supply route between Raqqa and Deir Ezzor province to the east. Later that month the Pentagon announces US troops, artillery and helicopters have backed an SDF operation to seize the strategic Tabqa hydroelectric dam, around 50 kilometers west of Raqqa. For the first time members of the SDF have been carried by helicopter behind jihadist lines. On May 10, the SDF seizes Tabqa and the dam on the Euphrates. In late May the Pentagon says it has started to deliver weapons to the SDF's Kurdish units.

SDF enters Raqqa

On June 6, the SDF enters Raqqa for the first time, the start of the battle for the city. On June 18 a US fighter



RAKQA: School children walk past destroyed buildings in the northern Syrian city of Raqqa yesterday. — AFP

jet shoots down a Syrian military plane accused of bombarding the SDF. Clashes take place between regime troops and SDF fighters to the south of the city. In early July the Arab-Kurdish coalition penetrates Raqqa from the south, crossing the Euphrates. The US army says American military advisers are operating within Raqqa. In August Amnesty International says civilians in Raqqa are under fire "from all sides".

Raqqa freed from IS

On September 1, the SDF say they have routed IS jihadists from the Old City, bringing them closer than ever to the jihadist bastion's well-defended and densely populated heart. The SDF and US special forces tighten the noose around the last pockets of resistance, but landmines hinder operations. On October 16, the SDF takes the infamous Al-Naim traffic circle, dubbed the "Roundabout of Hell" by residents under IS rule because jihadists used it for public beheadings and crucifixions. After ousting IS fighters from their final holdouts at the state hospital and municipal stadium, the SDF on October 17 declares it has "taken full control of Raqqa". On November 30 the US-led coalition says over 400 US Marines involved in battling the

Islamic State group in Syria are being withdrawn after the capture of Raqqa, and would not be replaced. Some 2,000 US soldiers have been deployed in northern Syria, mainly special forces.

'In ruins'

In April, the UN says it has conducted its first humanitarian mission to Raqqa since its liberation, warning that returning civilians face enormous risks, as it is littered with unexploded devices. In June Amnesty International says the US-led military campaign killed hundreds of civilians in indiscriminate bombing, amounting to possible war crimes.

In July Human Rights Watch says Raqqa has "at least nine mass graves, each one estimated to have dozens, if not hundreds, of bodies, making exhumations a monumental task". On October 12, Amnesty International says the destruction of Raqqa was "shocking" and thousands of bodies have yet to be exhumed. "Eighty percent of the city is basically in ruins and that applies to schools, to hospitals, to private homes," Amnesty's research director Anna Neistat says after a visit. On October 15 it condemns the coalition's failure to acknowledge and investigate its role in civilian killings during the battle. — AFP

Syrians search for IS captives a year after caliphate crumbles

RAQA: When the Islamic State group lost its Syrian bastion Raqqa last year, Amani hoped to finally uncover what happened to her husband who had vanished in the jihadists' prisons. But with many IS jails destroyed in fighting and no centralized body investigating the issue, she has spent a year desperately searching for Abdullah without answers.

"I thought I'd see him immediately after the city was liberated. I thought he would come back to me," said Amani, a mother of three. "But I haven't heard any news on whether he's alive or dead. No one helped me with this." IS ruled over Raqqa for three years, implementing its interpretation of Islamic law until US-backed forces seized the northern Syrian city on October 17, 2017.

Anyone who violated the jihadists' rulings or was suspected of working against them was locked up in its notorious prisons, including under the football stadium where the group made its ill-fated last stand.

Abdul-Ilah was among them, accused by IS three years ago of plotting with the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces to bring a car bomb into Raqqa. Amani, who denies his involvement, said she has spent a painful year searching for her husband. Some sources told her that he had been killed, while others said he was whisked away with other detainees to Hajin, IS's final holdout in Syria's eastern Deir Ezzor. Amani now works with the Raqqa Civil Council, which has governed the city since the fall of IS, and has demanded a committee be created to properly follow up. Her hair wrapped in a glittery beige scarf, she flipped through papers at her RCC office. "Whether he's alive or dead, I just want to know so I can rest."

Hanan, 22, misses having her older sister Razan around. Her 24-year-old sibling was arrested in an IS raid two years ago, accused with seven friends of being "regime spies" and "apostates". "Until today, we know nothing," Hanan said. — AFP

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International

Ethiopia creates a 'Peace Ministry' to tackle violence in sweeping reshuffle

Women hold half the posts in smaller cabinet

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopia's prime minister created a new Ministry of Peace and handed half the posts in his cabinet to women in a sweeping cabinet reshuffle yesterday as he sought to tackle a wave of ethnic violence. Abiy Ahmed - who has turned the region's politics on its head with a string of reforms since being appointed in April - named new finance and defense ministers in an overhaul that left only four of the appointments unchanged. "The main problem in this country is the lack of peace. This (peace) ministry will be working hard to ensure it prevails," Abiy told lawmakers.

About 2.2 million people out of a population of 100 million have been displaced by violence since last year, much of it between rival ethnic groups. The new peace ministry will be led by former parliament speaker Muferiat Kamil, and her office will oversee the intelligence and security agencies, the government said. Since his appointment, Abiy has made peace with neighbor Eritrea and presided over the partial privatization of key economic sectors such as telecommunications.

The 42-year-old has also extended an olive branch to several rebel groups, promised to follow a

policy of reconciliation and rein in the powerful security agencies. Yet the changes have not stopped ethnically-charged violence, some of which escalated since he was named premier. Former construction minister Aisha Mohammed was named defense minister - the first woman to hold that position in the country. Ahmed Shide, who has previously served as a deputy minister of finance and a government spokesman, replaced Abraham Tekeste as finance minister.

The economy has grown by nearly 10 percent on average for the past decade, official data shows, but

the recent unrest has led to concerns over its long-term stability. Abiy merged ministries to cut the cabinet to 20 from 28 and for the first time handed half of the top jobs to women. He named new ministers of agriculture, culture and tourism, education, labor, mines, planning and development, revenue, science, trade, transport, urban development, and women's affairs - a mixture of new names and reshuffled ministers. He kept Workneh Gebeyehu as foreign minister, Amir Aman as health minister and Seleshi Bekele as water and electricity minister, as well as Berhanu Tsegaye as attorney general. —Reuters

News in brief

30 killed in Central Africa

BANGUI: At least 30 civilians were killed in August and September by armed groups in and around Bria, the diamond hub of the restive Central African Republic, the UN said, adding that some of the killings could constitute crimes against humanity. The militias have been battling one another ever since the 2013 overthrow of long-time leader Francois Bozize, a Christian, by majority-Muslim coalition of militias called the Seleka. Thousands of people have died, 700,000 have been internally displaced and another 570,000 have fled abroad in fighting since then. The other main militia is the Christian-dominated Antibalaka. "These crimes, many of which could constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity can be attributed to the former Seleka coalition ... and the Antibalaka," said the UN statement yesterday. —AFP

Dating app DonaldDaters

WASHINGTON: New dating app DonaldDaters was supposed to help lonely conservatives find each other discreetly. But the app leaked its database of users on launch day, a report said yesterday. With the slogan "Make America Date Again," the app targets the "American-based singles community connecting lovers, friends, and Trump supporters alike," its website says. The app had just over 1,600 users on its first day of operations, technology news site TechCrunch reported. TechCrunch said it learned the figure because a French security researcher found "issues" with the app, making it possible to download the entire user database. The researcher "shared the database with TechCrunch, which included users' names, profile pictures, device type, their private messages-and access tokens, which can be used to take over accounts," it said. —AFP

Israeli teenager fined

WARSAW: A Polish court has fined an Israeli teenager who admitted to urinating on a memorial at the site of the former Nazi death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, a court spokeswoman said yesterday. The 19-year-old man, who was identified only as Zeev K, committed the act in late March and was arrested the same day but released after admitting to it. "The court found the accused guilty as charged and imposed a fine of 5,000 zloty (1,160 euros, \$1,350)," Daria Pichorz from the district court in the southern city of Krakow said. Pichorz said that Zeev K was not present for the verdict by a regional court in the nearby town of Oswiecim where Auschwitz is located, but added that he had agreed to pay the fine. A guide from the museum and several other people witnessed the act. —AFP

Clashes rock Comoros

MORONI: Government forces and opponents of President Azali Assoumani exchanged gunfire on the Comoros island of Anjouan yesterday, said residents of the main town Mutsamudu. Instability has rocked the Indian Ocean archipelago since July when Assoumani won a referendum on constitutional changes that includes ending the traditional rotation of the presidency between the country's three main islands after one term. Assoumani, from Grand Comore island, launched a crackdown on rivals following the poll, which was boycotted by opposition parties and which he won with 92.74 percent support. Gunfire erupted in Mutsamudu on Monday when security forces deployed to dismantle barricades erected by anti-government activists who authorities accused of being armed members of the Juwa opposition party. —AFP

Vietnam busts meth haul

HANOI: Vietnam police discovered a massive haul of suspected methamphetamine worth an estimated \$3 million after pulling over a speeding truck, authorities said yesterday, the latest major bust in a country where synthetic drug use is on the rise. Two men managed to escape the scene but one of them who was arrested later, a Laotian, said he was promised \$10,000 to deliver the drugs to Danang city, a tourist hub on Vietnam's central coast. Police are still searching for the second suspect who is a Vietnamese national, an officer said yesterday. "We found 12 green bags containing small packets of a white substance weighing a total of 309 kilograms," the officer said. Though Vietnam has some of the toughest drug laws in the world, it is a popular transport hub and destination market for narcotics smuggled in from the notorious "Golden Triangle" lawless border zone that straddles Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. —AFP

Terror-hit French town suffers 2nd trauma in floods

PARIS: A French town that was the scene of a jihadist shooting spree earlier this year has been swamped by floods, with one local woman known to have lost her husband in the attack and her parents in the latest disaster, officials said yesterday. The sleepy medieval town of Trebes was targeted by a gunman in March who killed four people during a rampage that saw him take shoppers and staff hostage at a local supermarket. The attack became a focus of global attention when a police officer at the scene, 44-year-old Arnaud Beltrame, agreed to swap himself for a hostage before being killed by the gunman, who claimed allegiance to the Islamic State group.

Seven months later, the Super U supermarket, like much else in Trebes, has been swamped by devastating storms that ripped through the region of southwest France near the city of Carcassonne on Sunday night. At least 11 people have died in the flooding in the Aude area of France and three people are missing after violent rainstorms turned the normally placid local rivers into raging torrents that washed away bridges, roads and homes.

One resident in Trebes has suffered a triple bereavement in the terror attack and flooding, local officials and neighbors said yesterday. Her husband, a 61-year-old retired winemaker named Jean Mazieres, was the first victim of the jihadist after he was shot



TREBES: A man walks past a vehicle swept away on the bank of the Aude river, in Trebes, near Carcassonne, southern France yesterday after the floods. —AFP

dead in a parked car in an apparently random shooting. The woman's elderly parents, both in their 80s, were washed away Monday by waters of the Aude river, which officials say rose eight metres (26 feet) in just

five hours. "It's horrible. The widow has lost both her parents," a neighbour, Valerie Puerta, told AFP. "Every day a nurse would come to check on the couple. They lived by the river in Trebes." —AFP

US defense chief Mattis says Trump is '100%' with him

HO CHI MINH CITY: US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said President Donald Trump has assured him of his full support, one day after Trump appeared to cast doubt over the Pentagon chief's fate. Speaking to reporters as he flew from Washington to Ho Chi Minh City at the start of a diplomatic tour that will take him to Vietnam and Singapore, Mattis said he had spoken directly to Trump by phone late Monday morning Washington time.

"He said, 'I'm 100 percent with you,'" Mattis said. His remark comes after US broadcaster CBS on Sunday aired an interview with Trump, in which he suggested Mattis may be headed out the Pentagon door. "It could be that he is. I think he's sort of a Democrat, if you want to know the truth," Trump said. "But General Mattis is a good guy. We get along very well. He may leave. I mean, at some point, everybody leaves."

Earlier on in the 20-hour flight to Vietnam - before he'd spoken to Trump, who himself was flying on Air Force One to Florida - Mattis was asked what he'd made of Trump's comments. "Nothing at all," Mattis said. "I'm on his team. We have never talked about me leaving. And as you can see right here, we are on our way, we just continue doing our job... no problem." He added that he had never registered with

any political party, and that those in the military are "proudly apolitical".

Cabinet reshuffle

Mattis's fate has been the subject of intense speculation for months. It reached fever pitch in September, when veteran journalist Bob Woodward published a book giving an inside glimpse into a chaotic White House and said Mattis had questioned Trump's judgment, likening his understanding to that of a 10- or 11-year-old child.

Mattis, a buttoned-up former Marine Corps general, is loath to discuss politics or his relationship with Trump, and the president is widely reported to bristle at unfavourable comparisons to Mattis, who has broad bipartisan support. The Woodward book details a number of times Mattis or Trump officials are said to have slow-walked orders from the president, such as in the aftermath of Trump's tweets last year that said all transgender personnel would be banned from the military.

Trump is looking to reshape his cabinet after the mid-term elections, which will determine whether the Democrats can regain some degree of power after a total and humiliating defeat in 2016. The president has already cast off many of his original top-level picks, including former secretary of state Rex Tillerson and Lieutenant General HR McMaster, who had been national security advisor. Last week, his ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, announced her resignation, effective at the end of the year.

Locals fear being cast away on Brexit border 'island'

DRUMMULLY: For people living in and around the Drummully Polyp, a squiggle on the map of the Irish frontier, life without an open border is unimaginable and a reminder of the bad old days of checkpoints. Threaded through emerald farmlands with serpentine disorder, this section of the border all but hems in locals in this part of Ireland surrounded by British-ruled Northern Ireland. "There's no border in our eyes because it's a road that you travel every day," said Bernie McElwain, 40, who has lived her whole life astride this peculiar boundary.

With only a 100-metre (-yard) narrow tract of impassable countryside linking the Polyp to the Republic, it is accessible only by crossing through Northern Ireland. This cartographic curiosity is officially called a "pene-enclave" and explains why the handful of locals-no more than 200 souls-jokingly refer to their home as "the island". Only a line in the tarmac, a change in road markings and a shift in signage from miles to kilometers delineates north from south on the patchwork of roads that criss-cross the border up to four times in a 10-minute journey.

'We don't want it'

When Brexit comes this boundary will be the new frontier between the UK and the EU-and could mean new controls. For locals that would make life here unimaginably difficult-

potentially marooning them in their homes. "Really and truly it's not feasible, and we don't want it," lifelong Polyp resident John Connolly told AFP, overlooking the sprawling borderlands on a blustery afternoon. The bucolic landscape belies growing unrest among locals, aimed at politicians governing Britain's withdrawal process.

Post-Brexit the EU, Britain and Ireland have pledged to preserve "frictionless" movement between the North and the Republic but as the deadline approaches little progress has been made. "They don't really know what the border is," said Connolly, 59. "They just think there's a road and it's a crossing. It's a whole different scenario when you're on the ground."

'Mood is not good'

Nearby, local businessman Eamon Fitzpatrick runs a hardware store and petrol station which thrums with steady traffic from the north and south. The border cuts directly through his forecourt, but for now the only indication is a notice on the till saying both pounds and euros are accepted. In a single day Fitzpatrick can cross the border up to 25 times, often passing in and out of the Polyp, which covers no more than 10 square kilometers.

"We can hop into the car now and we can go north, south, and there is no hassle," he said. McElwain was born in the Republic, raised in the family home in the North, before moving south once more. Her mother still lives in County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland, on the outside cusp of the Polyp, but is considering building a new house in the Republic as she approaches retirement-fearful that a border will separate her from family. "The mood is not good on the ground," McElwain said during a tour of the border crossings. —AFP



HO CHI MINH CITY: US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis (left) and Ho Chi Minh City's communist party chief Nguyen Thien Nhan hold a commemorative plaque during a meeting in Ho Chi Minh City yesterday. —AFP

China strains

Speculation of Mattis's future in the Trump administration loomed over his arrival Tuesday in Ho Chi Minh City for a week-long trip likely to be dominated by escalating tensions between Washington and Beijing over a roster of issues. En route to Vietnam, Mattis blasted China's increasingly muscular military presence in the South China Sea and "predatory economic practices" towards smaller countries in Asia. But after weeks of worsening military-to-military strains with China as a trade war with the US slogs on, Mattis said Washington was not trying to hold back its Pacific rival.

"Obviously, we're not out to contain China," he told reporters. "We'd have taken an altogether different stance had that been considered." The defense chief's Asia trip initially included a leg in Beijing, but that fell through after China declined to make Mattis's counterpart available for him to meet. Mattis's trip to Vietnam is his second to the country after his visit to Hanoi in January. Such visits by US defense secretaries have until now been exceedingly rare, and Mattis's presence strongly signals the importance Washington sees in further enhancing ties with a former foe amid rising tensions with China. —AFP



CLONES: A picture shows a street in the town of Clones in County Monaghan, Ireland - situated close to the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. —AFP

International

Koreas and the UN Command discuss demilitarizing border

North Korea slams US for 'evil' sanctions push

SEOUL: The two Koreas and the US-led United Nations Command held talks yesterday on demilitarizing a section of the heavily fortified border dividing the peninsula, as a diplomatic thaw gathers pace. "The three parties examined the progress in removing landmines at the Joint Security Area (JSA)...and discussed other practical matters regarding steps toward disarming the area," Seoul's defense ministry said in a statement.

The JSA, also known as the truce village of Panmunjom, is the only spot along the tense, 250-kilometre frontier where troops from the two countries stand face to face. It was a designated neutral zone until the "axe murder incident" in 1976, when North Korean soldiers attacked a work party trying to chop down a tree inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), leaving two US army officers dead. South and North Korea—which are technically still at war—agreed to take measures to ease military tensions on their border at a meeting in Pyongyang last month between President Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong Un.

Earlier this month, the two sides began removing landmines at the JSA—which is now often used for talks between the two Koreas—as part of the deal, and are due to withdraw "unnecessary" surveillance equipment once the landmine work is completed. The September summit was the third this year between the leaders as a remarkable rapprochement takes hold on the peninsula. Moon has advocated engagement with the isolated North to nudge it toward denuclearization. During his summit with Kim last month, the two men also agreed to remove some guard posts at the border by the end of the year and to halt military drills in the area from November.

Yesterday's talks were the first meeting of a trilateral

JSA commission made up of the two Koreas and the UN Command, which is included as it retains jurisdiction over the southern half of the JSA. Its chief, US general Vincent Brooks, told reporters in August that as UN commander he supported initiatives that could reduce military tensions. But he added that as commander of the combined US-South Korean forces—one of his other roles—he felt there was a "reasonable degree of risk" in Seoul's plans to dismantle guard posts near the DMZ.

'Evil' sanctions push

Meanwhile, North Korea's state media yesterday slammed the United States for an "evil" attempt to maintain sanctions against Pyongyang, accusing President Donald Trump of blocking progress in inter-Korean relations. The declaration threatens to upset the negotiations between Washington and the nuclear-armed North, in which Trump is expected to hold a second summit soon with Pyongyang's leader Kim Jong Un.

Diplomatic thaw gathering pace

At their first meeting in Singapore in June they signed a vaguely-worded pledge on denuclearization, but little progress has been made since then with the two sides sparring over the meaning of the text. Pyongyang has not made any explicit public promise to give up its existing arsenal but has repeatedly called for UN Security Council sanctions imposed over its weapons programs to be loosened, citing a freeze in its nuclear and missile tests.

For its part Washington has been adamant the measures should be maintained until Pyongyang's complete denuclearization. Washington was playing a "double game", said a lengthy commentary carried by the North's official KCNA news agency, and was "little short of destroying" the rare diplomatic opportunity between the



PANMUNJOM: Photo shows delegations from South Korea (right), North Korea (left) and the UN Command during a meeting of a trilateral JSA commission at the border truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). —AFP

two. "Hostile policy and reciprocity can not go together," it said, and negotiations would not move forward "an inch with an obstacle called sanctions". "The US... is responding to good faith with evil," it added.

'Enraged all Koreans'

KCNA said the article, nearly 1,700 words long and titled "What Do Ill-boding Remarks from US Signify", had been "made public" by Kim Chol Myong. No further details about its origins or the author's affiliation were given, suggesting that "Kim Chol Myong" is likely to be a pseudonym. But the fact that it was carried by Pyongyang's official news agency indicates that it has the authorities' approval. It was published just days after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited

Pyongyang and said he had "productive" talks on denuclearization with the North Korean leader.

After an earlier Pompeo visit in July the North issued an angrily-worded official foreign ministry statement condemning what it called his "unilateral" demands for its disarmament, describing them as "gangster-like". It cast doubt on the prospects for progress - even though it proclaimed "our good faith in President Trump" - and prompted the US leader to cancel a scheduled August trip to Pyongyang by his Secretary of State, before a fresh round of visits and a letter from Kim restarted the process. But yesterday's declaration went further, implicitly criticizing the US leader - who is known to consider personal relationships important. —Agencies

Cambodia construction boom built on 'blood bricks' and slavery

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's construction boom is built in part with "blood bricks" manufactured by modern-day slaves, including children, researchers said yesterday. Poverty fuelled partly by climate change has pushed tens of thousands of Cambodian families into bonded labor, making bricks for buildings in the capital, Phnom Penh, according to a report by researchers from London's Royal Holloway University.

"Tens of thousands of debt-bonded families in Cambodia extract, mould and fire clay in hazardous conditions to meet Phnom Penh's insatiable appetite for bricks," researchers said. "Kiln owners repay farmers' debts and offer a consolidated loan. In return, farmers and their families are compelled to enter into debt bondage with the kiln owner until the loan is repaid." Families surveyed had agreed to pay back loans of between \$100 and \$4,000. The average was \$712 - a fortune in a country where the average annual income is \$1,230, according to the World Bank.

Those pushed into debt bondage often earned far

less than the average, with climate change hitting harvests and pushing farming families into debt. Cambodia is among the most vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of climate change, the report noted. The country is also one of Asia's fastest growing economies, but inequality remains stark - two-bedroom apartments in the capital were up for sale at prices of \$260,000 and up, more than 200 years' wages for the average Cambodian, the report said.

Workers reported "respiratory illnesses driven by the inhalation of kiln fumes and brick dust without protective equipment, and limb amputation resulting from unsafe brick-moulding machinery". When bonded laborers need to seek medical treatment or for other reasons, they must leave without their families to ensure they return, said the report, which was backed by the British government and the Economic and Social Research Council. "Kiln owners showed a preference for families over single workers as they were apparently less likely to run away," according to the researchers.

Cambodia's labor minister released a statement last week warning businesses, including brick kilns, against using child labor and other forms of exploitation such as debt bondage. The International Labor Organization (ILO) said working standards in construction had been neglected as advocacy groups and the government focused on the garment sector, a key driver of the economy. Chuong Por, who coordinates the ILO's construction industry work, said the building boom had not so far attracted much attention. "In the brick kiln sector, actually there is not enough inspection. That's why we cannot find out all the problems in the sector," she said. —Reuters

'Price of democracy': Afghans risk their lives to vote

KABUL: From a university student to a middle-aged housewife, Afghans planning to vote in the October 20 parliamentary election say they are willing to risk their lives for democracy. Nearly nine million people have registered to vote, but far fewer are expected to turn out on polling day due to threats of violence and expectations for massive fraud. Six people across the war-torn country explain why their vote matters.

Omaid, the artist

Out with the old and in with the new is Omaid Sharifi's hope for the legislative election. The 32-year-old artist, who is voting for the first time, wants to see a new generation of politicians take their seats in the next parliament. Sharifi, co-founder of Kabul-based street art collective ArtLords, was inspired to vote by the large cohort of young, educated candidates among the more than 2,500 contesting the ballot. "I am concerned (about security) but I think this is the price of democracy we have to pay," he said.

Fatima, the housewife

First-time voter Fatima Sadeqi wants to stop criminals, thieves and corrupt people from entering the next parliament. The 55-year-old housewife and her eight family members plan to support the same candidate in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. "We are tired of poverty and insecurity," she said. "I hope the new parliament is a better place, full of good people."

Shirin, the potter

Shirin Agha wants his 10 children to grow up in a peaceful Afghanistan and he is willing to die to help make that happen. The 45-year-old potter in the eastern city of Jalalabad is a first-time voter and plans to back "a good Muslim and an honest person". "I want the new parliament to bring fundamental changes to the economy, education and security so that our children can live in peace," Agha said. "If my vote can bring these changes I will take any risk. I will either die or vote."

Zahra, University student

A sense of "duty and responsibility" is pushing English literature student Zahra Faramarz to vote-but she admits being "anxious" about security. Faramarz's polling station is located in a heavily Shiite neighborhood of Kabul

where the Islamic State group has carried out devastating attacks in recent months. But the 21-year-old said it was important to vote to ensure her community has a voice in the lower house. "If we don't, someone else will select the candidates... that is not good for us," she said.

Ghulam, the public servant

After disappointing results in the previous two elections, Ghulam Farooq Adil hopes it will be third time lucky on October 20. The 29-year-old public servant from the western city of Herat plans to vote for an "honest" candidate who can help bring peace to Afghanistan. "I want the new parliament to come up with a solid plan to end the war," Adil said. "I need to see changes, at least for the future of my son."

Abdul, the retiree

Abdul Karim believes voting is a religious obligation for Muslim men and women. "They must vote," said the 85-year-old retiree in Kabul, who is voting for only the second time in his life. But in return, the next parliament should "serve our nation, serve our land and provide" job opportunities for the poor, he said. "We vote for Afghanistan and we expect our incoming MPs to make solid decisions for our nation's well-being." —AFP

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Riyadh unlikely to use 'oil weapon'

By John Kemp

Saudi Arabia is unlikely to employ its so-called "oil weapon" in the diplomatic crisis over the disappearance of a journalist after visiting the country's consulate in Istanbul. Experience from the last time Saudi Arabia tried to use oil sales as a diplomatic instrument in 1973/74 shows such action does not work and the kingdom itself would be the biggest victim. Despite some of the impassioned rhetoric in Saudi media, self-interest makes it improbable the government will retaliate by reducing oil sales or trying to drive up prices. That has not stopped some veiled threats to weaponize oil production and prices, but they should be interpreted as an urgent plea for support and understanding rather than a serious threat.

"If US sanctions are imposed on Saudi Arabia, we will be facing an economic disaster that would rock the entire world," according to one heated editorial ("US sanctions would mean Washington is stabbing itself", Al Arabiya, Oct 14). "Riyadh is the capital of (global) oil and touching this would affect oil production before any other vital commodity," the editorial warned. If the price of oil reaching \$80 a barrel angered US President Donald Trump, "no one should rule out the price jumping to \$100, or \$200, or even double that figure", the author said bluntly.

The government's official response has been more circumspect but it nonetheless warned that it would respond to any action with even greater retaliation and pointed to the kingdom's "influential and vital role in the global economy".

Oil embargo

In Oct 1973, Saudi Arabia and the other Arab oil producers announced that they would start cutting production by 5 percent per month until Israeli forces evacuated from occupied Arab territories. In addition, Saudi Arabia and the other Arab producers announced an embargo on oil sales to the United States and a number of other countries ("OPEC: 25 years of prices and politics", Skeet, 1988). Global oil supplies had already become tight even before the decisions to cut production and embargo the United States, mostly as a result of low real prices during the 1950 and 1960s.

Spare production capacity in the United States, which had been as much as 4 million barrels per day in 1968, had been used up by March 1972. In this context, the production cuts and embargo made an already tight market worse, sent oil prices surging, and produced a huge, short-term revenue windfall for Saudi Arabia and other oil producers. But the policy was a failure in its own terms, was reversed a few months later, and caused immense long-term damage to Saudi Arabia and OPEC that took decades to reverse.

Policy failure

At the most basic level, the policy failed to achieve its stated objective of changing US support for Israel or forcing Israel to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories. More seriously for Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producers, the surge in prices, which rose again after the Iranian revolution in 1979, resulted in permanent demand destruction and encouragement of alternative suppliers. Rising prices helped spur the development of new supplies in Alaska, the North Sea, the Soviet Union and China, which came onstream and flooded the oil market in the 1980s.

Rising prices also encouraged a wholesale switch away from the use of crude oil and heavy fuel oil in residential and commercial heating boilers as well as in power generation. Homes and offices in the United States and many other advanced economies switched from heavy fuel oil to cheaper and more reliable heating using natural gas or electricity generated from coal or nuclear. Crude oil and fuel oil were replaced by a new generation of coal-fired power plants in the United States in the late 1970s and the 1980s (ironically the same coal plants that are now being closed and replaced by natural gas).

The oil shock also provided the impetus to develop a new generation of nuclear power plants in the United States, France, Japan, Britain and other countries to reduce the reliance on imported crude. Cheap oil had been on the way to becoming the dominant fuel for power generation in the 1950s and 1960s, putting the coal industry under pressure. By the late 1980s, however, expensive and unreliable oil had been largely pushed out of the power sector by cheaper and more secure coal, gas and nuclear, a permanent loss of markets from which it has never recovered.

Policymakers in the United States, Europe and Japan also enacted new fuel-economy standards for motor vehicles to reduce reliance on imports for the transport sector, taking another enduring bite out of demand. In the long term, the oil embargo created the conditions for the oil price slump that hit Saudi Arabia and other producers in the 1980s and 1990s, and from which they did not recover until the 2000s.

The oil weapon does not work, which is why Saudi Arabia is unlikely to employ it in the dispute over the disappearance of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi. In the short term, Saudi Arabia might gain more revenue from a rise in prices than it lost from a reduction in sales. But rising prices would hit the global economy and consumption hard and threaten a renewed oil market slump within a year. — Reuters



More loans on paper but not in reality

Beijing is keen to show results after four rounds of policy easing, so China's big banks are playing along, highlighting their efforts to boost lending to cash-starved small firms, offering collateral waivers and setting loan targets. But in reality, banks' loan eligibility requirements for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) remain stringent, making it too difficult or too expensive for them to borrow, according to bankers and company executives.

That has forced some small firms, including exporters, to simply give up on borrowing and put investment plans on hold. The health of millions of small firms, most privately owned, is crucial to China's efforts to ward off a sharp slowdown and mass job losses while fighting a bitter trade war with the United States. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) has cut the amount of cash commercial lenders must hold as reserves four times since January. The latest reduction in the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) effective Oct. 15 added more than \$100 billion to the financial system, the biggest net injection this year.

To guide lending to small firms, authorities have issued directives to banks, arranged meetings between executives of banks and private firms, and doled out tax breaks for banks' "micro-loans". Big banks are keen to show they are heeding the call. Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), the country's biggest state-controlled lender, says it has opened 230 centres nationwide dedicated to serving small business borrowers. Interest rates on ICBC's loans to small business averaged 4.64 percent in August, it said. That is below the average corporate lending rate of 5.97 percent in the second quarter.

China's monetary policy transmission mechanism is working, as corporate lending rates have been falling month-on-month since June, PBOC Governor Yi Gang was quoted by Chinese financial magazine Caixin as saying in an interview published on Saturday. Agricultural Bank of China (AgBank), the country's third-largest bank, has put a cap on lending rates at 7.5 percent above the benchmark lending rate in Wenzhou, according to a local bank official. AgBank has also set a target on loan issuance to small firms in Wenzhou, while some companies do not need to offer collateral if they have sound tax records, the official

said. Wenzhou, a bustling port city in Zhejiang province, is known for its entrepreneurs. Other provinces with a high concentration of privately owned small companies include Guangdong, Jiangsu and Fujian, all on the coast. Yet, many small firms say financing conditions remain tight, and official data showed 5.04 million businesses went bust in the first half this year. "There are many ways a bank can make it look as though it's lending to SMEs to meet targets, like lending to multiple smaller subsidiaries with a big parent

of them still cannot meet our requirements," said the AgBank official. The weakening in domestic demand and increasingly uncertain export outlook have also dented corporate appetite for funds.

A lamp factory owner in Guangdong surnamed Cai told Reuters he wouldn't consider taking on more debt given the slowdown in the economy, even with banks offering much lower rates. "Banks want us to borrow more when they are flush with money, but they would recall the loans in advance in less than a year," said Cai. "What use is that to business owners? No industry can turn in profits in one year. Debt is a scourge."

The PBOC in August urged lenders not to recall loans blindly, especially to small firms facing operational difficulties. SMEs are viewed as risky by lenders as they have limited quality collateral or government backing in case of default. Cash-flows are often not sufficiently stable to cover interest payments. "In the past, for a big bank like China Construction Bank and ICBC, it was hard enough to provide 10 or 20 billion-yuan loans to small businesses," CCB Chairman Tian Guoli said at an industry event in Beijing last week. "That came at a great cost, with non-performing loan ratios of 5-6 percent, or 7-8 percent, or even higher. So banks have no resources or motivation to do so," Tian said, though CCB will try.

Lost in transmission

company, or lending to the supplier of a material to a big company," said a senior banker.

Not enough, not wanted

Indeed, official data shows new bank loans have surged. Total new loans in the first eight months jumped nearly 19 percent from a year earlier to 11.76 trillion yuan, the latest central bank data showed. That is well on track to set a new full-year record, eclipsing last year's 13.53 trillion yuan. But the increased lending barely compensates for shrinking "shadow" loans, one of the major targets of regulators as they seek to curb systemic financial risks. Off-balance sheet loans used to be a major source of funding for small firms traditionally shunned by the big state banks.

Annual growth in outstanding total social financing (TSF), a broad measure of credit which includes off-balance sheet forms of financing, slowed to 10.1 percent in August, a record low. "We have indeed issued much more loans now (to small companies), but in reality, the majority

of them still cannot meet our requirements," said the AgBank official. The weakening in domestic demand and increasingly uncertain export outlook have also dented corporate appetite for funds. "Limits of effectiveness The outlook for the world's second-biggest economy has been further threatened by the escalating Sino-US trade war. "Most Chinese SMEs are export-oriented and their exports will be affected by the China-US trade frictions," said Cao Yuanzheng, chief economist at Bank of China in Beijing. "That means they are unlikely to invest, and therefore unlikely to borrow funds." Some economists say the PBOC's RRR cuts may have reached the limits of their effectiveness, and big tax cuts may be more effective at boosting growth. Analysts say there is ample scope as tax revenue growth remains high - up 13.4 percent in the first eight months of 2018, according to data from the finance ministry. "Lowering the RRR is good, but it doesn't cure all ills," Financial News, a newspaper run by the PBOC, said in a recent editorial. — Reuters

Bhutan's not so happy evicted minority, the Lhotshampa

The Himalayan nation of Bhutan, often described as a "Shangri-La" where happiness is equated to wealth, is holding elections this week. But the Lhotshampa people, brutally driven out of the small kingdom in the 1990s, won't be voting. The Nepali-speaking Lhotshampa were branded as immigrants and stripped of citizenship rights when the then-king introduced a "One Nation, One People" policy in 1985. The edict made following the customs of the Buddhist majority mandatory, including wearing their traditional dress, and speaking Nepali was banned.

Those who resisted were labeled "anti-nationals", arrested and subjected to brutal treatment including rape and torture, according to Amnesty International. The security forces made detainees sign declarations saying they would leave Bhutan voluntarily as a condition of their release. Some 100,000 - one sixth of Bhutan's population - fled, ending up in refugee camps in eastern Nepal.

One man who left Bhutan is Bhumpa Rai, who was serving as a royal doctor when the king's edict was promulgated. "They humiliated us... they said that we are not Bhutanese and chased me and my people from the country," Rai told AFP. The king offered him protection from the Draconian rules, introduced under the pretext of promoting "national harmony". But

the doctor decided to join his fellow Lhotshampa and left Bhutan, becoming a refugee in Nepal. "They treated people of Nepali origin like enemies. I cannot respect them anymore, though I admit that I used to clean their wounds. I was their doctor," the 68-year-old said.

Rai is one of just 7,000 people who remain in the camps in Nepal. The majority have been resettled by the United Nations in third countries including the United States, Australia and Norway. But the UN program ended in late 2016 with those remaining refusing resettlement because they say it absolves the Bhutanese authorities of what they did to the Lhotshampa.

'Not happy'

Switzerland-sized Bhutan - sandwiched between regional giants China and India - has long resisted outside influences, with televisions only allowed in 1999. Its fight against Westernisation is often seen as a source of its mystic draw, along with its pursuit of "gross national happiness" - made official policy in 1998 - over economic gains. It only swapped absolute monarchy for constitutional monarchy in 2008 and the current elections, due to wrap up on Thursday, are the country's third.

Bhutan still describes the Lhotshampa as immigrants, justifying its nationalistic laws as essential for cultural identity and political stability, according to Freedom House, a think tank. The refugees in Nepal do not expect the elections to bring any change. "The election results in Bhutan will reflect what the monarchy wants. Its decision won't come in our favor," said 80-year-old Durga Prasad Sharma - an outspoken proponent that would be unheard of inside Bhutan where self-censorship is rife and the monarchy still revered. Sharma fled Bhutan in 1994 with a



This picture taken on Aug 10, 2018 shows members of a Bhutanese refugees family walking in the Beldangi refugee camp in Damak, some 300 km southeast of Kathmandu. — AFP

bounty on his head after he joined a political party demanding rights for the Lhotshampa. Such political parties are now banned under the constitution, which states that all parties have to promote national unity and are barred from using ethnicity or religion to attract voters. Parties also have to field candidates in all 47 constituencies. The rules have created a monolithic political environment leaving little room for minority rights, effectively disenfranchising the Lhotshampa who remain in Bhutan from the electoral process.

It is unclear how many of the community are still in Bhutan: A 2017 census did not include questions about ethnicity, language or religion, which would have given an indication of how many people identify as

part of Nepali-speaking, mostly Hindu minority. The government has prevented human rights groups established by Nepali-speakers from operating, categorizing them as political organizations that do not promote national unity, according to the US State Department.

In the lead up to the 2008 and 2013 polls there were reports of small protests by Nepali-speakers unable to vote, and during the 2013 elections international monitors also documented Nepali-speakers being turned away from polling centers. "We are also Bhutanese and we are not happy," said 54-year-old Rajman Gurung. "Lhotshampas in Bhutan are unhappy. We will be happy only if we are repatriated to our country and given equal status." — AFP

Business

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018

12 Strong oil prices boost Kuwait economy; CB maintains rate



13 China's cooling factory-gate inflation signals waning demand



14 IndiGo begins new daily flights to Abu Dhabi International Airport



DUBAI: Eaman Al-Roudhan with Chung Lyung Lee, Hamad Al-Marzouq, Mohammed Gharaibeh, and Al-Babtain at Zain's booth in GITEX.

Zain, Al-Babtain and Samsung ink MOU on day 3 of GITEX

Strategic partnership to fast-track enterprise digital transformation with IoT

DUBAI/KUWAIT: Zain Kuwait, the leading digital service provider in the country, announces a strategic partnership with Samsung and Al-Babtain Turnkey Solutions to employ Internet of Things (IoT) solutions to accelerate the nation's digital transformation. This collaboration will facilitate the development of smart education, smart health, smart security and smart mobility solutions in line with Kuwait National Development Plan's smart government goals.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed during GITEX Technology Week 2018, in which Zain Kuwait participated showcasing its B2B and Smart City offerings. Under the terms of the MOU, Samsung, as a global leader in innovation, will support Zain Kuwait in driving transformative and beneficial IoT innovation to create exciting opportunities for consumers and enterprises alike. Present at the signing ceremony were Eaman Al-Roudhan, Chief Executive Officer of Zain Kuwait, Hamad Al-Marzouq, Chief Enterprise Business Officer of Zain Kuwait, Chung Lyung Lee, President at Samsung Gulf Electronics, Mohammed Gharaibeh, Samsung Gulf Electronics Regional Director, Enterprise Business Group, and Mohammad AbdulAziz Al-Babtain, Vice President of Al-Babtain Turnkey Solutions.

Eaman Al-Roudhan, Chief Executive Officer of Zain Kuwait, said: "We are pleased to expand our partnership ecosystem with global technology companies like Samsung to enhance our IoT capabilities. We have started launching our first waves

of digital products within our Zain Life brand that we launched in April this year to promote the digital lifestyle of our consumers. We have also set the foundation to empower the achievement of our country's vision (New Kuwait 2035), and this MoU will definitely be used to support it".

Hamad Al-Marzouq, Chief Enterprise Business Officer of Zain Kuwait, said: "IoT is also taking a leading role in today's digital revolution with a wide variety of business applications around the world. Through this MoU with Samsung to exchange global best practices in IoT and promote a 360-degree view of technologies, we will make our services more valuable and efficient enabling us to further drive Kuwait's digital transformation."

Chung Lyung Lee, President at Samsung Gulf Electronics, said: "Some of the most exciting IoT innovations in the region have occurred within the business sector, where companies have been able to streamline business processes, increase productivity, and develop cutting-edge products and services. We have embarked on a digital journey with Zain Kuwait to transform its IoT initiatives - in line with its strategic road map to facilitate Kuwait Vision 2035."

Mohammed Gharaibeh, Samsung Gulf Electronics Regional Director, Enterprise Business Group, said: "Enterprise IoT is poised for strong growth because of its ability to improve the customer experience, boost productivity, and support the development of innova-



DUBAI: Eaman Al-Roudhan (center) with Chung Lyung Lee (left) and Mohammad Al-Babtain during the signing of MoU.

tive products. Our collaboration with Zain Kuwait is aimed at developing IoT-enabled services that will potentially transform its business model and help it support Kuwait's innovation agenda."

Mohammad AbdulAziz Al-Babtain, Vice President of Al-Babtain Turnkey Solutions said: "With the potential to address future challenges, there is great promise in

the role of digital. Zain Kuwait's collaboration with Samsung to use IoT to facilitate enterprise digital transformation shows its commitment towards investing in pioneering solutions to not only enhance its business operations and support Kuwait's innovation agenda, but also ensure value and convenience for consumers in Kuwait."

Business

NBK Economic Report

Strong oil prices boost Kuwait economy; CB maintains rate

Real estate sales drop 15% y/y in August

KUWAIT: Domestic economic news was mixed through September. Non-oil growth came in stronger than expected in 1H18, while elevated oil production and oil prices at four-year highs implied a major boost for the fiscal position. However, consumer spending growth slowed and real estate sales were weak (albeit affected by seasonal factors) – both are traditional pillars of the non-oil economy. In order to support the growth outlook, the Central Bank of Kuwait held off on raising its key lending rate following the latest hike by the US Federal Reserve. There was also a milestone for local capital markets with Kuwaiti stocks upgraded to Emerging Market status by FTSE, triggering sharply higher trading activity and record foreign buying, but making little impact on equity prices amid profit-taking.

Non-oil growth strong

According to preliminary official data, real GDP expanded by 0.7 percent y/y in the 1H2018, improving on its Q1 performance on the back of pick-up in non-oil activity, which offset lower oil-related output. Non-oil GDP was up 4.9 percent y/y in the first half of the year, driven by healthy performances from the telecom, manufacturing, and utilities sectors. Meanwhile, a dip in refining activities (part of the oil sector) led to a decline in oil output by 2.2 percent in 1H18, while crude oil and gas output remained relatively flat in adherence to the OPEC imposed limit; the latter has since been relaxed in an effort to substitute lost supply from Iran and Venezuela.

Although the 1H18 non-oil data is stronger than we had expected, the numbers can be volatile and we continue to project an expansion of 2.8 percent in non-oil activity and of 2.5 percent in oil output in 2018 overall, generating an increase in total GDP of 2.6 percent.

After rallying in August, crude oil prices saw another big rise in September, with Kuwait Export Crude ending the month up 6 percent at \$80/bbl and then reaching \$83 in early October. There are continued concerns over the supply outlook ahead of the re-imposition of US energy sanctions on Iran in November. Indeed there is some market skepticism about the ability of key members of the OPEC+ group including Saudi Arabia to increase their own output to compensate for Iranian losses, despite assertions to the contrary, with production in August having risen by less than half of the 1 million b/d targeted back in June. This has fed speculation that output may already be running into capacity constraints, adding support to prices. With the price of KEC having averaged \$70/bbl year-to-date, the risks to our year average forecast of \$69 are clearly to the upside.

Oil production

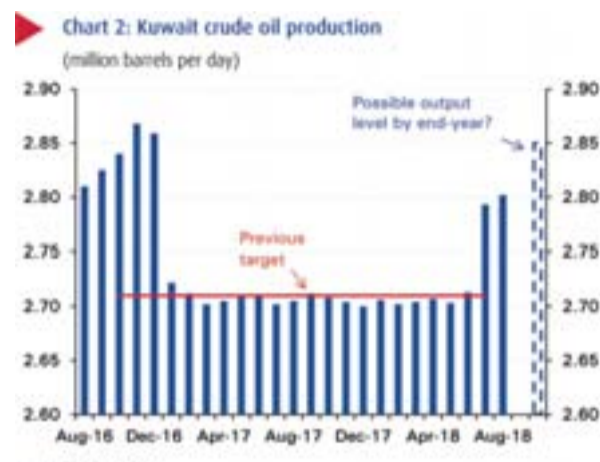
Kuwait has done its part to boost OPEC supplies by lifting its own crude production to 2.80 million b/d in August, up fractionally from July but a more substantial 100,000 b/d (3.7 percent) since May. Our projection remains that output could reach 2.85 million b/d over coming months and for the year overall this would translate into growth of around 2.5 percent. Next year, we project output to be more or less flat at those levels, but Kuwait's production capabilities could rise if, as has recently been reported, output from the Neutral Zone shared with Saudi Arabia is restarted, with Kuwait's share up to 250,000 b/d once fully restored.

Real estate sales

Real estate sales in August stood at KD 132 million,



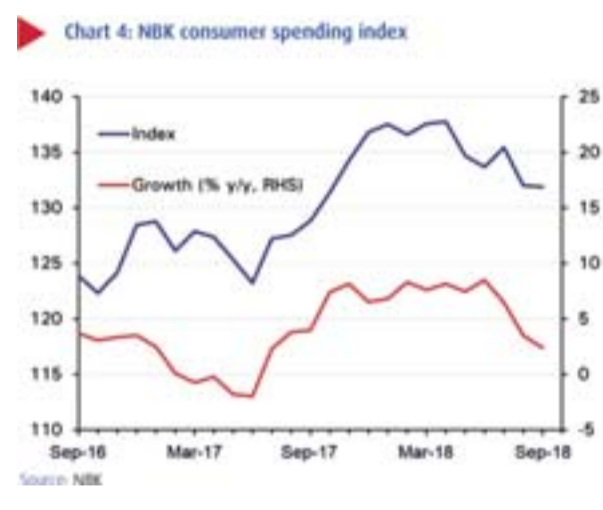
Source: CB / NBK



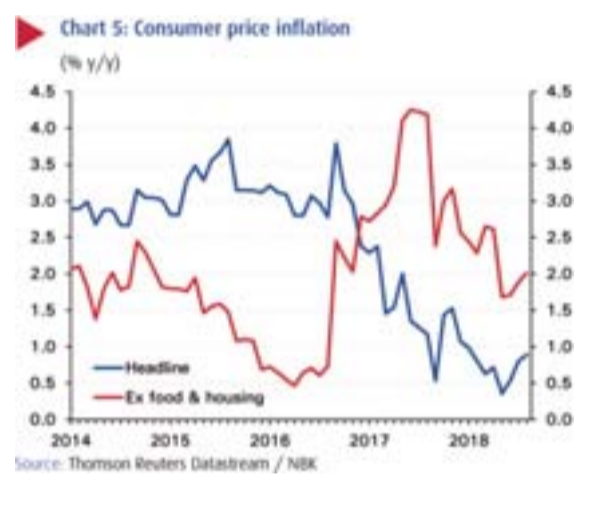
Source: OPEC / NBK



Source: Ministry of Justice



Source: NBK



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream / NBK



Source: Boursa Kuwait

down 15 percent y/y, the lowest value recorded since September 2016. Soft sales were the result of a sharp month-on-month drop in both transaction numbers and average transaction size across all three sectors - residential, investment and commercial. The decline may have been due to a combination of factors, the clearest being that August is typically a slow summer month, but also compounded by the week-long Eid Al-Adha holiday as well as a likely correction after very high sales in July. As for prices, August saw a continuation of the negative trend observed in prior months. The exception was apartment prices, which increased 8.1 percent y/y after declining for most of the year. However, this was mainly due to a base effect following a dip in apartment prices a year prior, and the market remains burdened with declining rents and oversupply.

Consumer spending

The NBK consumer spending index held relatively steady in September, but growth eased for a third consecutive month to 2.4 percent y/y. Weaker spending on non-durables weighed on overall expenditures, but there was a healthy bump in spending on autos and services. Soft wage growth, easing household borrowing and a decline in the number of expatriate dependents may be affecting spending growth. Nonetheless, with confidence at four-year highs, jobs growth improving and higher oil prices supporting the outlook, we expect consumer spending to recover and remain supportive of the broader economic climate over the coming months.

Inflation rose slightly to 0.9 percent in August from 0.8 percent in July, driven mainly by an easing pace of deflation in the clothing and footwear segment and a

moderate rise in food prices. These two components together constitute 25 percent of the CPI basket. Food prices rose 1.4 percent y/y having been negative earlier in the year, while the slower pace of decline in clothing prices is likely due to the winding down of summer sales and promotions. Housing rent inflation remained steady at -0.9 percent y/y, while inflation excluding food and housing was also unchanged at 1.9 percent y/y.

Inflation overall seems to be on track to achieve our forecast of 0.8 percent, on average, in 2018. However, some modest downside risk remains including from a soft housing sector, as apartment vacancies remain relatively high and rents continue to decline.

CA surplus hits four-year high

Kuwait's current account registered a surplus of KD 4.7 billion (23 percent of GDP) in the first half of 2018, its best performance in four years, thanks to higher energy prices (the average price of Kuwait Export Crude was up 36 percent y/y in 1H18), which boosted the value of both crude and petrochemical exports. Imported goods were up 8 percent y/y over the same period, helped by increased domestic demand and high levels of consumer confidence. On the services end, travel-related outflows dominated the bill, as usual, and recorded their strongest six-month gain on record.

Stock market buoyant

The Boursa Kuwait All Share index ended September at 5128 points, slightly down (-0.2 percent) from August, but still marginally outperforming the MSCI GCC index (-0.5 percent m/m). This was despite the relatively strong trading value of KD 557

million observed during the month, much higher than the monthly average observed year-to-date. The leading sector in September was the basic materials sector, which saw a rise of 3.8 percent from August, followed by insurance and banking which rose 2.2 percent and 1.8 percent m/m respectively. The worst performers were the real estate and consumer services sectors, which fell by 9.7 percent and 6.5 percent m/m respectively.

Strong activity levels were supported by a record level of foreign investment, at a net value of KD 59 million, which took aggregate foreign investment this year to KD 160 million (+60 percent m/m). These inflows were related to the FTSE's inclusion of Boursa Kuwait in its Emerging Market index, with the first tranche taking place on September 24th and the second due late December. Although net foreign investment was positive, a higher than average value of foreign selling took place in September, while local and GCC investors continued to be net sellers. Additional risk remains in the form of the broader sell-off in emerging markets, though the impact on the Gulf region so far appears modest.

However, overall sentiment remains positive with oil prices rising and an improving macroeconomic backdrop, as well as the possible decision by MSCI to reclassify the Kuwaiti market from frontier to emerging market status in the second half of 2019. If it materializes, the MSCI upgrade could eventually generate about \$1.2 billion (KD 364 million) in passive inflows. Further, market performance in general remains fairly strong, with the All Share index up by 6.2 percent year-to-date and market capitalization remaining steady at just under KD 30 billion.

UK jobless rate holds at 43-year low

LONDON: Britain's unemployment rate remained at 4.0 percent in the three months to August, the lowest point since 1975, official data showed yesterday.

The jobless rate—the proportion of the workforce that is unemployed—stood at the same level in the three months to July, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

The ONS also reported a pick-up in wages growth in upbeat economic data published six months before Britain is due to leave the European Union. Average

earnings excluding bonuses grew 3.1 percent in the three months to August compared with a year earlier.

That was the best level since January 2009 when the UK economy was emerging from the wreckage of the global financial crisis. Including bonuses, wages increased by 2.7 percent in the year to August.

Philip Smeaton, chief investment officer at Sanlam, argued that employers were having to increase salaries to compete and recruit staff.

“Wages keep on going from strength to strength, as competition for workers is finally feeding through to pay,” said Smeaton. “The Bank of England will be keeping a watchful eye on any upwards pressure this puts on inflation. “However, until the outcome of Brexit becomes clearer, (interest) rates are likely to be placed on hold.” —AFP

TRT World now live on Turkish Airlines

KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines now also extend live TRT World broadcast across its wide-body aircrafts for its passengers to enjoy programming from Turkey's first English broadcaster.

Commenting on the initiative Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee, M. Ilker Ayçi said: “As the national flagship airline of Turkey, where the East and West meet, we offer Turkish hospitality to our guests on board. Today we are proud to offer TRT World's objective perspective and alternative approach to news making to 122 countries we fly.”

Ibrahim Eren, Director General and Chairman of TRT, said: “It is important to stay informed and up-to-date on world events. Passengers tune in to different outlets for news and it is vital to have variety in your sources to have a more well-rounded view of current events. We are grateful to Turkish Airlines for delivering our content in-flight and making this challenge a lot easier during flight. Being accessible also onboard is a major achievement to fulfill our promise to offer our service everywhere, wherever



platform our audience prefer to receive it.”

TRT World, international news platform launched in 2015 and headquartered in Istanbul, offers an alternative viewpoint on global and domestic events, challenging perceived narratives and providing a much needed new perspective on news.

Turkish Airlines' in-flight entertainment system allows passengers to watch eight channels on board, including TRT World, that broadcast live over satellite.

Mohainudeen wins KD 4,000 in Burgan Bank's Value Account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank yesterday announced Sayed Hussain Khaja Mohainudeen as the winner of the Value Account KD 4,000 draw. The winner expressed his excitement of winning the cash prize of KD 4,000.

Dedicated to offer the best in-class services, Burgan Bank's Value Account presents customers with exceptional features which were specifically designed to suit the needs of expatriates living in Kuwait. Account holders will be able to enjoy matchless benefits that include

receiving a free credit card for one year, application for a loan, in addition to a chance to enter the quarterly draw to win KD 4,000 as well as other discounts from selected merchant stores.

Burgan Bank will continue presenting exclusive services and draws with an aim of exceeding customers' expectations while offering them chances to win valuable cash prizes all year round. Opening a Value account is simple, interested Individuals with salaries starting from KD 150 and above are eligible to open a Value Account.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence, and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

EXCHANGE RATES

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL			
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	
Europe			
British Pound	0.392021	0.405021	
Czech Korune	0.005580	0.014880	
Danish Krone	0.042997	0.047997	
Euro	0.343654	0.357354	
Georgian Lari	0.112695	0.112695	
Hungarian 0.000997	0.001187		
Norwegian Krone	0.033164	0.038364	
Romanian Leu	0.058333	0.075183	
Russian ruble	0.004626	0.004626	
Slovakia	0.009074	0.019074	
Swedish Krona	0.029831	0.034831	
Swiss Franc	0.300274	0.311274	
Australasia			
Australian Dollar	0.207903	0.219903	
New Zealand Dollar	0.192988	0.202488	
America			
Canadian Dollar	0.228282	0.237282	
US Dollars	0.299750	0.305050	
US Dollars Mint	0.300350	0.305050	
Asia			
Bangladesh Taka	0.002970	0.003771	
Chinese Yuan	0.042435	0.045935	
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036685	0.039435	
Indian Rupee	0.003576	0.004345	
Indonesia			
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000016	0.000022	
Japanese Yen	0.002623	0.002803	
Korean Won	0.000259	0.000274	
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069491	0.075491	
Nepalese Rupee	0.002627	0.002967	
Pakistan Rupee	0.001776	0.002546	
Philippine Peso	0.005454	0.005754	
Singapore Dollar	0.215001	0.225001	
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001469	0.002049	
Taiwan	0.009716	0.009896	
Thai Baht	0.008945	0.009495	
Vietnamese Dong	0.000013	0.000013	
Arab			
Bahraini Dinar	0.791398	0.808798	
Egyptian Pound	0.014274	0.019992	
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085	
Iraqi Dinar	0.000212	0.000272	
Jordanian Dinar	0.424260	0.433260	
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000	
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250	
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022449	0.046449	
Omani Riyal	0.782903	0.788583	
Qatar Riyal	0.079170	0.084110	
Saudi Riyal	0.079940	0.081240	
Syrian Pound	0.001288	0.001508	
Tunisian Dinar	0.103851	0.111851	
Turkish Lira	0.046560	0.058060	
UAE Dirhams	0.081302	0.083002	
Yemeni Riyal	0.000988	0.001068	

Business

China's factory-gate inflation cools, signals waning demand

Domestic demand drops amid raging trade war

BEIJING: China's factory-gate inflation cooled for a third straight month in September amid ebbing domestic demand, pointing to more pressure on the world's second biggest economy as it remains locked in an intensifying trade war with the United States.

Consumer inflation, on the other hand, picked up slightly in September from the previous month, led mainly by higher food prices, official data showed yesterday. Overall, pricing pressures were contained, giving authorities the flexibility to ease monetary policy to shore up slowing growth. Over the weekend, central bank governor Yi Gang said he sees plenty of room for adjustment in interest rates and banks' reserve requirement ratio due to significant downside risks from the Sino-US trade row.

Indeed, economic activity has been slackening in the past few months, prompting the People's Bank of China (PBOC) to announce another cut to banks' reserve requirement ratio (RRR) just over a week ago - the fourth reduction this year.

For this year, Yi said that CPI will likely come in about 2 percent and expects PPI between 3-4 percent. The producer price index (PPI), a gauge of industrial profitability, rose 3.6 percent in September from a year earlier, compared with a 4.1 percent increase in August, according to data released by the National Statistics Bureau yesterday. On a monthly basis, the PPI picked up to 0.6 percent from 0.4 percent in August. Julian Evans-Pritchard, senior China economist at Capital Economics, noted that the small monthly rise in producer inflation mainly reflected an 'unsustainable' increase in global oil price.

"The bigger picture is that broader factory gate price pressures still appear to be cooling alongside weaker economic activity," he said in a client note following the data release.

Analysts polled by Reuters had expected September producer inflation would cool to 3.5 percent as both external and domestic demand weakened.

Price inflation in non-metallic mineral resources, metal smelting, chemicals and coal mining all slowed in September from previous month, while extraction in oil and natural gas extended its gains.

Raw materials prices rose 7.3 percent in September from a year earlier, down from a 7.8 percent increase in August, according to the statistics bureau.

Profit growth at China's industrial firms slowed to a five-month low in August, fanning concerns about faltering domestic demand. The trade row with Washington appears to be already impacting industries. Growth in China's factory sector in September stalled after 15 months of expansion, with export orders falling the most in more than two years, a private business survey showed. An official survey also confirmed a further manufacturing weakening.

CPI pickup

The consumer price index (CPI) rose 2.5 percent from a year earlier, in line with expectations of 2.5 percent and accelerating from August's 2.3 percent gain. It still remained comfortably below China's inflation goal of 3 percent for 2018, same as last year.

The food price index increased 3.6 percent in September, up sharply from the 1.7 percent annual gain in September, due to extreme weather conditions such as seasonal typhoons, heavy rains and hailstorms, according to the NBS.

Despite the pickup in the headline number, the core consumer price index, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, rose 1.7 percent year-on-year, cooling from 2.0 percent's gain in August.

Gains in non-food prices also slowed to 2.2 percent from August's 2.5 percent. China's economic growth cooled slightly to 6.7 percent in the second quarter, though worries about a sharper slowdown in coming quarters have increased in recent months amid the rocky trade relations with the United States.

The two countries have already slapped tit-for-tat



BEIJING: A vendor (left) sells vegetables to a customer at a market in Beijing yesterday. China's consumer inflation accelerated for a fourth straight month in September with big jumps in food prices, while factory gate inflation slowed, official data showed. —AFP

tariffs on each other's goods, and US President Donald Trump has warned that he was ready to slap tariffs on virtually all Chinese imports into the United States. If China goes ahead with a 15 percent tariff on \$60 billion US goods, it could lead to a one-time impact of a 0.2-0.3 percentage point gain on China's consumer inflation, according to estimates from Morgan Stanley.

Yet, few expect the overall inflation picture to prevent further policy support for the economy.

"The recent rise in CPI is due to temporary disruptions to food supply and is unlikely to prevent the People's Bank from loosening monetary policy further in the coming months in a bid to shore up economic growth," said Evans-Pritchard. —Reuters

Daimler AG chooses Al Mulla Group as new Mercedes-Benz distributor in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Daimler AG, the owner of the Mercedes-Benz brand, has announced Al Mulla Group as its future distributor in Kuwait, operating under the name 'Al Mulla Automobiles Company for Buying and Selling Cars SPC'. The distributorship will comprise passenger cars, vans, trucks, and buses.

As one of the leading diversified and privately held business groups based in Kuwait, Al Mulla Group was selected after undergoing Mercedes-Benz's standardized worldwide distributor selection process. The appointment will take effect on January 01, 2019.

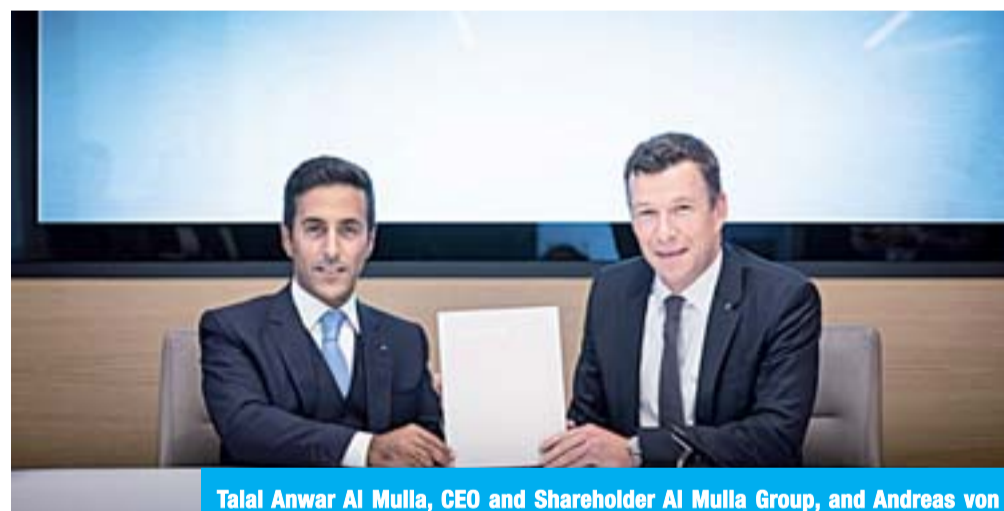
Commenting on the appointment, Britta Seeger, Member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG responsible for Mercedes-Benz Cars Marketing and Sales, said, "Daimler is looking forward to the new distributorship of Al Mulla. We will continue to put our customers first and offer the best customer experience."

Talal Anwar Al Mulla, CEO and Board Member at Al Mulla Group, stated, "With this distributorship we have created the basis for a successful future of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait. We are confident that this distributorship will be successful due to the strong customer demand for the Mercedes-Benz brand in the region."

Contracts between the two companies were signed at a ceremony that took place at Daimler AG's headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. Representatives from Mercedes-Benz included: Ms Britta Seeger, Member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG responsible for Mercedes-Benz Cars Marketing and Sales; Matthias Luhrs, Head of Region Overseas Mercedes-Benz Cars; Andreas von Wallfeld, Head of Marketing, Sales and Services Mercedes-Benz Trucks. Representatives from Al Mulla Group included Talal Anwar Al Mulla, CEO and Board Member at Al Mulla Group, as well as Imad Flayhan, Managing Director - Automotive at Al Mulla Group.



Britta Seeger, Member of the Board of Management, Mercedes-Benz Cars Marketing & Sales, and Talal Anwar Al Mulla, CEO and Shareholder Al Mulla Group



Talal Anwar Al Mulla, CEO and Shareholder Al Mulla Group, and Andreas von Wallfeld, Head of Marketing, Sales & Services Mercedes-Benz Trucks

Global FDI falls 41% in H1 2018 after Trump tax reforms: UN

GENEVA: Global foreign direct investment (FDI) fell by 41 percent to \$470 billion in the first six months of this year, the lowest since 2005, preliminary figures from the United Nations trade and development agency UNCTAD showed yesterday.

President Donald Trump's US tax reforms were the main cause of the slump, which followed a 23 percent fall in 2017, as American firms repatriated a net \$217 billion from foreign affiliates, UNCTAD investment chief James Zhan said.

"The investment flows are more policy-driven and less economic cycle-driven," Zhan told a news conference, citing the US tax reform and economic liberalization in China. "Overall the picture is gloomy and the prospect is not so optimistic." FDI, comprising cross-border corporate takeovers, intra-company loans and investments in start-up projects abroad, is a bellwether of globalization and a potential sign of growth of corporate supply chains and future trade ties. But it can also go into reverse as companies pull out of foreign projects or repatriate earnings.

Such reversals could erode the importance of international supply chains, which became an increasingly important driver of international trade until 2011 and subsequently stagnated, Zhan said.

"If there's a lack of FDI for expansion of the value chains then of course it will impact on global value chains and therefore impact on global trade," he said. "It's difficult to tell whether we are at a turning point (in globalization) or if this is only a slowdown."

As US firms pulled money out of their investments in the first half of the year, China became the top destination for FDI, with \$70 billion of inflows, a 6 percent rise. Developing countries attracted twice as much FDI as developed countries overall. Flows into Europe fell by 93 percent, as traditional inflows to Ireland - the European base of a number of US multinationals - flipped to a negative \$81 billion and Switzerland saw \$77 billion pulled out. But Britain jumped to second in the global rankings, with \$66 billion of inflows, as international companies shifted money into Britain with intra-company loans, reversing a relative drought in 2017.

The United States was the third biggest destination, with \$46.5 billion of inflows. Despite the overall slowdown, money going into newly announced start-up projects, so-called greenfield investments, rose 42 percent, providing a glimmer of hope that more money will follow and drive more spending and trade in future. —Reuters

China to show off its zeal to import but business awaits policies

SHANGHAI: China will soon host a huge trade fair to highlight its commitment to free trade and show off its willingness to import, but skeptical foreign businesses and diplomats say they want to see concrete policy changes to improve market access.

The China International Import Expo, announced by President Xi Jinping in 2017, is aimed at calming mounting foreign concern about China's trade practices and to signal its willingness to narrow its trade gap with the United States and others. Authorities have been pulling out all the stops to ensure the success of the Nov. 5-10 trade fair in Shanghai.

But with a China-US trade dispute deepening, sources familiar with the planning of the expo say that while many US companies will attend, Washington is not planning to send any officials, though they have been invited. The US embassy in China declined to comment.

The ultimate value of the event - beyond propaganda points for China - will hinge on whether the government unveils substantial new market-open-

ing policies, some foreign business people say. But there are few signs any are imminent. The expo was a "broadly positive gesture" that China wants to increase imports, said Ken Jarrett, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai.

"On the other hand, hurdles such as market access restrictions and non-tariff barriers continue to prevent companies from selling their products in China. Addressing those structural barriers are just as important, if not more so." The expo, which will fill an exhibition hall bigger than 35 soccer pitches, is one of the most important events on China's diplomatic calendar this year, with foreign officials and executives due to attend.

The Commerce Ministry and Shanghai government established new departments to organize and run it, and a special dispute resolution tribunal has been set up.

Chinese embassy staff around the world and officials at home have spent months pressing foreign businesses and governments to participate, according to diplomats and businessmen.

Two senior Western diplomats, one in Shanghai and one in Beijing, said they had even been told of oblique threats, but declined to give specific details. "Things like: 'You've got a great business here. It'd be a pity if something happened to it' ... We've heard this from many, many companies," said one. Others in the diplomatic and foreign business communities said they were not aware of such tactics. —Reuters

Rising oil turns up heat on vulnerable emerging economies

LONDON: A rise in oil prices to four-year highs is heaping pressure on big emerging-market crude consumers such as Turkey, India, Indonesia and South Africa that are already grappling with current account deficits, weak currencies and rising inflation.

Emerging markets worldwide have been buffeted in recent months by the strong dollar, climbing US interest rates and slowing growth momentum with Turkey and Argentina descending into full-blown currency crises.

Meanwhile Brent crude prices have risen above \$80 per barrel, thanks largely to coordinated production cuts by some of the world's biggest oil exporters, as well as impending US sanctions on crude exporter Iran that could wipe yet more supply off the market.

Some analysts now think benchmark prices could return to \$100 per barrel for the first time since 2014. But for a number of importers such as India, Turkey or Indonesia - who all have seen their currencies tumble to record lows this year - oil is already more expensive now at \$85 a barrel than it was back in 2008 when the price hit a record \$147 a barrel.

Rising oil prices spell trouble for emerging markets, said Jim McDonald, chief investment strategist Northern Trust, an asset management firm with \$1.1 trillion under management.

"Look at the largest market cap countries ... every one of them is an oil importer," said McDonald. "High oil prices are bad for them, unless it is tied to growth being really good - today what is driving oil prices higher is not a pick-up in growth, it is a slowdown in supply, and that's a bad scenario."

Trouble is especially on the cards for those economies hit by the triple-whammy of a sharp currency drop, heavy reliance on dollar-denominated energy imports and external funding flows.

While China, India, Thailand, Turkey, South Africa and Indonesia top the list of biggest emerging market oil importers, Thailand enjoys a solid current account surplus and China only edged into a rare deficit in the first half of the year.

However, Turkey, Argentina, India and Indonesia find themselves high up on the list of countries featuring large current account deficits as a percentage of their GDP, according to forecasts by the International Monetary Fund for 2018.

For many countries, the pressure is two-fold: rising crude imports with rising prices. China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey and South Africa imported 18 percent more crude oil in July 2018, the last month for which complete data is available, than they did in January 2017.

The average cost of their oil imports in their respective currencies, however, has risen by an average of nearly 60 percent in that time.

Analysts are also closely watching how another oil shock might affect country's import cover and the adequacy of central banks' foreign currency reserves. As oil prices rise, that ratio will come under even more scrutiny.

Consumer spending power across many of these countries is also bound to suffer as - unlike in 2008 - many consumers do not have the same cushion of fuel subsidies and central banks have to ramp up rates to tackle inflation pressures and steady their currencies. —Reuters

Business

IndiGo begins new daily flights to Abu Dhabi International Airport

Two daily services to connect Abu Dhabi with Cochin, Calicut airports



ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi International Airport (AUH) yesterday welcomed the IndiGo's inaugural flight to and from India, commencing daily flights that connect the UAE capital with Cochin International Airport (COK) and Calicut International Airport (CCJ).

IndiGo is amongst the fastest growing low-cost carriers in the world, bringing a simple philosophy of low-cost fares, on-time flights and a courteous, hassle-free travel experience. With its fleet of 189 Airbus A320 and 12 ATR aircraft, the airline offers over 1200 daily flights and connects 48 domestic destinations and 11 international destinations.

The inaugural IndiGo flights from Cochin and Calicut touched down on Monday and yesterday

respectively. A daily non-stop flight from Cochin will depart at 13:30 and arrive at 16:30. The IndiGo service to Cochin will leave Abu Dhabi at 04:30, and will arrive at 10:30. IndiGo will fly out of Calicut at 00:40 and will arrive into Abu Dhabi at 03:30. The return IndiGo flight departs at 17:30 and arrives Calicut at 23:30. All time slots incorporated above are as per the local time of respective geographies.

Bryan Thompson, CEO of Abu Dhabi Airports, commented: "This new addition expands further the network of the Capital' airport, to provide our passengers with enhanced connectivity. It also reflects further on the strong global confidence in the Abu Dhabi market, and we hope to continue to build on such



partnerships over the coming months and years."

Abu Dhabi Airport, Chief Commercial Officer, Maarten De Groof, said: "With a total of 14 flights per week, these new connections reflect Abu Dhabi's status as a global hub for travel and business. India has always been one of our largest and most important areas of operations, and we are pleased to welcome these new daily services and to continue meeting the market's growing demand."

William Boulter, Chief Commercial Officer, IndiGo, said, "We are delighted to receive a heartening welcome from Abu Dhabi International Airport this morning. IndiGo today operated its inaugural flights from Calicut-Abu Dhabi and Cochin-Abu Dhabi. IndiGo has

completed 12 years of successful operations in the India market as a low cost carrier, and adding Abu Dhabi to its network will further augment the regional connectivity that we aspire to provide to our customers."

Boulter further added: "Abu Dhabi holds immense potential for IndiGo, and this launch is part of organic expansion within the Gulf for us, as we complement our domestic network with international connectivity. With these non-stop flights between Abu Dhabi and India, IndiGo operates 63 daily non-stop flights between the Middle East and India. IndiGo will continue to provide an on-time, courteous and hassle free service, and affordable fares to our customers, as always."

Award-winning Al-Areen Palace & Spa offers more than just a pleasant stay

KUWAIT: Travelers are always on the hunt for new and exciting adventures to break away from their dizzying lifestyles. As the new season brings cool winds, one such resort appeals to all those seeking a one-stop holiday destination - the time to explore an all-round world of possibilities are within easy reach and available at your doorstep, at Al-Areen Palace & Spa, Bahrain.

Built on the foundation of Arabian culture, comfort, and warm hospitality, Al-Areen Palace & Spa lies over 131,000 square meters featuring 78 luxurious villas on a total built-up area of 32,000 square meters. Not stopping there, the 5-star resort is surrounded by organized and do-it-yourself excursions beyond the boundaries of the resort.

Al-Areen Palace & Spa promises the travel connoisseur complete intimacy in an alluring, peaceful retreat that is rich in its provisions such as a private heated swimming pool, steam, and Jacuzzi while also ensuring every member of the family is well entertained even as they step out of their cozy premise.

So pack your bags and fly to the awe-inspiring beauty of the stark desert panorama where one can wrap themselves in sheer luxury and unearth the ideal blend of calm and wholesome family filled activities.

Set as Bahrain's biggest water park, the Lost Paradise of Dilmun Water Park is the first fully-themed water park currently covering approximately 77,000 Square Metres. Each corner of the popular park is derived from the history of the Dilmun Period reflected by unique stone sculptures and architecture that encapsulates the theme. All age groups can enjoy over 18 Slides ranging from tube, sleep and full body slides, super bowls, sandy beaches, family raft rides, aqua loop water rides, rain fortresses and other attractions seamlessly integrated to create a desert oasis. In addition, circus events, weekend DJ's and community celebrations are guaranteed to serve a memorable time for all.

Meet the Zoo!

Welcome to the home of wildlife in Bahrain, where



all plant and animal species have been under strict protection and care for over 30 years! Breathe in the sight of different animals, birds, and desert plants in their own natural environment. One can take a walk around the park and get closer to unique birds that wander freely and happily around visitors. Alternatively, one can take a bus tour in the reserve and get to know all the different kinds of endangered animals such as the Arabian Leopard, the Ostrich, the Arabian Gazelle, the Oryx and many more.

How's your Golf?

The Royal Golf Club is home to Bahrain's only 18 hole championship standard golf course and to a par 3 9-hole course, both designed by course architect and golfing legend Colin Montgomerie.

Dive into Excitement

Bahrain's first indoor skydiving experience brings the incredible feeling of a freefall in one of the tallest wind tunnels in the world. The family can purchase the flying gear, receive instructions through a briefing session, and earn a flight certificate apart from the 90 minutes experience for two flights in the wind tunnel.

Land Rover Experience

This facility is the first of its kind in the Middle East, located in the heart of the Sakhr desert. The unique setting offers 3.5 kilometers of varying ter-

In order to benefit from the offer, which applies to all destinations, except for Jeddah and Al-Madinah, customers must book their tickets online through <http://emirates.com/>, and enter the promo code: KWABK17. Bookings can be made until 31st December, 2018 for travel dates up to 31 March, 2019.

ABK customers who choose to book a Business Class ticket at regular market fares are eligible for a 10 percent discount, whereas bookings made at promotional fares will be subject to a 7 percent discount. Moreover, customers booking Economy Class tickets at market fares are eligible for a 5 percent discount, whereas bookings made at promotional fares will be subject to a 3 percent discount.

Special fares on Emirates Airline tickets for ABK cardholders

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) is offering all its Credit, Prepaid and Debit cardholders a discount of up to 10 percent upon booking a Business Class or Economy Class ticket online with Emirates.



rains such as sand, rock, hill and water landscapes. Get to Al Areen to gain access to off-road activities with the Land Rover.

Karting Adrenaline

Bahrain International Karting Circuit (BIKC) is a state-of-the-art, world-class facility that caters to the grassroots level of motorsport. BIKC offers a wide range of experiences for the avid karter, including a Formula One-inspired Mini Grand Prix.

Al Dar Island

Scuba life is the premier diving and watersports center in the Kingdom of Bahrain and offers watersports centers where visitors can jump into the water and join the fun by riding a towable. Gear up with a mask and snorkel, life-vest and fins to find some of Bahrain's interesting array of fish in their natural habitats. It needn't end there - all dolphin lovers can watch their favorite warm blooded mammal up close and get personal. Al Areen Palace and Spa can support all visitors by directing to a safe and exciting trip out in the sea.

Wander the mystic roads

Travelers can peek into Bahrain's true hospitality and city splendor through personalized tours as one maneuvers through exotic forts, shopping malls, and proud heritage spots.

Win up to 250,000 gold coins at Malabar Gold & Diamonds this festive season

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong retail network of 250 retail outlets spread across ten countries unfolded the details of its much awaited Diwali promotion.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds is also celebrating its 25th anniversary during this festive season. The company is taking this opportunity to thank their customers for their continued support over the years. This season's festive promotions brings every customer a chance to be a winner through this festival. The customers get unmatched chances to win a total of 250,000 gold coins across their showrooms globally.

Customers can win a guaranteed gold coin or up to 100 gold coins instantly on purchase of gold

Chevrolet Alghanim brings its mega offer on after-sales services again

KUWAIT: In line with its unceasing commitment to guarantee the safety and peace of mind of its customers and their families, Chevrolet Alghanim launches once more the very successful free safety checkup campaign on all Chevrolet vehicles being serviced at any of its centers, started again from October 15th until November 30th, 2018. Chevrolet Alghanim encourages its valuable customers to visit the nearest service center today and take advantage of this limited time offer.

Performed by a team of professional service advisors, the special safety checkup entails a detailed inspection relying on state-of-the-art technology and all latest available tools for car inspection and servicing. It covers the most important mechanical and electrical components guaranteeing a car's proper operation and safety, including disk brakes, tire treads and pressure, car battery, windshield wipers, front and rear lights, suspension, shock absorbers and controlling sticks.

Furthermore, Chevrolet Alghanim offers include a free car wash upon visit for a unique experience and full satisfaction. Right after the checkup is complete, customers will receive a comprehensive report of 21 check points detailing the car's condition, required maintenance, and pricing. In addition to a 30 percent discount on spare part and 10 percent discount on labor fees for maintenance and professional service, Chevrolet Alghanim's customers will get a free car wash and nitrogen refill for their tires, in addition Two discount coupons worth 2.5 KD each (customer can get reimbursed one coupon at a time against next service or repair) will enable them to drive their Chevy safely without having to worry about potential car malfunctions. Chevrolet Alghanim recommends its customers to take advantage of this free checkup before it's too late and reap the valuable benefits and peace-of-mind it offers.

Customers can benefit from this amazing safety checkup offer by visiting either the Shuwaikh Service Center, located in Shuwaikh Industrial Area, from Saturday to Tuesday, 7am till 7pm, and Friday, 2pm till 7pm, or the Fahsheel Service Center, from Saturday to Wednesday, 7.30am till 6pm, and Thursday, from 7.30am till 1pm.

jewellery worth KD 200 via 'Scratch & Win' coupons. Adding to the above, customers also get two gram gold coin on diamond jewellery purchase of KD 400 and a one gram gold coin on purchase of diamond jewellery worth KD 250.

Also, customers will have a great opportunity to get protected from the increasing gold rate by just paying 10 percent of the entire amount on the selected gold jewellery.

Above offers are valid at their outlets in Kuwait until 05th Nov 2018.

To add more glitter to this season, they have also revealed their festive collection of jewellery in gold, diamonds and precious gems to suit the tastes of their multicultural and multinational customers. Malabar Gold & Diamonds has incorporated these designs as a part of various brands presented at Malabar Gold & Diamonds' namely Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewellery, Era - Uncut Diamond Jewellery, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine- Indian Heritage Jewellery, Precia - Gem Jewellery and Starlet - Kids jewellery. Malabar Gold & Diamonds is displaying an eye catchy collection of trendy designs in 18 & 22K gold, diamonds, platinum and precious gems from different parts of the world to flaunt at any occasion or event.

Technology

VIVA participates in 38th GITEX Technology in Dubai

Team featured latest range of products and services

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced its participation in the 38th GITEX Technology where its professional team featured latest range of products and services. The International GITEX Technology Week 2018 taking place from 14 - 18 October 2018 in Dubai at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

On this occasion, Eng Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, VIVA's CEO, said: "We are honored to take part in GITEX for the seventh year in a row. It is an exciting experience for VIVA to participate in one of the world's most anticipated IT and technology exhibitions". He added, "Our participation in the GITEX Technology

Week 2018 comes in line with our corporate strategy to extend and present our services not only locally, but on a regional scale. We strive to provide smart solutions for both enterprises and individuals that keep them abreast to global development."

Alongside VIVA, Saudi Telecommunication Company (STC) showcased its latest products and services through team of professionals. GITEX Technology Week is the largest event in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, where all technology leaders participate and identify the most important global trends in the technology industry in the modern sectors, and reveal the latest advanced products and services.

“ Honored to take part in GITEX for the seventh year in a row ”



Safe City Group signs MoU with Dell EMC

KUWAIT: The Safe City Group recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dell EMC. The MoU was signed by Eng Ali Omari, Chief Executive

Officer - Safe City Group and Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, Middle East, Turkey & Africa at Dell EMC.

Through this collaboration, Safe City Group and Dell EMC aim to continue development of advanced solutions for public safety in the UAE, which is central to the ambitious vision of the UAE leadership. In alignment with this objective, Safe City Group selected the industry leading solution portfolio by Dell EMC which spans across modern data centers.



Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, Middle East, Turkey & Africa at Dell EMC shakes hands with Eng Ali Omari (Right), Chief Executive Officer - Safe City Group.

Japan hotels must be wheelchair accessible

TOKYO: New hotels in Japan with more than 50 rooms will be required to provide wheelchair-friendly accommodation, the government said yesterday, as the country gears up to host the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics. Japan is hoping to attract around 40 million tourists annually by the time of the Games and concerns have been

expressed over the quantity of accommodation and facilities for disabled travelers.

Under the revised laws, which come into effect on September 1 next year, at least one percent of rooms in newly built and refurbished hotels or traditional inns must be barrier-free for wheelchair users. "Through efforts to improve travel and lodging for the disabled, we hope to make the Games a success and create a society" where people with and without disabilities can live together, Olympics Minister Yoshitaka Sakurada told reporters yesterday.

According to a government survey conducted last year, only 0.4 percent of around 100,000 rooms at more than 600 hotels or inns were "barrier-free". — AFP

'Year of extremes' for shrinking Swiss glaciers in 2018

GENEVA: Despite an exceptionally snow-filled winter, Swiss glaciers have lost 2.5 percent of their volume this year, according to a report yesterday which dubbed 2018 "a year of extremes". This year's record-breaking temperatures have greatly contributed to the loss of "a fifth of (the glaciers') volume over the past decade", according to the annual study on the state of the glaciers, published by the Swiss Academies of Science. And this despite the piles and piles of snow that fell during the 2017-18 winter season, following three consecutive years of little snow in the Alpine country.

Snow acts like a protective covering that prevents glaciers from melting. "Up until the end of March, there was still more than twice as much snow as usual above an altitude of 2,000 meters," the report authors said. But the exceptional snowfall at the start of the year was matched by soaring temperatures and little to no precipitation after March. According to the Swiss Office of Meteorology, the period between June and August ranked among the hottest on record after 2003 and 2015.

'Hottest ever recorded'

And the period from April to September was "by far the hottest ever recorded" in Switzerland, the report said. It pointed to the case of Weissfluhjoch peak (2,540 meters), which hosts the Swiss Institute for Snow and Avalanche research. The peak saw no snowfall of more than one centimeter between May 17 and September 4 — a first in the 81 years of record-keeping, the report said. The heat and lack of precipitation "not only melted large quantities of winter snow (up to five meters on some glaciers), but also melted the ice," Matthias Huss,



This file photograph taken on August 16, 2018, shows the Rhone Glacier and its glacial lake, near Gletsch. — AFP

in charge of the Glacier Monitoring Network (GLAMOS), told AFP.

The Swiss glaciers have rarely experienced such a melt, with the exception of when Europe was hit by a massive heatwave 15 years ago, he said. "2003 remains the worst year for the glaciers, but 2018 is clearly in the Top 10 over the past century, and the top three for some glaciers," he said. "If there had been the same low level of snowfall as in 2017, 2018 would definitely have

Uruguay's legal cannabis project provides benchmark for Canada

MONTEVIDEO: As Canada prepares today to become only the second country in the world to legalize the use of marijuana, experts in Uruguay say its pioneering move three years ago helped to reduce drug trafficking in the South American nation. While the public initially rejected the project first introduced by iconic leftist president Jose Mujica, who was in power from 2010-2015, attitudes have gradually changed, with the population now largely supportive of the move.

Uruguay legalized the production, distribution and sale of marijuana for recreational purposes in December 2013, before allowing the drug to be sold in pharmacies from July 2017. Things seem to be going well in the country of 3.5 million people, just 10 percent that of Canada's population. There are three ways to access cannabis in Uruguay: growing it at home, with a limit of six plants per person; growing it in a club as part of a cooperative; or buying it in the pharmacy.

Fear-mongers who predicted the project would lead to a deluge of doped-up lay-abuses have so far been proved wrong, according to Monitor Cannabis. The academic group that studies the government's marijuana project says that cannabis use has "shown an increase that isn't extraordinary with respect to the trend" observed prior to legalization.

The main difference between the illegal and legal periods is that it has become easier to track the evolution of marijuana usage. Official statistics from the Cannabis Regulation and Control Institute (IRCCA) show that 54 percent of those who consume cannabis regularly do so through legal means, something

that previously wasn't available to them. Four types of marijuana are available in Uruguay, sold in five gram (0.18 ounces) packets costing \$1.40 per gram. Registered users — either citizens or foreign residents — can buy up to 40 grams a month.

Logistical difficulties

It's not been entirely plain-sailing, though, logistically. There have been many challenges, from problems with harvests to banking system limitations imposed on companies working in the cannabis sector due to United States legislation. But Uruguay has 7,000 registered cultivators, 107 cooperative production clubs, 28,500 registered buyers and 17 distributor pharmacies. The banking restrictions, a fear of attracting crime due to the presence of drugs in stores, and the simple opposition of some pharmacists to the project has resulted in only a small number of pharmacies opting to sell marijuana.

But between July 2017 and July 2018, 100 percent of the 1,200 kilograms (2,645 pounds) of marijuana produced was sold to the public. Buyers would even queue up outside pharmacies once stocks were replenished, alerted by the pharmacists themselves. Production, though, is not satisfying demand, meaning some people continue buying the drug through illegal means, even when they would rather not.

"The priority is to increase the system's reach," sociologist Sebastian Aguiar says in his publication: "A year of advances and opportunities." If every registered buyer could purchase the maximum allocation of 40 grams, "50 percent of the total annual demand for cannabis would be taken from the illegal market, equivalent to \$22.5 million." That's especially relevant since, when presenting his plan, Mujica said the legalization strategy was aimed at combating illegal drug trafficking. However, not everyone wants to encourage greater use of marijuana. President Tabare Vazquez launched a campaign on October 1 called "Regulating is being responsible," which aims to provide education about "the risks, effects and potential damages" provoked by the use of cannabis. — AFP

Bangladesh inches closer towards green power goal

DHAKA: Bangladesh's electricity generation from renewable sources has passed the 5 percent mark with the opening of a major new solar plant - boosting hopes the country might meet its goal of getting 10 percent of power from renewables by 2020, experts say. The new 28 megawatt solar power plant in Cox's Bazar District is the largest yet opened in the country, following the earlier construction of a 3 MW plant.

The solar plants come on top of the widespread use of solar home systems in the low-lying country, considered one of those most vulnerable to climate change impacts. Currently about 5.2 million small-scale solar home systems provide electricity to almost 12 percent of Bangladesh's 160 million people, Dipal C Barua, president of the Bangladesh Solar and Renewable Energy Association, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

He called the new plant "good news" for the country, saying the accelerating construction of solar power facilities "will build confidence among future investors". The new 116-acre solar park will supply enough electricity to meet about 80 percent of power demand in the Teknaf sub-district where it is located, said Mahmudul Hasan, chief financial officer for Joules Power Ltd.

That area has about 300,000 power users, though little in the way of industrial or large commercial users, he said. Nuher Latif Khan, managing director of Technaf Solartech Energy Ltd, a subsidiary of Joules Power that owns the plant, said the plant had begun operations ahead of schedule. In Bangladesh, "the future of solar power is very fantastic," he said, noting that company "definitely" planned to invest more in renewable energy, including potentially wind power.

Khan said the solar park can produce up to 28 MW of solar electricity at peak capacity and has contracted to provide 20 MW to the government grid. Barua said several other large solar plants are in the pipeline in Bangladesh, after receiving government approval, with a few at advanced stages of construction.

More cost - then less

While solar plants need a large amount of initial investment to set up, he said, they have very small operational costs afterward, unlike plants that need ongoing sources of coal or other fossil fuels. The government has supported the construction of rooftop solar plants on factories and other commercial buildings, he said, with some facilities on large plants expected to generate a megawatt or more each.

With such solar plants, thousands of factories in Bangladesh should be able to meet their own electricity needs, and contribute surplus power to the national grid. "I think one day we will see every building has a rooftop solar power system," Barua said. However, finding available land to set up ground-level solar plants is a major challenge in densely populated Bangladesh, he admitted.

Sheikh Reaz Ahmed, director of the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), said the country's 2008 renewable energy policy calls for generating 10 percent of electricity from renewables by 2020. With the country expected to generate 20,000 MW of electricity in total by the date, renewables would have to reach 2,000 MW to hit that target, he said. So far Bangladesh generates just over 530 MW from renewables, nearly half of that from hydropower plants, he said. But the country is set to put online another 600 MW of renewable power in 2019 alone, he said, with another 1,100 MW rolled out in 2020 and 2021.

Altogether, plants now in the pipeline should bring the country's renewable energy generating capacity to 2,235 MW by 2021, Ahmed said. Not all the construction is progressing smoothly, however, with some plants tied up in problems with land acquisition and other issues, he said. Meanwhile, energy generation from fossil fuels also is rising to meet soaring demand for energy in Bangladesh, he said.

Last year, Bangladesh's cabinet committee on public procurement approved a proposal to construct 10 new oil-fired power plants, capable of generating 1,800 MW of electricity. In January, construction also began on a 1,200 MW coal-fired power plant in Cox's Bazar, funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency. That means boosting Bangladesh's percentage of renewable energy above 10 percent won't be easy, because "each year total power generation from traditional sources will go up" too, Ahmed noted. — Reuters

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Head of Cardiology departmenta at Dar Al Shifa hospital

- Consultant Interventional and conventional cardiologist.
- Specialised in the Diagnosis and treatment of all adult cardiac diseases, including those cases that need urgent intervention in Cath lab (primary angioplasty).

**مستشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555**

daralshifa

DR KHALED ALMERRI
Consultant interventional Cardiology
Department: Heart & Vascular Center

Specialized in:

- 1-Diagnostic and therapeutic cardiac catheterization (Angiography and Angioplasty). Aortic valve implantation.
- 2- Diagnosis and treatment of coronary artery diseases
- 3- Diagnosis and treatment of heart failure, cardiomyopathies and valvular diseases.
- 4-Diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- 5- Diagnosis and treatment of syncope, palpitations and cardiac arrhythmias.
- 6- Non-invasive diagnostic procedures echocardiography, exercise stress test, and 24 hour blood pressure and Holter monitoring

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Know your Doctor
Otorhinolaryngology (E.N.T)
Dr Hamoud Abdullah Alarouj
ENT Specialist

- ◆ Laryngology Fellowship - Canada
- ◆ Fellow of the European Board Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the British Laryngological Association
- ◆ Member of the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
- ◆ Member of the European Laryngological Society

Specialized in:

- ◆ Management of benign and malignant vocal cord lesions.
- ◆ Vocal cord augmentation.
- ◆ Treatment of spasmodic dysphonia.
- ◆ Adenotonsillectomy using latest techniques.
- ◆ Thyroid surgery.
- ◆ Surgery for the deviated nasal septum.
- ◆ Endoscopic sinus surgery.
- ◆ Treatment of allergic rhinitis.
- ◆ Treatment of snoring.
- ◆ Treatment of vertigo.

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American Board Certified in General Surgery
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation
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- ◆ Day case surgeries
- ◆ Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- ◆ Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- ◆ Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- ◆ Breast surgeries
- ◆ Hernia repair
- ◆ Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for reflux disease
- ◆ Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendectomy
- ◆ Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant

http://www.international-clinic.com Tel: 1886677 ic_kwt

Scope of Clinical Practice:

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, Including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ VAAFT Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
- ◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
- ◆ Laparoscopic mini bypass
- ◆ Transanal minimally invasive surgery

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

- ◆ American Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of American College of Surgery
- ◆ Canadian Board of General Surgery
- ◆ Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada
- ◆ American Board of Colo - Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

Dr. Abdullah Al Haddad
Surgery Department
Consultant General Surgery, Laparoscopic & Colo - Rectal Surgeon

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

Consultant Pediatrician-Canadian & American Board in Pediatrics-Canadian Board in Pediatric Emergency

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

DR. WALEED S BUHAIMED
Consultant of General Surgery
Laposcopic and Bariatric Surgery

Academic Certificates - Training

- ◆ Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- ◆ (IFSO) member .
- ◆ Faculty member of (BEST).
- ◆ Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

Scope of clinical Practice.

- ◆ Bariatric surgeries.
- ◆ Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- ◆ Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- ◆ G.I. surgeries.
- ◆ Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- ◆ Anal surgeries.

email: wbuhaimed@gmail.com Tel.: 965 22269411/ Mob.: 965 99212228 Jabriya, 4th Ring Road, Block 1A Floor 9 - Clover Center Mazaya Building

What's On

Linden Educational Services with AMIDEAST organizes education fair



By Faten Omar

The Linden Educational Services in cooperation with AMIDEAST organized an education fair on Monday at the Marina Hotel in Salmiya. The Linden University Fair provided a chance for Kuwaiti students to meet with representatives from accredited US institutions so that they can explore the possibilities of higher education in the United States.

The one-day fair offered students information about education in the US, which was attended by representatives from a diverse selection of US colleges and universities. Rola Fadlallah, Head of Education Outreach and Placement Services of AMIDEAST, told Kuwait Times that AMIDEAST is dedicated to help students from around the world connect with prestigious US universities. "This fair is organized by The Linden Educational Tours in conjunction with the US Embassy where 11 US universi-

ties are participating. AMIDEAST helps students with most of the major tests required for study in the US, including TOEFL, GRE, and SAT."

Fadlallah noted that this fair is the third one that AMIDEAST has organized for US universities, adding that more educational fairs will be organized in January, February and March 2019. For his part, US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman said that the fair is a great opportunity for students to know what suits them the best and what they need

to do to get admission to the university they want to achieve their dreams.

"US Embassy's team was present to address students' questions about education in the US and the student visa process. We have a coordinator and a representative from the consular section to talk about student visas and the papers they need. This month we had four educational fairs for US universities because it is the season when the students start to consider schools," he said.

Knowledge Club 2018 presents Bee Engaged Simulation

Vigor Events - in co-operation with Al Gas Events - is organizing a 2-day workshop titled Bee Engaged(tm) on the 30th to 31st of October 2018 in Burgan meeting room in Hilton Resort Kuwait. Conducted by renowned Author of "The Success Formula" and "The Bee Book" a parable about change, innovation, employee engagement and leadership.

The highly engaging workshop which is presented by the international employee engagement expert Paul

Rigby - is designed with the objective for participants' to develop a common language (based on the story of the bees) to be used throughout the organization for practical engagement.

In this lively and interactive workshop should help Leaders & Managers to understand the difference between engagement, motivation, happiness and satisfaction and their implications on the organization, use the P-O-L-L-ENTM Model of employee engagement to help participants easily remember the steps for effective and practical implementation and understand how you as a leader must embrace employee engagement to help implement change initiatives, improve performance and improve bottom line results.

The 1st day simulation is designed to will help attendees explore the difference between motivation, happiness, engagement and satisfaction and the scene for what employee engagement is all about. He will start to

explore the POLLENTM model of engagement with step P and O. Day 2 will focus on completing the POLLEN model and the assessment culminating in the respective teams or tables writing their own version on how an "engaged hive" will look and feel like using the learning from the workshop. It is worth mentioning that Paul Rigby consults and advises with business partners and frequently assists them with their change, innovation, leadership and employee engagement efforts and he is the leading facilitator & certified master consultant of the BEE suite of workshops.

The simulation is part of the Knowledge Club(tm) 2018 is the leading & development platform for top organizations in Kuwait, is attended this year by Warba Bank/ Burgan Bank as Gold Member, Commercial Bank of Kuwait/ Kuwait Oil Company as Corporate Members and with the media support by the International Advertising Association (IAA) - Kuwait Chapter.

Announcement

TIES

Dear Brother/Sister, you are cordially invited to another session of our series about some prophets and messengers of Allah (SWT) this Thursday, October 18th, at 7:00 pm. In this class, we will learn about the safety measures Prophet Yaqoub (Jacob) recommended to his sons before departing for Egypt, the benefits of trying to solve a problem or preempt a catastrophe even though Allah (SWT) has ultimate control, and the real meaning of dependence on Allah (SWT).

We will also discuss what happened to Yaqoub's sons when they arrived in Egypt, the gifts they took to the high minister, and why exchanging gifts is considered an act of worship in Islam. Finally, we will see how Yusuf (AS) received his full-brother, discover what his half-brothers said, and elicit many lessons to implement in our daily life. Come and learn more about the life and times of Prophet Joseph (AS) in a relaxed, encouraging and supportive atmosphere.

KNES Early Years Summer Concerts 2018

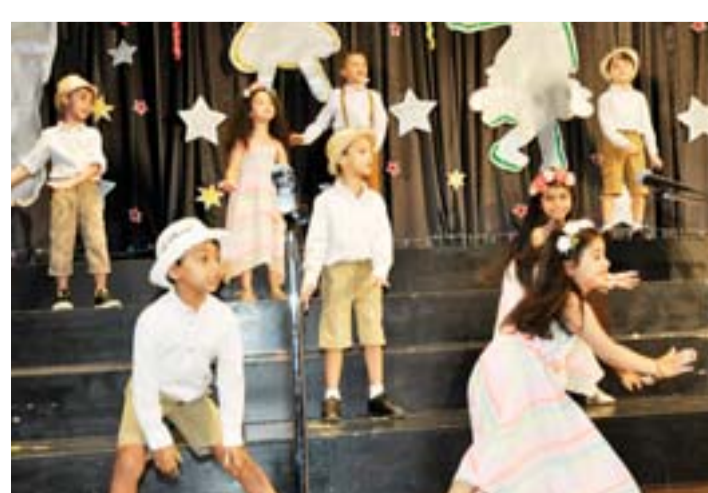


The Early Years children of Kuwait National English School held their Summer Concerts in the school theatre. The theatre was packed with parents, friends and staff and it was hard to figure out who was having a better time.....the audience or the children.

The theme of the concerts was "The empowerment of children" The nights were celebrating the development of the children during their time in Early Years and the empowerment they feel to take on strange and new challenges. The Early Years children have developed very strong personality traits over the past year and have been encouraged to approach new tasks and new situations with confidence and thought. Although we teach

the children to be strong and independent we equally encourage the children to be socially responsible. They have an obligation to both themselves, their environment and also to others, near and far.

As the children move on to the next year, they have proven they will do so with extraordinary academic and personal skills, ready to take on the next phase of their education! We will be there beside them every step of the way as we always have been, to guide them in the right direction. We at Kuwait National English School take great pride in these children and strongly believe they have achieved what few children their age have. Congratulations to the children and their parents as they face new and bigger challenges in the years ahead!

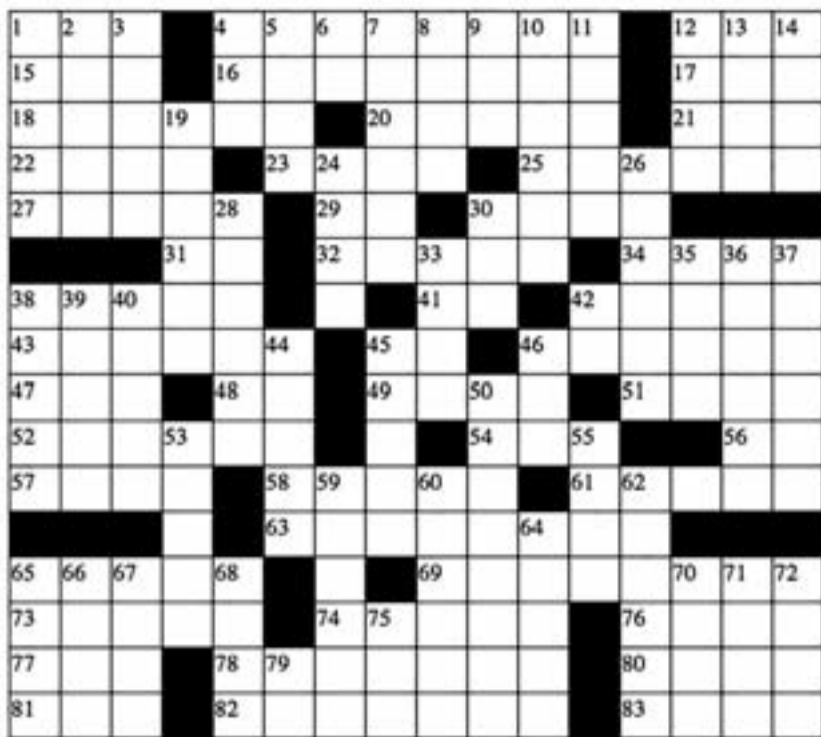


Sunil Grover announces live show in Kuwait

Acclaimed comedian Sunil Grover who plays the popular character of Dr Gulati and Rinku bhabhi will be in Kuwait for a gig as Dr Mashoor Gulati live in Kuwait along with his team for an event organized by Indian Youth Society. He sends video invite to all mentioning I am coming to Kuwait on 2nd of November to perform live at American international school auditorium. Indian Youth Society of Kuwait fondly known as IYS is honoring, encouraging, supporting and celebrating the Indian social & cultural values amongst the people of Kuwait. IYS intension is to create a platform for people by organizing various competition events like singing, dancing, sports etc., to showcase their talents and creativity. IYS has been successful in gaining popularity and remains a strong and fast growing organization in Kuwait led by its founder members. IYS welcomes all individuals to join and serve the community. Website : www.indianyouthkuwait.com; E-mail: iyskuwait@gmail.com

Stars

CROSSWORD 2036



ACROSS

1. Cut off from a whole.
4. Any freshwater fish of the family Characidae.
12. The compass point that is one point south of due east.
15. An artificial language that is a revision and simplification of Esperanto.
16. Professional care for the feet and toenails.
17. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
18. Conforming with or constituting a norm or standard or level or type or social norm.
20. The largest Greek island in the Mediterranean.
21. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
22. 4-wheeled motor vehicle.
23. A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
25. (of linens or clothes) Smoothed with a hot iron.
27. Infestation of the pubic hair by crab lice.
29. That is to say.
31. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
32. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
34. Tree of low-lying coastal areas of southeastern United States having glossy leaves and racemes of fragrant white flowers.
38. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
41. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
43. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
47. Considerate and solicitous care.
48. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
49. A member of the Athapaskan people of the Trinity River valley in California.
51. A town in north central Oklahoma.
52. South American cavy.
54. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
56. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
57. Any of the short curved hairs that grow from the edges of the eyelids.
58. Slanderous defamation.
61. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
63. (British) A billion.
65. Lacking either stimulating or irritating characteristics.
69. A Moslem republic in southern Asia.
73. Celebes megapode that lays eggs in holes in sandy beaches.
74. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
76. Predatory black-and-white toothed whale with large dorsal fin.
77. Greenwich Mean Time updated with leap seconds.
78. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
80. Scottish philosopher of common sense who opposed the ideas of David Hume (1710-1796).
81. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
82. Genus of beetles whose grubs feed mainly on roots of plants.
83. English monk and scholar (672-735).

DOWN

1. Ions are accelerated along a linear path by voltage differences on electrodes along the path.
2. The sensation that results when olfactory receptors in the nose are stimulated by particular chemicals in gaseous form.
3. An aperture or hole opening into a bodily cavity.
4. An accountant certified by the state.
5. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
6. A public promotion of some product or service.
7. Evergreen trees or shrubs of mountains of Australia and Tasmania.
8. A unit of area (4840 square yards) used in English-speaking countries.
9. An actor's line that immediately precedes and serves as a reminder for some action or speech.
10. An Asian river.
11. United States industrialist who manufactured plows suitable for working the prairie soil (1804-1886).
12. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
13. A very young child (birth to 1 year) who has not yet begun to walk or talk.
14. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
19. Large high frilly cap with a full crown.
24. (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a large number of instructions hard coded into the cpu chip.
26. Any isomeric saturated hydrocarbon found in petroleum and used as a fuel and solvent.
28. Cereal grass widely cultivated for its grain.
30. (British) A waterproof raincoat made of rubberized fabric.
33. A man who is the lover of a girl or young woman.
35. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
36. Capital city of the Piemonte region of northwestern Italy.
37. A large Yoruba city in southwestern Nigeria.
39. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
40. Elk or moose.
42. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
44. A deep opening in the earth's surface.
45. A simple machine consisting of a circular frame with spokes (or a solid disc) that can rotate on a shaft or axle (as in vehicles or other machines).
46. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
50. Around the anus.
53. United States parapsychologist (1895-1980).
55. Capital city of the Apulia region on the Adriatic coast.
59. (archaic) The emperor of Japan.
60. Wool of the alpaca.
62. Accumulate on the surface.
64. Jordan's port.
66. Being or occurring at an advanced period of time or after a usual or expected time.
67. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
68. Amino acid that is formed in the liver and converted into dopamine in the brain.
70. A tall perennial woody plant having a main trunk and branches forming a distinct elevated crown.
71. Harsh or corrosive in tone.
72. A quantity of no importance.
75. Lacking in light.
79. Half the width of an em.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have a special place in your heart for those close to you. You seem to be the one the younger generation in your life look up to and admire. Your advice and guidance may be sought from someone who looks to you as a mentor. You may feel as if your greatest growth comes when you are helping others. Today may be one of those days you are spinning your wheels getting physical tasks accomplished. Before frustration takes hold, stop and realize your shoulder to lean on and your listening ear and wonderful advice may be a much greater accomplishment than a completing a simple chore. Aries, be proud of who you are and what you mean to others.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may have been feeling a great need to make amends with others. You tend to be misunderstood at times. Some may see you as controlling when this is not your intent at all. Today great opportunities to make amends and mend fences may present themselves to you. This will leave you with a greater understanding of life and all you have to offer this world.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your relationships seem to take on a new importance for you now. You have come to realize you gather strength from the support of those closest to you. You may experience a bit of a wakeup call today. A refreshing reminder that helps you remember it is ok to put yourself first. You are not responsible for anyone's happiness but your own. Always putting others ahead of yourself after time can cause you to be unhappy. Take some time today to spoil yourself. This will be rewarding and satisfying to you.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Today may find you in a very serious mood dismissing all that you find trivial in this world. You have a no-nonsense attitude and a strong desire to succeed. You may find yourself in an extremely strict and disciplined mode and very ambitious. You are driven and passionate about your career and this is being noticed in the workplace to the point you may be approached to take on a special project. You are an excellent manager of yourself and your time and this may lead to an opportunity to excel as a manager of others. Cancer, you are on a prosperous and successful path. This is a great time for you to surround yourself with friends and family. This may lead to a more relaxed environment for you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You tend to be a very private person. Someone or possibly something that happens today seems to reveal you on a deeper level than you comfortably have ever allowed. This may cause great conflict and cause you to feel as if you are struggling to stay in control. This is a very emotional time for you and tempers may flare. This may leave you in deep thought and analyzing who you really are. You feel as if someone has opened the door and exposed all the skeletons in your closet. Keep your emotions in check and think before you speak about this issue.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

It seems as if you are a rock to many. Others turn to you for advice. You are admired and respected. You have needs and desires to be cared for as well. The combination of you feeling of you caring for others, and others caring for you should make for a perfect combination. This is a great time for you to get your point across to others. You timing should be perfect now. Others will find you spontaneous and alive.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You tend to bore easily. This is a time where you crave something different, something out of the ordinary. The only way to bring about change in your world is for you, yourself to make changes. Think outside of the box. Dare to dream the impossible. Reach for the stars, Libra. One day you just may be one. You crave excitement and something that will set your soul on fire. Trying new things and surrounding yourself with new friends may be in order. Let no one set limits on your life.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Love would not begin to describe the feelings you are experiencing now. This is more like an obsession. You crave something that makes you feel alive. Feelings such as passion, jealousy and possession may come into play in your world. It seems as if you know exactly what/who you want and you will not let anything nor anyone stand in your way. YOU HAVE TO HAVE IT! Keep your focus and your determination will lead to you having exactly what your heart desires.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This is your time to shine. You are full of pride and proud of your accomplishments. You are being noticed in the workplace and have been excelling at your job. You are very observant of the feelings of those around you and are able to make them feel good about themselves. You feel much support from your peers and family. Everything in your world is beginning to feel healthy and come natural. You begin to feel as if something doesn't come from the heart it is irrelevant in your world. You surround yourself with people you feel are real and true friends.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You look and feel good as you focus on getting things done. You could feel something amiss, something that just niggles and irritates but you can't tell exactly what. A new project progresses and the teamwork is excellent; someone could challenge some of your decisions on this! A quick visit with someone sparks your thoughts and ideas as you connect on a mutual understanding and agree to pursue this together. Warm feelings for someone younger brighten your day; you feel strongly about the future being with those of the younger generation and you contribute to this in some way.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today brings a sense of ease when communicating on all levels. Your gains in money and material items are a focus for you now; remember to be grateful for all that you have now! You find it hard to focus on anything but reaching your goals; pay attention to personal issues. Your sense of worth when looking at purchases or projects is very sharp; your judgment is on target. You shine when addressing a group with updates and plans. There may be a difficult family discussion later; you have the ability to take the bull by the horns and get to the heart of the matter.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You receive information regarding someone who is a large part of your emotional landscape. Activities with family members takes prominence over any other relationships. A discussion with others helps strengthen the bonds you share; if you have done or said anything you are confronted with remember it's just better to be honest so that feelings can be repaired. An older person may want you to do something that would go against your morals; remember shysters aren't right or good just because you're related. Money and control are very attractive to you; sexual acceptance and fulfillment are strongly desired.

Wordsearch Puzzle

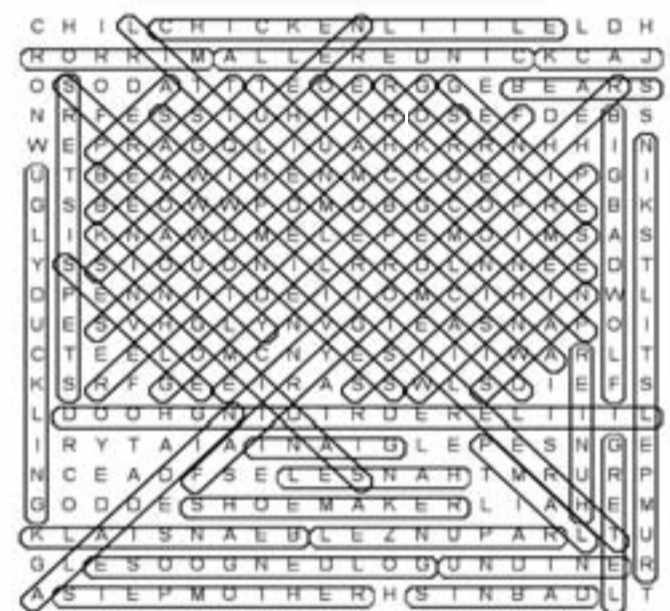
Family Ties

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a special occasion for families.



- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| ANCESTOR | FATHER | MOTHER | SISTERS |
| AUNT | FOLKS | NEICE | SON |
| BOND | GENEALOGY | NEPHEW | SPOUSE |
| BROTHERS | GRANDPARENT | NEWLYWED | STEPPARENT |
| CHILDREN | HALF BROTHER | OFFSPRING | TRIPLETS |
| CLAN | HALF SISTER | PARENTS | TWINS |
| COUSINS | HUSBAND | PROGENY | UNCLE |
| DAD | KIN | RELATIONS | WIFE |
| DAUGHTER | MARRIAGE | RELATIVES | |
| DESCENDANTS | MOM | SIBLING | |

Fairy Tales



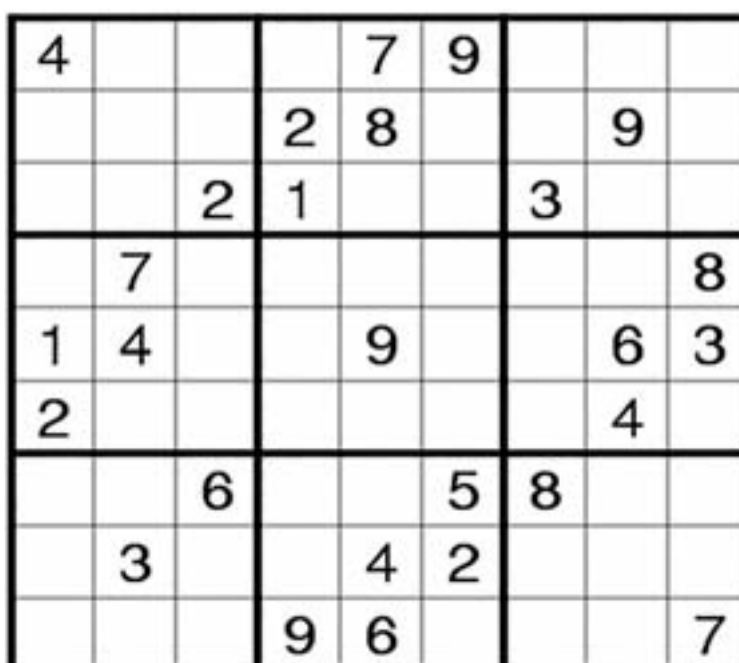
- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| ALADDIN | FROG PRINCE | LAMP | SINBAD |
| BEANSTALK | GENIE | LITTLE MERMAID | SNOW QUEEN |
| BEARS | GIANT | LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD | SNOW WHITE |
| BEAST | GOLDEN GOOSE | MIRACOR | STEPMOTHER |
| BEAUTY | GOLDBLOCKS | PEA | STEPPERS |
| BIG BAD WOLF | GRANDMOTHER | PRINCESS | THREE LITTLE PIGS |
| CHICKEN LITTLE | GRETTEL | RAPUNZEL | THUMBELINA |
| CINDERELLA | HANSEL | RUMPELSTILTSKIN | UGLY DUCKLING |
| ELVES | HUNTER | SEVEN DWARFS | UNDINE |
| EMPEROR | JACK | SHOEMAKER | WISHES |
| FAIRY GODMOTHER | KING MIDAS | | |

The hidden message is: CHILDHOOD ENDS WHEN FAIRY TALES CEASE TO DELIGHT

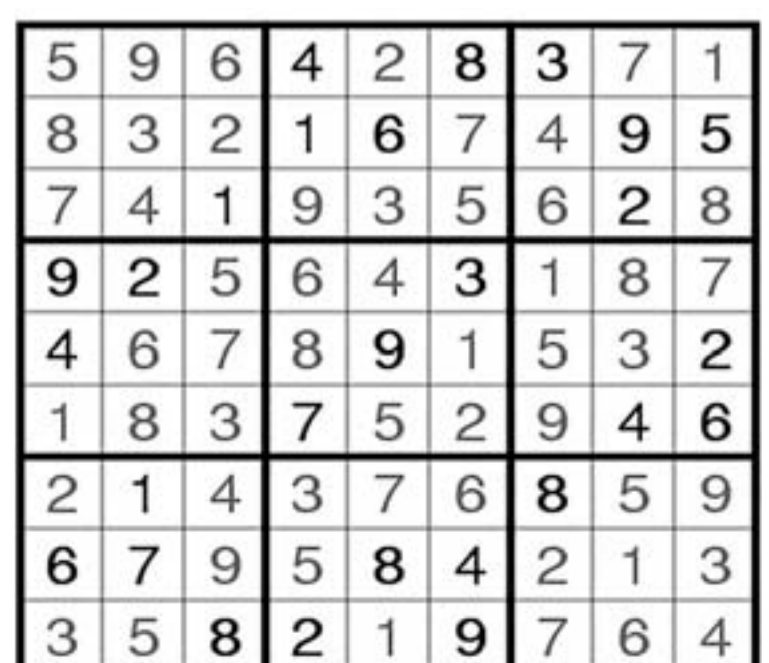
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018



US singer and actress Janelle Monáe performs during the 2018 Austin City Limits Music Festival at Zilker Park in Austin, Texas. — AFP

Rembrandt's 'The Night Watch' to be restored - live

Like watching paint dry? Soon art lovers will be able to watch one of the world's most famous paintings being restored live and online. Rembrandt's masterpiece "The Night Watch" will undergo a years-long, multi-million-euro overhaul at Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum under the full gaze of the public, its general director said yesterday.

The unique project starting in July 2019 will let art lovers see behind the normally secretive process as the Dutch master's 1642 tableau is brought back to its full glory. "The Night Watch by Rembrandt is one of the most famous paintings in the world and we feel we have to preserve it for future generations," Rijksmuseum General Director Taco Dibbits told AFP. "Over two million people a year come to see The Night Watch, it's a painting that everybody loves, and we feel that the world has the right to see what we will do with it."

The last major restoration work was carried out 40 years ago after a mentally ill man slashed the painting with a knife. Since then experts have noticed a white haze appear on parts of "The Night Watch", especially in the area around the knife damage, where it is bleaching out the figure of a small dog.

'Share this moment'

The restoration, billed as the biggest in the Rijksmuseum's history, will be carried out behind a huge glass case so that visitors to the museum in the capital of the Netherlands can

see experts carry out their painstaking work. But the regeneration of the piece, which hangs in the museum's "Gallery of Honour", will also be livestreamed on the internet so people around the world can see it be restored inch by inch.

"Conservation is usually done behind closed doors, but this is such an important painting, we feel that the public who owns it has the right to see it and we want to share this very important moment," Dibbits said. Rembrandt Van Rijn was commissioned in 1642 by the mayor and leader of the civic guard of Amsterdam, Frans Banninck Cocq, to paint the picture of the officers and other members of the militia heading out on The Night Watch.

Over the last three and a half centuries the painting has endured several moves, restoration attempts and even an escape from the Nazis. In the 1700s the painting had large chunks cut from each side during a move to Amsterdam Town Hall, followed by the clearing of "multiple layers of boiled oil and varnishes".

A century later "The Night Watch" underwent a series of attempts to "regenerate" the varnish and remove its yellowish tint. Then in September 1939 the painting was evacuated from the Rijksmuseum along with 30,000 other artworks as Nazi Germany closed in. When it was returned from its last hiding place in a cave in Maastricht in the southern Netherlands in 1945 it needed major restoration.

Knife and acid attacks

The painting's travails were not over: the 1975 attack saw a disturbed man slash the painting 12 times, with the marks of the deepest cuts still being visible today. The museum decided to carry out a major restoration then, only to see a man spray acid on it in 1990. Recently, however, new problems emerged. "We noticed that over the past years there's a white glare that appeared on the bottom part of the painting. We want to be able to understand what that is," said Dibbits.

Restoring "The Night Watch" will not be cheap, or quick, however. "That will cost several millions," said Dibbits, adding that the museum would also be looking for private funding. "I'm very confident people will want to contribute to it because we all want to restore it for future generations." After several months of research, "The Night Watch" will be the centerpiece of an exhibition marking the 350th anniversary of Rembrandt's death starting in February 2019, before restoration work begins in full in July. "As we say in Dutch, conserving paintings is a monk's job, it takes a lot of patience, so it might be several years," said Dibbits. — AFP



Harry and pregnant Meghan get baby gifts, meet koalas Down Under



Britain's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan walk down the stairs of the iconic Opera House to meet people yesterday.



Prince Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex speak to 4-year-old Findlay Blue (center) and 6-year-old Dasha Gallagher (left) after they officially opened the Taronga Institute of Science and Learning at Taronga Zoo in Sydney.



Britain's Prince Harry (right) and his wife Meghan (second right) meet an echidna held by Michelle Shaw (left) during a visit to Taronga Zoo in Sydney.

British royals Harry and Meghan received baby gifts, met a koala couple and posed in front of Sydney's dazzling Opera House yesterday, on their first public outing since announcing they are to become parents. The happy prince and his US-born wife laughed as they were given a pair of Australian baby Ugg boots from the country's governor general, watched eucalyptus-munching koalas at the zoo and took a boat ride across Sydney Harbor as they began a lengthy tour of the Pacific.

Meghan, wearing a tight white dress by Australian designer Karen Gee, showed few signs of having a baby bump, but smiled broadly as she stepped back into the limelight-posing against the backdrop of the Opera House sails, which gleamed in the spring sunshine. Shortly after the appearance, Gee's website was down, apparently due to the volume of traffic it was receiving.

At the foot of the Opera House a crowd of hundreds pressed against security fences for a royal outdoor meet-and-greet, waving Australian flags, assorted pictures and carrying human-size koala toys, all under the gaze of police snipers and close protection officers. "I've been following them since the wedding," 90-year-old retiree Edward Atkinson told AFP, adding that he would be looking out for any signs of Meghan's pregnancy. "I want to see how she interacts with the crowd," added Atkinson, who saw Harry's mother Princess Diana when she visited Australia for the country's bicentenary celebrations in January 1988.

This royal couple are on a 16-day tour of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga that had already been keenly watched but is now set to be a media frenzy that will test Australia's large contingent of royal-sceptic republicans. Shortly after the pair stepped off the plane on Monday, Kensington Palace announced that Queen Elizabeth II's 34-year-old grandson and the 37-year-old actress are "expecting a baby in the spring of 2019", triggering a chorus of coos and rampant tabloid speculation about baby names. "What fantastic news!" tweeted Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison. "Australia is thrilled for you both. Looking forward to sharing in the joy during your stay down under."

The queen was said to be "delighted", British Prime Minister Theresa May tweeted her "warmest congratulations", and Meghan's mother Doria Ragland said she was

"very happy about this lovely news". As TV stations in the English-speaking world broke into their regular coverage, Google saw a spike in searches for "when is spring?" -the answer in Britain is from March until May or June-and newspapers mused over what the baby, who will become either an earl or lady, will be called.

The bookies' instant pick was Diana-the name of the late princess who was mother to both Prince Harry and his older brother Prince William-along with Arthur and Alice. The celebrity couple can expect a warm welcome on their tour, even if polls show half of Australians would like to ditch British monarchs as their country's head of state.

American princess

Kensington palace said they did not expect any changes to the trip schedule, although Meghan is not expected to join Harry in scaling the Sydney Harbour Bridge to mark the start of the Invictus Games later in the week. They are still expected to visit Fiji and Tonga despite a notice advising pregnant women to stay away because of the Zika virus.

The decision came after consultations with doctors, Kensington Palace said. The BBC's royal correspondent said

scrutiny will only intensify with the announcement Meghan is expecting. "This is now the duchess's pregnancy tour-every step of the way she will be greeted with a new level of excitement and with some degree of concern," the BBC's Jonny Dymond wrote. Meghan made her name in acting as savvy paralegal Rachel Zane in the US television legal drama "Suits", a world far removed from Buckingham Palace.

Her first steps as a British royal have been cautious, immaculately scripted and well received. It is all but mandatory for a major royal to have a charity project, and Meghan's choice addressed the biggest tragedy to befall Britain in the past years. The June 2017, the Grenfell Tower fire in London killed 71 people and raised uncomfortable questions about the government's approach to low income families who lived there. Meghan wrote the foreword to the recipe collection entitled "Together: Our Community Cookbook", produced by women who suffered in the blaze. Britons also swooned after seeing Meghan nonchalantly closing her own car door at her first solo engagement last month in London. — AFP



Britain's Prince Harry (second left) and his wife Meghan (right) are presented with presents for a baby from Australian Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove (second right) and Lady Cosgrove (left) at Admiralty House in Sydney yesterday. — AFP photos



FLASH MOVIE GETS NEW START DATE

Production has been pushed back on the Flash movie. Warner Bros has reportedly pushed back filming for DC's long-in-development standalone movie centered on The Flash, with it now expected to start filming in late 2019. The movie didn't have a confirmed date but was expected to begin filming in March. However, the project's script is still being tweaked and the studio will not have time to finish the script in time for the original beginning of filming. Ezra Miller - who will play the titular lead role the superhero flick - is scheduled to begin work on the third installment of the 'Fantastic Beasts' franchise in July, causing the push back, which will likely see the Flash film's release delayed until 2021, Variety magazine reports. John Francis

Daley and Jonathan Goldstein - who wrote 2017's 'Spider-Man: Homecoming' - are directing a script written by 'King Arthur: Legend of the Sword' scribe Joby Harold. In a previous interview, Miller admitted his standalone film will cause an "endless, headache-inducing fabric of multiversities". He said: "What fans understand when they hear 'Flashpoint' would be almost like hearing a word like 'crisis'. We start to understand that our precious DC Universe will inevitably be torn asunder to an endless, headache-inducing fabric of multiversities. The DC hyped-Extended Multiverse, as I plan to call it. Quote me."

Sir Michael Caine rejected 'emotional' movie role

Sir Michael Caine once rejected a movie role because it made him too emotional. The 85-year-old actor has revealed he was in line to star in a movie about a dementia sufferer, but Michael ultimately rejected the part because of the death of his good friend and well-known tailor Doug Hayward, who had battled the disease. He confessed: "I couldn't. I couldn't do it, no. As an actor, if I'm going to play someone with dementia, I have to keep thinking back to someone I know who had dementia. And the only person I knew was Doug." Michael is confident he would have excelled in the role, having previously studied the disease. But he admitted the emotional stress was simply too much for him to deal with while working on the movie. He told Radio Times: "I had become so knowledgeable about [dementia]. But I realized emotionally I couldn't do it." "All day, for two months, thinking about the worst side of Doug, which killed him." Meanwhile, Michael previously admitted he barely watches any of his old films. The veteran star explained: "I sometimes see them on television and I'll sit there and watch 10 minutes. "The only one I watch for any amount of time, I'll watch for a quarter hour or 20 minutes, is 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels'. The rest of them I turn off after about five minutes. "I have seen them so many times and I know what's coming. The butler did it, or if you're watching 'Batman', the butler didn't do it."



McCarthy relished serious role in Can You Ever Forgive Me?

Melissa McCarthy relished playing a serious role in 'Can You Ever Forgive Me?'. The 48-year-old actress - who is best-known for her comedic performances - plays the late author Lee Israel, who went from being a celebrity biographer to a literary forger, in the new movie, and Melissa has insisted she enjoyed the challenge. She said: "I love a very flawed, challenging character. "You still root for them because whatever they're doing on the surface is not really what's happening on the inside. "We all play with different defense mechanisms, and Lee's was to be as prickly and difficult as possible. But I always thought, 'What is she hiding? What's going on the inside?'" Despite this, Melissa admitted it was difficult to really develop a deep understanding of the real-life person behind her performance. She told The Hollywood Reporter: "She barely took any pictures. There's absolutely no video of her." Melissa stars in the movie alongside Richard E. Grant, and he's admitted that a character like Lee is a breath of fresh air. He explained: "She's so authentically herself. She's unapologetic. "The era we live in now with social media, everybody has the perfect life - perfect food, or the perfect look, everything - but you see on a daily basis that people are sharing their lives. Lee is the antithesis of that. "She's completely authentic to her grumpy self, and somebody who doesn't give in at all, or doesn't give a nod to political correctness in any shape or form. I think it's sort of liberating, and to be admired in a certain way."

Sophie Turner experienced voices in her head for X-Men: Dark Phoenix

Sophie Turner experienced what it was like to hear voices in her head for research for 'X-Men: Dark Phoenix'. The 'Game of Thrones' actress reprises her role as psychic Jean Grey in the next outing in the superhero franchise and has revealed part of her research into mental health disorders saw her actually face some of the symptoms of schizophrenia. Turner told ScreenRant: "As soon as Simon [Kinberg] kind of told me what the movie was about we just started straight away sharing ideas, sharing materials. "Simon gave me a big, big book on schizophrenia. "I actually found this thing online, on YouTube. And it was just kind of repeating, repeating, repeating, what it sounds like being a schizophrenic. "So I used to walk around town with all these voices in my head. Kind of feel it out. And see what it felt like." The 22-year-old star also delved into how sufferers of split personality disorder cope with waking up in the morning and having no recollection of what they did the night before. She said: "We also explored Multiple Personality Disorder as well. "And what that feels like to kind of wake up and not know what you did, what happened and that sheer panic and how that affects you." Turner - who is best known for portraying Sansa Stark in HBO series 'Game of Thrones' - felt she needed to understand fully how her "complex" alter-ego was feeling to play the part, and says she's never dedicated so much time to research for an acting job before. She said: "Jean is just ... she's so, so, layered. She's so complex in this movie. "I really don't think that I've done more research for a role than for this one and I loved every minute of it." Turner found the forthcoming movie highly "challenging" and emotionally draining, but heaped praise on director Simon Kinberg, who stepped up from being a script writer for the saga to go behind the camera for the first time. She said previously: "I kept saying to Simon

(Kinberg, director), 'Oh good, that's nearly done. Now I only have, like, seven huge emotional scenes to go. It was a real challenge.' She added: "Simon has been the brain behind 'X-Men' for years and it's really exciting to have what feels like one of our own rise up and take hold of the franchise and direct it in the way that he sees it. "I have to say he's one of the best directors I've ever worked with. He's so passionate and collaborative."



Mortensen to make directorial debut with Falling

Viggo Mortensen is set to write, produce, star in, and direct the upcoming drama 'Falling'. The 59-year-old star will, in fact, be making his directorial debut with the release of the new movie, which tells the story of a son's relationship with his father. Viggo has written the screenplay and will also appear as one of the two leading roles, playing a man who lives with his male partner and their adopted daughter. Lance Henriksen will star alongside him as a farmer who has a traditional attitude towards family. And so when the father travels to Los Angeles to stay with his family, the duo clash over their contrasting approaches to life. Looking forward to the new movie, Gabrielle Stewart, the managing director of HanWay Films, said: "The industry has always regarded Viggo as a really soulful artist. He is a talented photographer, poet, and musician. "His screenplay for 'Falling' is a powerful, well-observed family drama. We are thrilled to be part of his promising and exciting directorial debut." Meanwhile, Viggo previously claimed he's always keen to take on challenging projects. Speaking about his approach to acting, he explained: "If I think it's an interesting story, but I don't think I can do it - then that's probably a good sign. "Each time I make a movie, it's like a paid scholarship to a different university course. It's up to you - you can just learn the script and certain mannerisms, props you might be given to play your part and do a technically great job, but I love the opportunity."



Pink to bring Beautiful Trauma tour to the UK

Pink is to bring her Beautiful Trauma tour to the United Kingdom next year. The 'Just Give Me A Reason' hitmaker has announced 20 tour dates in 10 countries across Europe in 2019, including two dates at London's iconic Wembley Stadium. Taking to Twitter, she wrote: "Ok Europe! FINALLY I get to share with you the plans for my tour next summer! Can't wait to see all your beautiful faces (sic)" Pink will begin her tour at the Johan Crujff Arena in Amsterdam, Netherlands before heading to Dublin, Ireland for a show at the RDS Arena. It is then on to Cardiff's Principality Stadium, Glasgow's Hampden Park, Liverpool's Anfield Stadium and Rock Werchter in Werchter, Belgium before the two dates at Wembley on June 29 and 30. The mother-of-two - who has Willow Sage, seven, and Jameson Moon, 21 months, with her husband Carey Hart - will then head to Nanterre, France before touring around Germany in K?ln, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Hannover, Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich. Austria, Poland, Switzerland and Sweden also feature on the tour. And Pink is no doubt hopping her UK and European tour will go better than her Australian one as she was forced to postpone a number of gigs after being rushed to hospital in Sydney with a gastric virus. In a lengthy update to fans posted on Instagram, she wrote: "Hi beautiful Sydney people ... On Monday, we were absolutely planning on going ahead with the show, and about 20 minutes before I left for soundcheck, I was rushed to the hospital, in excruciating pain. That was the reason for the late cancellation. It was out of anyone's control, and of course, wasn't planned that way. "I was discharged from hospital last night, and am following doctors orders of liquids and rest. A lot of you know how physical my shows are, and that I don't just stand in front a microphone and sing. I flip, dance, fly, harness, silk, and scream my way through

a total s**t show of awesomeness (no pun intended). Therefore, I need to be physically healthy and well in order to perform this show. I think all of you deserve the full show and me at my best. (sic)"



Right Said Fred by Sir Mick Jagger snub

Right Said Fred are hurt after being snubbed by Sir Mick Jagger. The group's Richard Fairbrass has recalled how unimpressed he was when the Rolling Stones legend - who they used to be pals with - ignored them at a restaurant. He said: "We sat next to him in a restaurant and he ignored us. We said, 'hey' and he ignored us, which was rude. We played guitar and bass with him. He is a wonderful frontman but maybe he was having a bad day." The band recently worked with Taylor Swift's team on her hit track 'Look What You Made Me Do', which samples their song 'I'm Too Sexy', but they don't envision becoming friends with the pop superstar any time soon. He added to The Sun newspaper: "We're only allowed to speak to her through her people. We do - and they've been very nice." When 'Look What You Made Me Do' was released, the group said couldn't be more thrilled with her inventive interpolation, as they said they were "honored" to be a part of the track and took the time to thank the blonde beauty and her team for "being absolutely wonderful". In a statement posted to their website, the band said: "We're very pleased to hear Taylor Swift's interpolation of our 1991 hit 'I'm Too Sexy'. Taylor and her team reached out to us about the track, we like what she does and we were very honoured to have her interpolation feature on her new single 'Look What You Made Me Do'. Thanks to Taylor and her team for being absolutely wonderful. We're very happy that our debut single will potentially be reaching new fans 26 years after its release." — Bang Showbiz

Lifestyle | Music & Movies



Warner Bros set to remake Tom and Jerry

Warner Bros. are set to remake 'Tom and Jerry' and 'Scooby Doo' next year. The beloved Hanna-Barbera animated productions are getting a revamp as Warner and Warner Animation Group (WAG) have recruited Chris Columbus - who has previously directed 'Harry Potter' and 'Pixels' - for a 'Scooby Doo' adaptation and 'Fantastic Four' filmmaker, Tim Story, to join their 'Tom and Jerry' team. Warner will join forces between their animated department and hybrid pictures to shoot everyone's favorite cat and mouse duo, and sources have revealed that Warner Bros will stick to the cartoon's successful slapstick style and keep the characters mute. 'Tom and Jerry' will start shooting in 2019 and the untitled 'Scooby-Doo' project is due to arrive in the

first quarter of 2020, Variety magazine reports. The other major live-action sequel that's expected to hit theatres next year is a 'Space Jam' sequel featuring NBA basketball player LeBron James.

The professional basketball player will star in the hotly-anticipated Warner Bros. movie and he is delighted to be working with the 'Black Panther' director Ryan Coogler on the project. He said: "The 'Space Jam' collaboration is so much more than just me and the Looney Tunes getting together and doing this movie. It's so much bigger. I'd just love for kids to understand how empowered they can feel and how empowered they can be if they don't just give up on their dreams. And I think Ryan did that for a lot of people." Terence Nance will

direct the motion picture, which is expected to be released next year, and Justin Lin - who was initially directing the film but pulled out - will remain on board as executive producer. The original 'Space Jam' film saw Michael Jordan team up with Bugs Bunny and the rest of the 'Looney Tunes' cartoon characters to play a game of basketball to save them from enslavement at an alien amusement park. — Bang Showbiz

Actress who helped trigger India's #MeToo movement 'inspired by God'

The Bollywood actress who helped trigger the #MeToo movement in India challenging sexual harassment and abuse sees it as part of her religious education after an experience 10 years ago she said effectively ended her career. "I feel God used me to start something which had to happen," Tanushree Dutta told Reuters. "All these women had this buried deep in their hearts out of shame." Dutta, who said she was inspired by Christianity, Buddhism, yoga and the #MeToo movement in the United States, said last month that prominent actor Nana Patekar had sexually harassed her on the set of a movie in 2008.



Indian Bollywood actress Tanushree Dutta talks during an interview with an Indian media outlet in Mumbai. — AFP

since. "All of that disgusted me - it took my faith and confidence from the industry," she said in an interview. "I didn't want to work here. I still kept in touch and did some work which needed short-term commitments." Rajendra Shirodkar, Patekar's lawyer, has sent Dutta a legal notice asking her to apologize to Patekar or face further legal action. He hasn't specified what that action would be.

The far-right group, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena

(MNS), this month filed a complaint with the police against Dutta for comments she made about their chief. The police in turn filed a defamation case against Dutta, currently under investigation, based on the MNS complaint. Dutta, on holiday in Mumbai, said she hadn't intended to bring up the issue in public again until she was asked by a reporter whether the #MeToo movement would ever come to India.

"My answer was that if what happened to me 10 years ago hasn't been addressed and hasn't been brought to justice, then how can any movement happen here?" Dutta said. She then repeated her allegations from 2008. The subsequent story on the Zoom TV channel set off a barrage of other stories in the Indian media about her allegations. This time, though, she didn't back off.

"I knew I had to keep the dialogue going ... and other women would speak out. I was in it deep - there was no way out. I was not going to cow down - not the second time for sure," she said. Within days of her story hitting the headlines, a wave of allegations - largely against figures in the media and entertainment industries - has swept across social media in India. — Reuters

Around half of hip hop videos feature smoking, researchers say

Almost half of the music clips made for hip hop's biggest hits in the past five years have featured scenes of smoking or vaping, researchers said Monday. "Music videos offer largely unregulated opportunities for exposure to, and brand advertising of, combustible and electronic tobacco and marijuana products," said a report published in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The report warned that product placement for particular brands of smoking gear was on the rise in videos for hip hop music, which is the most popular genre in the United States. Kristin Knutzen, a researcher in public health at Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy, and two of her colleagues logged smoking in music clips that made Billboard magazine's hip hop charts between 2013 and 2017.

They tallied the number of portrayals of smoking, be it joints, cigarettes or e-cigarettes. Of the 1,250 songs that made the Billboard 'Top 50' hip hop and R&B chart, between 40 to 50 percent had clips that featured some form of smoking, depending on the year. The music videos were collectively viewed some 49 billion times. The smoking included joints (pure cannabis rolled in cigarette paper), spliffs (weed and tobacco), blunts (marijuana rolled in cigar leaves, which are popular with rappers) as well as pipes, cigarettes and vaping devices, which are often used to inhale cannabis products.

The researcher also logged every instance of smoke or vapor appearing on screen. Brand mark placement also increased over the same period, the study showed, from zero percent for "combustible" (non-electronic) products in 2013 to almost 10 percent of clips in 2017. One of the biggest hits of 2017, "I'm The One," by DJ Khaled with Justin Bieber, Quavo, Chance The Rapper and Lil Wayne, was viewed 1.1 billion times on YouTube and shows a female dancer voluptuously exhaling smoke from an e-cigarette. A later shot zooms in on a box with an e-cigarette brand label on it.

Rappers have always featured product placement in their video, be it for sneakers, clothes, sound systems or alcohol. Theoretically, if the film-makers receive payment for the placement, they are supposed to include an acknowledgement of the fact. Since 2010, the US Food and Drug Administration required prior notification for any paid tobacco product placement in music videos or in movies, but the rule does not yet apply to e-cigarettes, and such notifications are not public. "Future regulation that directly addresses the often co-occurring appearance and marketing of tobacco, marijuana, and electronic products in music videos would limit exposure to their use and could reduce the burden of tobacco and marijuana use," the researchers said. — AFP

Spy master Le Carre's TV series showcased at London film fest

A tale of espionage and intrigue by Britain's master spy novelist John le Carre is the latest TV series to grab the limelight usually reserved for movies. The series based on his 1983 novel "The Little Drummer Girl", directed by South Korea's Park Chan-Wook, will hit TV's in the next month, but it got a big screen world premiere this week at the London Film Festival. It was the only TV production to earn a coveted slot at the two-week international showcase, and its inclusion is seen as a further sign of the format's growing status within the world of cinema.

"The landscape has shifted completely in the past decade," Alexander Skarsgard, the Golden Globe-winning actor who plays a lead role in the mini-series, told AFP. "It's not like it used to be where TV actors want to graduate and move into features. It feels almost like the river's flowing in the opposite direction now. A lot of amazing directors and writers gravitate towards television."

'Not a whizz-bang thing'

Park, who won the top prize at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival for "Oldboy", directs all six episodes of the spy series in what is his TV debut. Commissioned by the BBC and American pay-TV network AMC, "The Little Drummer Girl" is the latest Le Carre work adapted for television by this Anglo-American partnership, which was behind hit TV series "The Night Manager", crafted from the British author's 1993 spy novel. But Le Carre-the pen name of David John Moore Cornwell-warned that this follow-up, which will also be broadcast worldwide after netting various distribution deals in London, may struggle to match its predecessor's broad appeal. "It's not a whizz-bang thing and it has a much more serious content in some ways," he said at the premiere of "The Little Drummer Girl" on Sunday.

Set in the late 1970s, it follows a fiery actress and idealist-played by English actress Florence Pugh-who is recruited by

Skarsgard's character to become a double agent. She joins an Israeli counter-terrorism unit infiltrating a Palestinian terror cell carrying out bombings across Europe. Pugh said she was drawn to the project for the "mind-blowing" chance to work with Park. She told AFP that audiences increasingly appreciate quality TV because "you have time with these characters, you really get to love them." "It's not over in an hour and a half. You are invested in these people," Pugh added.

'Looks terrific on the big screen'

Cannes, the world's most prestigious film festival, last year allowed TV series among its offerings for the first time. London has included small screen work in previous years, showing episodes of British sci-fi anthology "Black Mirror" in 2016 and American crime drama "Mindhunter" last year. Tricia Tuttle, artistic director of its 2018 showcase, said their inclusion stemmed from high-calibre TV remaining "very exciting" and attracting top filmmakers.

"(They) are working in ways we often think of as more cinematic-with story, image, design and sound working intertextually, with real sophistication," she said. "This kind of work looks terrific on the big screen. And festivals can provide audiences with that 'one-of-a-kind' collective cinematic experience of scale." Oscar-nominated actor Michael Shannon, who plays the head of the anti-terrorism unit in "The Little Drummer Girl", agreed TV allows storytelling details to be retained in a way often impossible in a 90-minute movie. However, he added films still held a special appeal, allowing filmmakers to be artistically adventurous. "I think television can't help but be a little bit more oriented towards mass consumption," he told AFP. "There is the possibility in film to... take a bit more risk." — AFP



(From left) British actor Billy Howle, US actor Richard Gere, producer Hilary Salmond and Tom Rob Smith pose during a photocall for a TV serie "MotherfatherSon" as part of the MIPCOM, in Cannes, southeastern France. — AFP

Richard Gere trolls Trump as he makes his TV debut

Hollywood star Richard Gere took a pop at US President Donald Trump as he unveiled his television debut at Cannes playing a billionaire tycoon not dissimilar to Rupert Murdoch. The "Pretty Woman" actor is shooting a new BBC series "MotherFatherSon", which he said is a bid "to tell a story that relates to this crazy moment on the planet." "The reality-show president we have highlights the real stuff even more," Gere told reporters at MIPCOM, the world's top entertainment showcase Monday in the French Riviera resort.

Gere, 69, plays the media mogul patriarch of a dysfunctional dynasty who has built up a worldwide empire on the back of his trashy British tabloids. Although the story includes many parallels with the rise of Australian-born tycoon Rupert Murdoch, the program-makers deny there is any direct link. Murdoch's Fox News channel has been a cheerleader for Trump, who is a

vocal fan of the network. Gere said he decided to take the dive into TV only because of the strength of the script by English writer Tom Rob Smith, who was nominated for an Emmy for "The Assassination of Gianni Versace".

"I don't need to work. But I want to take on challenges like this," he told the Hollywood Reporter. "We have now become accustomed to seeing something that is false and lies and all artifice," he said. Gere called the eight-hour series-which will be broadcast next year-"neo-Shakespearean" in the way it deals with abuse of a power and how the dynasty is threatened by the self-destructive actions of an heir played by Billy Howl. Helen McCrory, of "Peaky Blinders" fame, is playing Gere's estranged British wife. — AFP

Saudi Hollywood deal hit by Khashoggi disappearance

The head of Hollywood's most powerful talent agency said he is "really concerned" and "upset" about the disappearance of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi amid reports yesterday that it jeopardizes a \$400 million deal with the kingdom. The Saudi Public Investment Fund negotiated a minority stake in Endeavor worth 345 million euros in March as powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman pushed for a foothold in the entertainment industry. But Ari Emanuel, the CEO of the giant, which includes the William Morris Agency, told television executives in Cannes on Monday that Khashoggi's case was "very, very concerning", although he stopped short of saying whether the deal was dead.

"I personally am really concerned about it. But all I can say is that we are monitoring the situation. That's legally all I can say right now," he told delegates at MIPCOM, the world's top entertainment market in the French Riviera resort. "It is very, very concerning. Really concerning, it's upsetting," he added. Saudi Arabia is apparently considering an admission that Khashoggi died during an interrogation that went wrong, US media reported Monday.

Khashoggi, a Saudi national and US resident who became increasingly critical of Prince Mohammed in columns for the Washington Post, has not been seen since he walked into the kingdom's Istanbul consulate to sort out marriage paperwork on October 2. Turkish officials have said they believe he was killed, a claim Saudi Arabia denies. Since Khashoggi's disappearance a wave of Western business leaders have pulled out of a major investment summit next week in Riyadh organized by the prince, who has wanted to present himself as a modernizer. — AFP



Korean director Park Chan-wook (left), British author John le Carre (David John Moore Cornwell) and British actress Florence Pugh (right) pose upon arrival for the world premiere of the film "The Little Drummer Girl" during the BFI London Film Festival in London. — AFP



Scottish Actor Gerard Butler participates in a news conference about his new submarine action film 'Hunter Killer' at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. Butler spent three days on board a US Navy submarine while researching and preparing to make the film, which stars Butler as an American submarine captain who teams with US Navy Seals to rescue the Russian president, who has been kidnapped by a rogue general. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



Experts from Europa Nostra, a NGO for protection and celebration of Europe's cultural and natural heritage inspect the crumbling oval skeleton of the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party on mount Buzludzha in central Bulgaria. — AFP photos



A detail of a mosaic in the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party on mount Buzludzha prior to the inspection of experts from Europa Nostra.



A detail of a mosaic in the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party on mount Buzludzha.

Bulgaria urged to save communist-era architectural 'masterpiece'

Perched like a vast flying saucer on a central Bulgarian mountainside, Buzludzha is a brutalist concrete monument that was built to glorify communism nearly 40 years ago. The striking circular building has been left to fall victim to vandalism and decay, as Bulgaria has been eager to forget its communist past, but now western experts want to preserve it as a heritage site. The 70-metre (230-foot) high structure—made of 70,000 tons of concrete, 3,000 tons of reinforced steel and 40 tons of glass—looks like it is hovering at around 1,400 meters above sea level.

It has a 40-metre-wide ceremonial hall with room for 400 people and was covered from floor to ceiling in mosaics depicting the history of Bulgaria's communist party. Inaugurated in 1981, it fell into disrepair following the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and now lies empty and crumbling. In recent years, only the most adventurous foreign tourists have visited the isolated spot, prompting local authorities to lock it up to prevent any accidents.

Nevertheless, experts from cultural heritage organization Europa Nostra visited the site last month and have urged the Bulgarian authorities to rescue what they believe is "a masterpiece of architecture, engineering and art".

Endangered site

Europa Nostra listed it as one of the most endangered heritage sites in Europe this year. During the Cold War era, the communist party claimed that the red glass stars on top of a tower that is part of the complex could be seen as far as Romania to the north and Greece to the south. "With its brutalist style, it is a genuine architectural achievement of the 20th century," said Laurent Levi-Strauss, of Europa Nostra and a former deputy chief of UNESCO's Cultural



Laurent Levi-Strauss, an expert from Europa Nostra, a NGO for protection and celebration of Europe's cultural and natural heritage inspects the crumbling oval skeleton of the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

Heritage division.

For British architect Graham Bell, Buzludzha is "an unbelievable building, unbelievably impressive and unbelievably sad in the way it is deteriorating." "This monument is part of European cultural heritage, but most of Europe doesn't know it exists," Bell said.



A detail of a mosaic in the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party.



The crumbling oval skeleton of the House of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

The experts are convinced that what remains of the building could—and should—be saved. Following their visit, they called for "urgent action" to stop the decay. And they proposed giving the site national protected status, which would allow EU funds to be used for its rescue. "It is good that Europe cares about it as Bulgaria doesn't," Buzludzha's 89-year-old architect, Georgy Stoilov, told AFP.

Indeed, the cash-strapped local authorities never regarded Buzludzha as much of a priority and saw little point in the upkeep of a site that had such bad connotations. It is a Bulgarian architect, Dora Ivanova, born a year after the fall of the regime, who has been responsible for the revival in interest in Buzludzha.

'Explaining history'

She came across the monument on the internet while she was at university in Germany and started a campaign for its conservation four years ago. "It's not possible that such an amazing piece of architecture is in such bad condition. It is a part of Bulgarian history whether we like it or

not," Ivanova said. She said her aim was to conserve the building, rather than restore it, "as restoring it would be to glorify communism". "I just want to explain history," she added.

Part of her project would use three-dimensional projection mapping to show what the missing parts of the mosaics might have looked like.

And Ivanova also suggests offering augmented reality self-guided tours. Europa Nostra's Levi-Strauss conceded that it would be difficult to restore Buzludzha to its former glory given the controversy surrounding its past. But that should not prevent the authorities from making use of it for "educational purposes, for conferences and concerts," he said. Tourism expert Rumen Draganov suggested that Buzludzha could also help boost tourism to a region already known for its Thracian tombs and famous rose gardens. — AFP



Trump hangs painting of self at bar with Republican presidents

It could be any Republican president's fantasy: hanging out at a bar with fellow conservative American leaders of years, decades, and even centuries past. For President Donald Trump, that fictional "happy hour" exists, in the form of a painting hanging at the White House that caused a huge uproar on social media when it was revealed over the weekend. The president's critics say the scene is as real as some of the claims Trump made during his interview on "60 Minutes" that aired Sunday where a glimpse of the painting could be seen in the background.

Trump's likeness has been ruthlessly disfigured by "high" and "low" artists alike, who have made no secret of their dislike of the Republican president. But in "The Republican Club," a painting by Andy Thomas, an uncharacteristically brawny Trump sports an affable, if slightly pinched smile as he is joined by the likes of Abraham Lincoln, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Teddy Roosevelt and George W. Bush.

The whole group is chatting around a table and seems to be having a jolly good time while sharing drinks, apart perhaps for Calvin Coolidge, who hovers in the back-

ground a short distance away. Trump, who does not drink alcohol, appears to be having a soda. Instead of sitting, Roosevelt has a foot propped up on a chair as he leans in intently, hand on one knee. Gerald Ford is leaning against a pillar. Reagan and Nixon are trading glances, and George H.W. Bush looks on. Eisenhower leans in next to Trump.

The fantasy creation was mercilessly mocked on social media. One Twitter user wrote: "Neither Lincoln nor Teddy would be caught dead at this table." "Like, you could borrow stuff from the Smithsonian or the National Gallery of Art but, nope, you're gonna decorate the White House with crap from the Things Remembered kiosk at the mall," wrote journalist Benjamin Freed in another comment.

Bucked by art world

Indeed, the Trump White House has a strained relationship with the art world. It has no curator—William Allman, who long held the post, retired last year and has yet to be replaced. And when the Trumps asked the Guggenheim Museum to borrow a Vincent van Gogh painting, they were instead offered a solid gold toilet by Maurizio Cattelan, a

satirical, if fully functioning sculpture called "America."

Thomas, who specializes in figurative paintings of cowboys, also made a Democratic presidents' version of the image. In both the Republican and Democratic versions, there's a vague rendering of a woman in the background, a nod to a potential first female American president. "Even in

Trump's thrift store trash painting, a woman is coming to end the bullshit when they aren't paying any attention," read a comment by Twitter user Emily Colucci.

Others digitally altered images of other protagonists like North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Trump supporter and rapper Kanye West or Russian President Vladimir Putin onto some of the other presidents' heads. Thomas said Trump gave him some positive feedback about the painting. "He basically said, 'Most portraits of me I really don't like,'" Thomas told Time magazine. "And he's right. He's hard to paint. There's some bad ones out there." — AFP



An editor looks at the Twitter feed of Josh Billinson showing a painting by Andy Thomas (right) entitled "The Republican Club", alongside a screenshot of the painting hanging at the White House during a "60 Minutes" interview with US President Donald Trump, in Los Angeles, California.—AFP

Classifieds

Wednesday, October 17, 2018

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Relatively hot and Partly cloudy with light to moderate variable wind to south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 35 km/h with a chance for scattered rain.

BY NIGHT: Humid weather specially over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to south westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h with a chance for mist forming over some areas.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 16/10/2018 0000 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	37 °C	27 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	36 °C	23 °C			
ABDALY	37 °C	22 °C			
BUBYAN	** °C	** °C			
JAHRA	37 °C	26 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	33 °C	25 °C			
SALMIYAH	34 °C	29 °C			
AHMADI	33 °C	28 °C			
NUWAISIB	37 °C	24 °C			
WAFRA	37 °C	22 °C			
SALMY	36 °C	23 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	10/17	Partly cloudy and with a chance for scattered rain at times	38 °C	23 °C	VRB-SE	12 - 38 km/h
Thursday	10/18	Relatively hot and Relatively humid and some scattered clouds will appear with a chance for rain	37 °C	23 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 40 km/h
Friday	10/19	Partly cloudy and Relatively humid with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	36 °C	22 °C	SE-VRB	08 - 40 km/h
Saturday	10/20	Partly cloudy and Relatively humid with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times	35 °C	21 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 40 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:30
Sunrise	05:50
Zuhr	11:34
Asr	14:50
Sunset	17:18
Isha	18:34

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	34 °C
MIN. Temp.	25 °C
MAX. RH	92 %
MIN. RH	31 %
MAX. Wind	SE 64 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kamrudin Kazi S/o Abdul Razak Kazi, holder of Indian Passport No. P6324092 & Civil ID No. 273041904798 has changed my name from Kamrudin Kazi to Kamrudin Khaji hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Kamrudin Khaji. (C 5429)

I, A.SUDHAGAR (HINDU), S/o: Arunachalam, Passport No. J5548581, Civil ID No. 280031007474, date of birth 10.3.1980, No. 2/98, Mariyamman Koil Street, Palaiya Kunjaram, Villupuram - 607201, has converted Hindu to Islam with the name of MOHAMED JAFEEER ARUNACHALAM (ISLAM). (C 5428) 16-10-2018

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 17/10/2018				Departure Flights on Wednesday 17/10/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	JZR	144	Doha	13:55
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	CLX	573	Hanoi	14:30
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	MSR	2615	Cairo	00:30
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	JZR	528	Sohag	01:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
JZR	651	Lahore	02:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	JZR	188	Dubai	15:10
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
RBG	215	Sohag	03:05	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	KNE	684	Madinah	15:50
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR	606	Kochi	16:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:00
KAC	796	Madinah	03:45	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	619	Doha	16:15
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	KAC	128	Sharjah	16:15
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
KAC	544	Cairo	05:20	SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
JZR	603	Mumbai	05:25	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	FDB	052	Dubai	17:20
JZR	561	Sohag	05:55	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	381	Delhi	17:45
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	KAC	331	Trivandrum	17:55
JZR	143	Doha	07:00	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:50	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
KAC	358	Kochi	08:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	JZR	608	Hyderabad	18:25
JZR	529	Asyut	08:10	JZR	266	Beirut	18:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JZR	240	Amman	18:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
JZR	787	Riyadh	10:30	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	JZR	552D	Alexandria	20:05
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	JZR	602	Mumbai	20:30
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
JZR	903	Baku	11:10	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	DLH	624	Dammam	20:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	21:00
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	KAC	353	Bengaluru	21:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
CLX	792	Luxembourg	12:45	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JAV	622	Amman	21:15
KAC	522	Al Najaf	13:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:35
JZR	357	Mashhad	13:05	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:30	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:45	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
FEG	341	Sohag	13:50	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	KAC	543	Cairo	22:15
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	KAC	383	Delhi	22:25

At least 7 dead as Morocco train derails; Amir sends condolences



BOUKNADEL, Morocco: This picture taken yesterday shows the scene of a rail accident in this Moroccan town between the capital Rabat and the port city of Kenitra to its north. — AFP

UAE charges British student with spying

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates has charged a British PhD student with spying in the Gulf country, as his wife yesterday called on Britain to defend his innocence. Matthew Hedges stands accused of "spying for a foreign country, jeopardizing the military, political and economic security of the state", UAE attorney general Hamad Al-Shamsi said late Monday. The 31-year-old, who was researching the UAE's foreign and internal security policies after the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions, was detained at Dubai airport on May 5.

Hedges' wife Daniela Tejada said yesterday he been "held in an undisclosed location in the UAE in solitary confinement" with limited access to the consulate and his family as well as no access to a lawyer until last week. She said Hedges had been told last week he "was being charged with gathering information and sharing it with a foreign agency - the UK Government". Tejada called on the British government to "clarify publicly that Matt is innocent of the charges and that there have been many falsehoods said about

him". "This horrifying situation has been going on for far too long," she said.

Britain's foreign office said it was supporting Hedges and his family and had been "in close contact with the local authorities", a spokesperson said. British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt told AFP last week he was "very worried" about Hedges' fate. "I've spoken to the Emirati foreign minister twice now on this matter face to face so they are very aware of our concerns and we are monitoring it very closely," he said.

The charges against Hedges are based on evidence from investigations carried out by the public prosecution, according to the attorney general. Hedges had been posing as a researcher to cover his activities, he said, adding that the accusations were backed by "information taken from his electronic devices".

Tejada, who has visited her husband once and spoken to him on the phone several times, told AFP last week her husband "simply isn't guilty of anything". "He was just doing academic research," she said, adding that his research involved only open source material. "He's not disclosed anything... classified or confidential," she said, adding that Hedges had lived in the UAE for "several years" before he returned to Britain in 2015. — AFP

Female mechanic driving change...

Continued from Page 1

more than hold her own. "Whatever task we give

her she does it like a man with hard work and dedication," said coworker M Attaullah. She has also convinced some of those who doubted her ability to make it in a male-dominated work environment, including members of her own family. "There is no need in our society for girls to work at workshops, it doesn't seem nice, but it is her passion," said her father Muhammad Nawaz. "She can now set up the machinery and can work properly. I too am very happy." — AFP

Australian PM's Jerusalem embassy...

Continued from Page 1

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whom Morrison had telephoned to explain his shift, said on Twitter he was "very thankful" Morrison was considering the move. But the response from neighboring Indonesia - the world's largest Muslim nation - was less welcoming. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, speaking at a joint news conference with Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki in Jakarta, reaffirmed Indonesia's support for a two-state solution to the Middle East dispute and warned Australia against the risk of insecurity. "Indonesia asks Australia and other countries to support peace talks ... and not take steps that would threaten that peace process and stability of world security," Marsudi said.

Maliki said he was saddened that Australia might violate international law and disrespect a UN Security Council resolution. "They are risking Australia's trade and business relationship with the rest of the world, in particular (the) Arab and Muslim world," he said. Ambassadors from 13 Arab countries met in Canberra yesterday and agreed to send a letter to Australia's foreign minister expressing their concern, Egyptian ambassador to Australia Mohamed Khairat said.

Australian state-backed broadcaster ABC reported a senior official in Jakarta saying a landmark trade deal between the two countries may now be put on ice. Officials from Indonesia's foreign and trade ministries told AFP they were unaware of any plans to

suspend talks on the agreement, but Morrison indicated he had discussed the issue with President Joko Widodo in a series of calls. "We will continue to work closely and cooperatively with our allies and our partners all around the world on these issues," Morrison told parliament.

Morrison earlier said he was "open-minded" to "sensible" proposals to formally recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move his nation's embassy to the holy city, a sharp break with the policy of successive Australian governments. "We're committed to a two-state solution, but frankly it hasn't been going that well, not a lot of progress has been made, and you don't keep doing the same thing and expect different results," Morrison said.

"Scott Morrison is now so desperate to hang on to his job, he is prepared to say anything if he thinks it will win him a few more votes - even at the cost of Australia's national interest," said opposition Labor party foreign policy spokeswoman Penny Wong. Morrison came to power in August after a revolt by hardline conservatives in the Liberal party ousted his more moderate predecessor, Malcolm Turnbull. Turnbull's government had explicitly distanced itself from the decision by Trump to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, branding it "unhelpful" to the peace process.

The Sydney Morning Herald newspaper described Morrison's apparent change of heart as "unprincipled and craven". University of Sydney political analyst Rod Tiffen said the shift in position was being driven by domestic politics. "It's a big change, it is out of step with everyone, except America," said Tiffen. "But three days out from the Wentworth by-election, it's pretty blatant ... to the extent that there is a Jewish vote there, it probably helps." — Agencies

RABAT: A passenger train derailed yesterday near the Moroccan capital Rabat killing at least seven people and injuring over 80 others, officials said. "Regrettably, seven people died," regional health director Abdelmoula Boulamizot told the official MAP news agency. National railway company boss Mohamed Rabie Khlie earlier gave a death toll of six, including the driver and his assistant, and said 86 people were injured. Seven seriously injured people were receiving treatment in Rabat military hospital, with four in intensive care, MAP reported.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolence to Moroccan King Mohammed VI over the victims of the train accident. The Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on the dead and swift recovery for the injured. Cables of similar sentiments were sent to the king by HH the Crown

Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

A short statement from the ONCF national railway company said "an investigation has been opened to determine the causes of the accident" and pledged to provide more information when it had it. The crash occurred some 20 km north of Rabat between the towns of Kenitra and Sale. An AFP photographer saw rescue teams work to retrieve bodies from the overturned train after its carriages had toppled across the tracks.

Railway boss Khlie said that such deadly accidents were rare in the North African country, pointing to a crash in 1993 that killed 15 people as "the last one". King Mohammed VI said he would pay the burial costs of the victims and for the treatment of the injured, according to a royal cabinet statement. — Agencies

Iran missiles can travel 700 km...

Continued from Page 1

forces" for the abductions and demanded action from Pakistan. State news agency IRNA said 14 troops were seized, while local media and other sources gave the number as 11.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said the two countries were coordinating efforts to "ascertain the whereabouts of the Iranian guards". "No effort will be spared to assist our Iranian brothers in finding the Iranian guards," it said in a statement. The Iranians were "abducted between 4:00 am and 5:00 am in the Lulakdan area of the border by a terrorist group", according to IRNA. Lulakdan is a village 150 km south-east of Zahedan, capital of Sistan-Baluchistan province which has seen a long-running separatist insurgency.

The Revolutionary Guards, in a statement on their website, said operations were underway to find those responsible and called on Pakistan "to stamp out terrorists that are stationed near the border". The group kidnapped was involved in "a security operation" and included two members of the elite Revolutionary Guards intelligence unit and seven Basij militiamen as well as regular border guards, said the Young Journalists' Club (YJC), a state-owned news website, in an article that was later deleted.

Pakistani security officials told AFP they had been informed of the abduction by Iran. "We are in contact with local tribal people and are looking into it so that we can take timely action for their recovery," said a senior security official based in Quetta. Sistan-Baluchistan has long been a flashpoint, with Pakistan-based Baluchi separatists and jihadists carrying out regular cross-border raids against Iranian security posts. The province has a large, mainly Sunni Muslim ethnic Baluchi community which straddles the border. — Agencies

Pompeo meets Saudi king on...

Continued from Page 1

"We are strong and old allies. We face our challenges together," the crown prince told Pompeo in the palace decked out with imposing chandeliers and gold-plated furniture, to which Pompeo said, "Absolutely," after thanking the Saudis for allowing him to visit.

The UN human rights chief called yesterday for the lifting of the immunity of officials who might be involved in Khashoggi's disappearance. Due to the seriousness of the case "I believe the inviolability or immunity of the relevant premises and officials... should be waived immediately," Michelle Bachelet said in a statement.

In Istanbul, Turkish investigators were expanding their search to include the residence of the Saudi consul and consulate vehicles, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan raised the possibility that parts of the consulate had been repainted since Khashoggi disappeared. "The investigation is looking into many things such as toxic materials and those materials being removed by painting them over," he told reporters. Yesterday, Turkish media reported that Saudi Arabia's consul to Istanbul, Mohammed Al-Otaibi, had returned to Riyadh as Turkish authorities prepare to search his residence.

A Turkish security official said no conclusive evidence emerged from the overnight search that indicated Khashoggi was killed in the consulate. "However, there

are some findings and they are being worked on," he said, adding that painting may have damaged some evidence. "These can't be fully erased after all, so the teams will continue to work on this." Despite the outcry, the case poses a dilemma for the United States, Britain and other Western nations. Saudi Arabia is the world's top oil exporter and spends lavishly on Western arms. It is also a military ally and an opponent of Iran.

Trump has threatened "severe punishment" if it turns out Khashoggi was killed in the consulate, but ruled out cancelling arms deals worth tens of billions of dollars. Indicating unease over the Khashoggi case, international media and business executives are pulling out of an investment conference next week. HSBC CEO John Flint joined the list yesterday, as did the CEOs of Standard Chartered and Credit Suisse. Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra told the Dutch parliament he most likely would not attend. Saudi Arabia has said it would retaliate against any pressure or economic sanctions.

CNN said on Monday that after denying for two weeks any role in his disappearance, Saudi Arabia was preparing to say he died in a botched interrogation. Turkish authorities have an audio recording indicating that Khashoggi was killed in the consulate, Turkish sources have told Reuters, and shared evidence with countries including Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The Turkish team that searched the consulate took away soil samples and a metal door from the garden, a Reuters witness said, but a senior official acknowledged the difficulty of collecting evidence 13 days after the incident. Khashoggi moved to Washington last year fearing retribution for his criticism of Prince Mohammed. Many members of the US Congress, which has long had a testy relationship with Saudi Arabia, have issued strong criticism of the kingdom. — Agencies

Sports

Coach Gatland names two uncapped players in Wales' November squad

Gatland welcomes back eight British and Irish Lions to the squad

CARDIFF: Wales coach Warren Gatland yesterday named uncapped backs Luke Morgan and Jonah Holmes to a 37-man squad for the four home Test matches in November. Ospreys winger Morgan, Wales Sevens' all-time leading points and try scorer, has scored four tries in five matches for his region this season, while Leicester's English-born Holmes, who qualifies for Wales through a grandparent, scored 10 tries in 11 games for the Tigers last season.

Gatland had the luxury of welcoming back eight British and Irish Lions to the squad which recorded three test victories against South Africa and Argentina in the summer. There was no place for Rhys Webb, the scrum-half who signed for Toulon this season.

In his absence, Aled Davies, Gareth Davies and Tomos Williams, who all featured in the USA and Argentina in June, are named, alongside Dan Biggar, Gareth Anscombe and Rhys Patchell as the fly-half options.

"This autumn is the start of a 12-month countdown to the Rugby World Cup and it is a huge opportunity for the players," said Gatland. "The players who performed and represented Wales so well in the summer deserve the opportunity again and we are really pleased with the depth we have built across the squad."

"We have added in a lot of experience with eight British and Irish Lions coming into the squad so there is a lot of competition for places. "Some experienced players have missed out, the message to them is the door isn't closed looking long term, it's just a reflection of where we are depth wise and the opportunity to look at other players. "A further eight players haven't been selected due to injury, dependent on their recovery they could be called in at a later date."

Wales squad

Forwards (20): Rob Evans, Wyn Jones, Nicky Smith, Elliot Dee, Ryan Elias, Ken Owens, Leon Brown, Tomas Francis, Samson Lee, Dillon Lewis, Jake Ball, Adam Beard, Bradley Davies, Cory Hill, Alun Wyn Jones (capt), Ellis Jenkins, Dan Lydiate, Ross Moriarty, Justin Tipuric, Aaron Wainwright

Backs (17): Aled Davies, Gareth Davies, Tomos Williams, Gareth Anscombe, Dan Biggar, Rhys Patchell, Jonathan Davies, Tyler Morgan, Hadleigh Parkes, Owen Watkin, Josh Adams, Steffan Evans, Leigh Halfpenny, Jonah Holmes, Luke Morgan, George North, Liam Williams

Players not selected due to injury: Seb Davies, Aaron Shingler, James Davies, Josh Navidi, Taulupe Faletau, Scott Williams, Hallam Amos, Owen Lane. — AFP



File photo shows Warren Gatland (left) and Sean O'Brien pictured during the Lions tour.

Bolt offered contract with Malta soccer club

SYDNEY: Sprint king Usain Bolt could be making his way to Europe after being offered a two-year professional football contract in Malta, reports said yesterday, with the club saying it wanted to "write history" with the signing.

Bolt, 32, has been on trial with A-League club the Central Coast Mariners since arriving in Australia in August in his bid to pursue a boyhood dream of becoming a footballer after retiring from athletics last year.

The 100 metres world record-holder scored his first two goals in professional football on Friday when he started a pre-season game against second-tier Macarthur South West United in Sydney.

Malta club Valletta FC said they had made a formal offer which includes playing in its upcoming cup final, with chief executive Ghasston Slimen saying the move to snare Bolt was "about writing history".

"Usain Bolt broke the record in Beijing (Olympics) in 2008, and I have followed him for the last year-and-a-half on his football journey," Slimen told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"We play the final of the Super Cup on December 13, which we will win... so can you imagine Usain Bolt lifting the Super Cup trophy 10 years after he broke the record in Beijing? "This isn't about money, this is about history. This is something that they will talk about in 50 or 100 years' time."

A group of investors from the Sanban Group in the United Arab Emirates acquired a majority stake in the club last month, vowing to qualify for the group stages of Europe's Champions League.



SYDNEY: Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt (R) playing for A-League football club Central Coast Mariners is tackled by Josh Symons of Macarthur South West United (L) in his first competitive start for the club in Sydney on October 12, 2018. —AFP

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Slimen admitted Bolt still had to improve his footballing skills, but said he was inspired by the former sprinter's jubilant celebrations including the trademark lightning bolt victory pose-after the goals.

"I don't want him to be here on holiday, I want him training hard," he said, adding that he wanted Bolt to be lifting trophies during his stint at Valletta. "I don't want to make a big fuss, I want him to sign the contract, get on the flight, arrive in Malta and train, because we need to prepare for the Super Cup."

The Australian agent who arranged Bolt's trial with the Mariners declined to confirm or deny the reports when contacted by AFP yesterday. Bolt does not yet have a contract with the Mariners ahead of the start of the A-League season this Friday, with the club's chief executive Shaun Mielekamp saying in a statement that the Jamaican "will continue his indefinite training period... until any further

notice". Media reports suggest the Mariners are waiting for governing body Football Federation Australia to decide whether it will contribute to a potential Aus\$3 million (US\$2.1 million) offer to Bolt.

FFA head David Gallop said Tuesday "the story of a contract in Europe is news to me", but that any financial support from the governing body would not be drawn from a marquee fund set up to attract top players to the A-League.

"The ball is very much in the Mariners court. They have to make a decision whether they want to move to put Usain onto a contract," Gallop told Macquarie Sports Radio. "If they get to that point (of signing Bolt) then we'll look at what's feasible for us but it can't be from the marquee player fund... we can't use that money but we'll look at if we can do anything else." The 32-year-old previously tried out with clubs in Germany, South Africa and Norway to no avail. —AFP

Akira Ioane gets Maori call-up

WELLINGTON: Auckland Blues loose forward Akira Ioane, who was overlooked for New Zealand's end-of-season tour, has been given something of an international reprieve after being selected for the Maori All Blacks squad for their trip to the Americas.

Ioane, whose younger brother Reiko has established himself on the left wing for the All Blacks, has been on the fringes of selection for the world champions for the last three seasons but was left out of an extended 51-man squad named on Monday.

The 23-year-old, whose size, speed and ball handling made him a standout in rugby sevens, has been involved in several wider All Blacks training groups and went on their end-of-season tour last year, playing a non-test match. Concerns that he had not improved in key areas saw him miss out this time around, however.

Ioane's availability came as a pleasant surprise for Maori All

Blacks coach Clayton McMillan. "We didn't really anticipate Akira being involved with us," he told reporters in Auckland yesterday. "He's been a part of the All Blacks environment for the last 12-18 months. We make a few assumptions fairly early on, on who might be available to us and we obviously got that one wrong."

"We're all well aware of his strengths and we'll welcome him into our fold with open arms." McMillan added that Ioane might now be expected to take more of an active leadership role in the Maori squad for next month's matches against the United States, Brazil and Chile.

"But equally we want him to express himself, play well and put himself back in the picture for the All Blacks," he added. McMillan was also able to call on winger Nehe Milner-Skudder, loose forward Jackson Hemopo, who has been named as a lock, scrumhalf Bryn Hall, centre Matt Proctor and prop Tyrel Lomax for the tour.

All five are part of the extended All Blacks squad in Japan but will link up with the Maori group in South America for their second match against Brazil in Sao Paulo on Nov. 10, missing only the game against the United States in Chicago on Nov. 3. They end their tour against Chile on the outskirts of Santiago on Nov. 17. —AFP

Pressure growing on new USA Gymnastics chief

LOS ANGELES: Olympic champion Aly Raisman slammed USA Gymnastics' choice of interim president on Monday as pressure mounted on the embattled organization to rethink the appointment.

In a series of posts on Twitter, Raisman criticized the decision to hire former Republican US Congresswoman Mary Bono to take over at the helm of the scandal-plagued governing body.

Raisman said Bono's association with law firm Faegre Baker Daniels—which advised USA Gymnastics during the Larry Nassar sexual abuse scandal—made her position untenable. The 24-year-old 2012 and 2016 Olympic gold medalist accused Faegre Baker Daniels of helping "cover up" Nassar's crimes before the scandal erupted into public view.

"My teammates & I reported Nassar's abuse to USAG in 2015," Raisman wrote. "We now know USOC & lawyers at Faegre Baker Daniels (Mary Bono's firm) were also told then, yet Nassar continued to abuse children for 13 months!?"

"Why hire someone associated with the firm that helped cover up our abuse?" Nassar abuse survivor Raisman is suing both USA Gymnastics and the United States Olympic Committee over the scandal.

Former USA team doctor Nassar was jailed for life this year for abusing more than 250 athletes, including many stars of the USA's 2012 and 2016 Olympic squads. "Survivors, current gymnasts, families, coaches, gymnastics community & fans deserve better," Raisman wrote on Monday.

"We can't move forward until we know exactly what happened. USAG take accountability, be transparent, release all your documents & data. PLEASE tell the truth. This is so devastating." Another gymnast abused by Nassar, Kaylee Lorincz, meanwhile, addressed Bono directly on Twitter.

"You owe me an explanation of why you and your firm allowed Larry to abuse me in 2016 after you were well aware that he was abusing little girls," Lorincz wrote.

BILES UPSET AT BONO

Monday's developments came after controversy erupted last week soon after Bono was named to her position on Friday. Bono drew



NEW YORK: File photo shows Leesa Sleep CEO David Wolfe and Gold Medalist Aly Raisman pose for a photo at Bowery Mission on World Homeless Day, donating 100+ mattresses to the shelter along with a check for \$1,000 in an effort to help the homeless on October 10, 2018 in New York City. — AFP

the ire of Olympic champion Simone Biles after a tweet posted by her last month that was critical of apparel maker Nike after the company's ad campaign featuring Colin Kaepernick.

Bono posted a photo of herself blacking out a Nike logo on a golf shoe. "Playing in a charity golf tournament raising money for our nation's Special Forces operators and their families. Unfortunately had these shoes in my bag. Luckily I had a marker in my bag too..." wrote Bono, who also re-tweeted a response that said "#BoycottNike."

In response, the Nike-sponsored Biles tweeted on Saturday: "*mouth drop* ... don't worry, it's not like we needed a smarter USA gymnastics president, or any sponsors or anything." The furor that has greeted Bono's arrival is another blow to USA Gymnastics, which was forced to part company with chief executive Kerry Perry last month.

Perry resigned under pressure from the US Olympic Committee after nine months in the job. Her departure came after the appointment and resignation of elite coach Mary Lee Tracy—who had made comments supportive of Nassar in 2016 when allegations of abuse against him had begun to emerge. —AFP

IAAF delays new gender rules over Semenya's CAS case

MONACO: The IAAF announced yesterday it had agreed to postpone by five months the implementation of controversial new rules on high testosterone levels in female athletes to avoid further delay in proceedings brought by South African track star Caster Semenya challenging their legality.

World track and field's governing body had scheduled November 1 as the date they wanted to introduce the rules that have split opinion: many female athletes welcome the new rules as a way to create a fairer playing field while others such as Semenya argue it is discriminatory.

"A contested application to stay the implementation of the DSD regulations would have caused additional delay and created new uncertainty for athletes seeking to compete in the women's category," the IAAF said in a statement.

Semenya, with the backing of the South African athletics federation (ASA), has turned to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in her challenge of IAAF rules. The powerfully-built Semenya, double Olympic 800m champion (2012, 2016) and three-time world champion (2009, 2011, 2017), is potentially the highest-profile female athlete that would be affected by such regulations.

Classified as "hyper-androgenous",

athletes like Semenya would have to chemically lower their testosterone levels to be able to compete, something the 800m runner says is in violation of the IAAF's constitution and the Olympic Charter.

The IAAF insisted Tuesday, however, that it remained "very confident of the legal, scientific, and ethical bases for the regulations, and therefore fully expects the Court of Arbitration for Sport to reject these challenges".

"However, the IAAF also understands that all affected athletes need certainty on the point as soon as possible. Therefore, in exchange for Ms Semenya and the ASA agreeing to an expedited timetable, the IAAF has agreed not to enforce the regulations against any athlete unless and until they are upheld in the CAS award, which is expected on or before 26 March 2019."

IAAF president Sebastian Coe added: "Prolonging the uncertainty for athletes looking to compete in these distances next year and beyond is unfair and so we have reached a compromise with the claimants."

"We have agreed not to enforce the regulations against any athlete until the contested regulations are upheld. In exchange, they have agreed not to prolong the process. All athletes need this situation resolved as soon as possible." — AFP

Sports

Fakhar, Sarfraz lead Pakistan fightback after Lyon strikes

Australia trail Pakistan by 262 runs with eight wickets intact

ABU DHABI: Debutant opener Fakhar Zaman and skipper Sarfraz Ahmed missed hundreds by six runs each but still revived Pakistan on the first day of the second and final Test in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Fakhar and Sarfraz scored 94 each and helped Pakistan recover from 57-5 to a total of 282 after winning the toss and electing to bat on a slow turning pitch at Sheikh Zayed Stadium. Before the close Pakistan grabbed two wickets, including that of Usman Khawaja for three, as Australia finished on 20-2, with Aaron Finch on 13 and nightwatchman Peter Siddler dismissed off the last ball of the day for four.

Australia trail Pakistan by 262 runs with eight wickets intact. Fast bowler Mohammad Abbas had Khawaja who scored a fighting 141 to lead Australia's fightback for a draw in the first Test in Dubai last week-caught behind for his 50th Test wicket in 10 Tests.

Abbas became joint second-fastest Pakistani to the milestone of 50 wickets with Waqar Younis, Mohammad Asif and Shabbir Ahmed. The record is held by team-mate Yasir Shah who completed 50

wickets in nine matches. Abbas then trapped Siddler to finish on 9-2.

Sarfraz was frustrated to miss his fourth Test hundred but happy with the fightback. "Yes, it's disappointing to miss a hundred but I am happy the way we revived the innings and then got two wickets, including that of Khawaja, so for me it is an even position," said Sarfraz who was hit on the left forearm by a rising delivery from Mitchell Starc.

"At the moment I am feeling discomfort and if there is swelling tomorrow then we can summon reserve wicketkeeper as per the new rules," said Sarfraz. Earlier Zaman and Sarfraz found form with fighting and innings-reviving knocks, taking the attack to the Australian bowlers after spinner Nathan Lyon had rocked Pakistan in the morning, reaching lunch with figures of 4-12.

Zaman hit eight boundaries and a six in his enterprising knock as he and Sarfraz added 147 runs. Zaman was trapped leg-before by leg-spinner Marnus Labuschagne for 94, becoming the fourth Pakistan



ABU DHABI: Pakistani cricketer Ahmed Sarfraz plays a shot during day one of the second Test cricket match in the series between Australia and Pakistan at the Abu Dhabi Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday. —AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scorecard on the first day of the second Test between Pakistan and Australia played at Sheikh Zayed stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday:

Pakistan 1st innings		Australia 1st innings	
Fakhar Zaman lbw b Labuschagne	94	Usman Khawaja c Sarfraz b Abbas	3
Mohammad Hafeez c Labuschagne b Starc	4	A. Finch not out	13
Azhar Ali c and b Lyon	15	P. Siddler lbw b Abbas	4
Haris Sohail c Head b Lyon	0	Total: (for two wickets; 7 overs)	20
Asad Shafiq c Labuschagne b Lyon	0	Still to bat: S. Marsh, M. Marsh, T. Head, M. Labuschagne, T. Paine, M. Starc, N. Lyon, J. Holland.	
Babar Azam b Lyon	0	Fall of wickets: 1-16 (Khawaja), 2-20 (Siddler).	
Sarfraz Ahmed c Siddler b Labuschagne	94	Bowling: Abbas 4-2-9-2, Hamza 1-0-4-0, Yasir 2-1-7-0.	
Bilal Asif c Paine b Labuschagne	12		
Yasir Shah b M. Marsh	28		
Mohammad Abbas b Starc	10		
Mir Hamza not out	4		
Extras: (b 11, lb 6, nb 4)	21		
Total: (all out: 81 overs)	282		
Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Hafeez), 2-57 (Azhar), 3-57 (Sohail), 4-57			

batmen to be dismissed in the 90s on his debut.

Sarfraz then holed out to Labuschagne, who finished with 3-45. Sarfraz hit seven boundaries in his 94. In the first session, pace bowler Starc provided Australia with an early breakthrough in the third over when Mohammad Hafeez fell to a freakish catch at short leg by Labuschagne for four.

Lyon then took four wickets in six balls at the total of 57. He dismissed Azhar Ali, caught and bowled for 15

in his fourth over, and next ball had Haris Sohail caught close to the wicket for nought.

In his next over, Lyon had Asad Shafiq caught at short leg and two balls later bowled Babar Azam, who had come dancing down the wicket.

Australia kept the same eleven from the drawn first Test in Dubai while Pakistan replaced injured Imam-ul-Haq and Wahab Riaz with Zaman and Mir Hamza. —AFP

Kerr prepared for slow start as Warriors tip-off

OAKLAND: Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr is prepared for his team to make a slow start to the season as they open the defense of their NBA crown against the Oklahoma City Thunder yesterday.

They tip-off their 2018-2019 season at Oracle Arena with the traditional banner raising ceremony to salute their third NBA Finals crown in four seasons.

The Warriors will be chasing a rare hat-trick of NBA titles this year when they aim to become the first franchise since the 2000-2002 Los Angeles Lakers to win three consecutive championships.

Kerr, however, does not expect the Warriors to hit the ground running, noting that injuries and inconsistent defensive displays in pre-season showed that there was still plenty of work to be done.

The Warriors have confirmed that veteran guard Shaun Livingston will be questionable for Tuesday's opener with a foot injury while Draymond Green is short of game-time.

"We're not in perfect shape," Kerr told reporters on Monday. "Shaun is questionable. Draymond only played one and a half games I think and needs more conditioning. So we've got some young guys we're going to count on."

Kerr said while he was satisfied with the team's training camp, a patchy pre-season indicated the Warriors needed to tighten up on defense.

The Western Conference favorites won only one of five pre-season games, and closed with back-to-back losses to the Los Angeles Lakers.

"Camp was great, but we had a let-up last week defensively," Kerr said. "We're trying to address those mistakes that we made and we'll see where we are tomorrow night."



LAS VEGAS: File photo shows Head coach Steve Kerr of the Golden State Warriors looks on during a preseason game against the Los Angeles Lakers at T-Mobile Arena on October 10, 2018 in Las Vegas, Nevada. —AFP

"I don't anticipate that we're going to be in high gear right away. We're not going to be nearly as good tomorrow as we will be down the road."

Kerr, meanwhile, admitted that the banner-raising game was always a personal highlight of the season.

"It's a huge night, an emotional night," he said. "It's a night to celebrate and a night for our fans to enjoy. Then you have to tip it up right afterwards and that's the challenge, from celebrating to competing just like that."

"Fortunately we've been through it a couple of

times and hopefully we'll adapt and get into the flow of the game.

"They're just really fun and exciting occasions. The best part is watching the banner go up, because that's what we're trying to do. Every year we're trying to raise the banner for the franchise, for each other and for the fans."

"It's a proud moment. The (championships) rings are great and obscenely beautiful—but the moment the banner goes up is the best for me." —AFP

India Test hero Yadav gets ODI call up

NEW DELHI: India yesterday called up Umesh Yadav, the 10 wicket hero of the Test triumph over West Indies, to replace injured bowler Shardul Thakur for the one-day squad to take on the Caribbean tourists.

Paceman Thakur suffered a groin injury bowling against West Indies in the second Test that India won inside three days on Sunday. The Indian selection committee said in a statement that Yadav—who took six wickets in the first inning and four in the second—would take Thakur's place for the first two of the five one day internationals. The five match series starts in Guwahati on Sunday.

India squad for first two ODIs against West Indies:

Virat Kohli (capt), Rohit Sharma, Shikhar Dhawan, K.L. Rahul, Ambati Rayudu, Manish Pandey, M.S. Dhoni (wicket-keeper), Rishabh Pant, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Khaleel Ahmed, Umesh Yadav. —AFP

Brewers blank Dodgers for 2-1 NLCS lead

LOS ANGELES: The bullpen has been a difference-maker for the Brewers this season, but it is starting pitching that is guiding Milwaukee on the final push toward the club's first World Series berth in 36 years.

Jhoulys Chacin delivered 5 1/3 strong innings, and Orlando Arcia hit a two-run home run Monday as the Milwaukee Brewers grabbed the lead in the National League Championship Series with a 4-0 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Ryan Braun got the Brewers off to a fast start with an RBI double in the first inning as Milwaukee took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven NLCS, with Game 4 set for Tuesday night at Dodger Stadium. Chacin (1-0) gave up just three hits and two walks while striking out six. Brewers starters have yielded just one run over 13 innings in the series as Chacin's outing followed 5 2/3 scoreless innings from Wade Miley in Game 2.

"My slider was very important for me," said Chacin, a 10-year veteran who is in the postseason for the first time. "I know my slider was good, but I think my fastball command was the thing that made my slider better."

The Dodgers have scored eight runs in the NLCS against the Brewers' acclaimed bullpen, although they failed to push a run home against the relievers

Monday despite loading the bases with one out in the ninth inning.

"Our guys that we're giving the ball to at the start of the game, they're doing a heck of a job, man," Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. "And they're setting the tone really for games. They're putting us in a good position. They're putting us in a very advantageous position to use our guys in the bullpen. And then that's going to lead to wins."

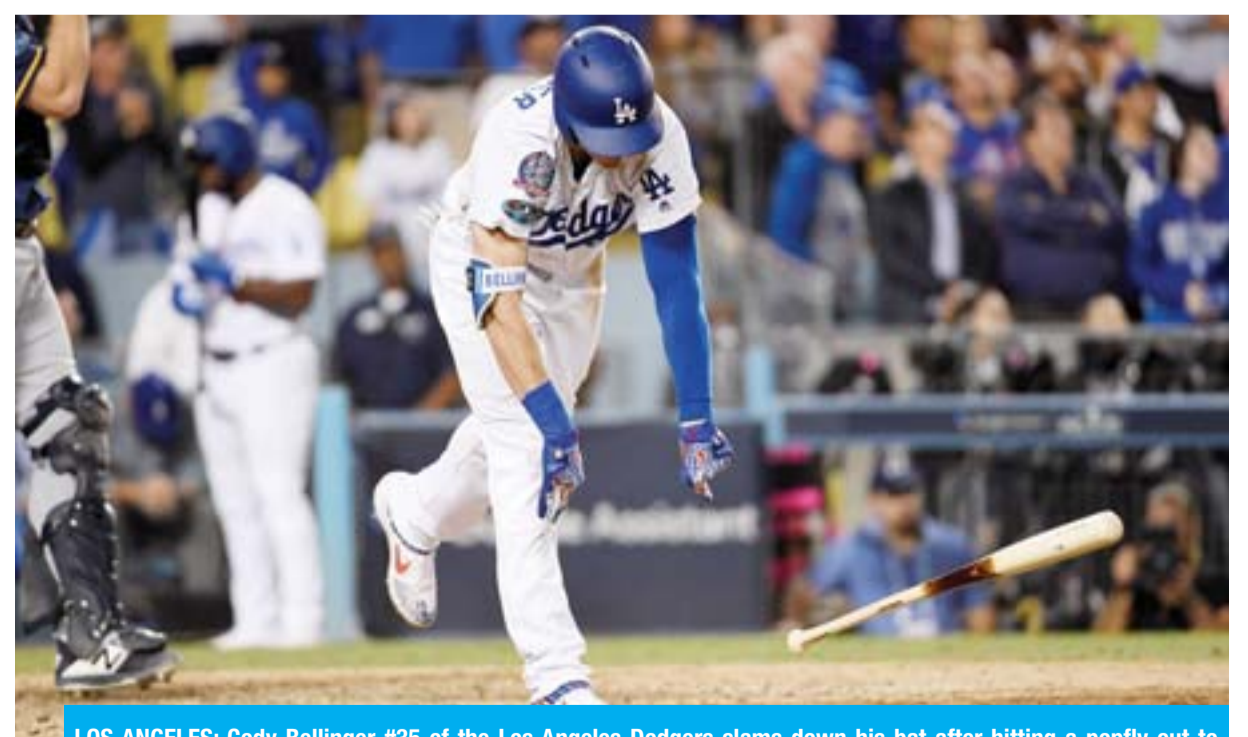
The Dodgers made things interesting in the ninth inning by loading the bases with one out, but Yasmani Grandal and Brian Dozier struck out against right-hander Jeremy Jeffress to end the game.

Relievers Corey Knebel, Joakim Soria, Josh Hader and Jeffress completed Milwaukee's five-hit shutout. Jeffress had given up five hits and two runs in 1 1/3 innings through the first two games of the series, but came through with the game on the line Monday, although Counsell did consider letting Hader pitch the ninth instead.

"That's the debate, you know. That's the debate for sure," Counsell said. "And we got Jeremy Jeffress who has been an All-Star this year and pitched huge, huge moments for us during the season. We got a four-run lead. I trust him to get those outs. The ninth inning was entertaining, but they didn't score."

Dodgers rookie starter Walker Buehler (0-1) had eight strikeouts over seven innings, matching his second-longest start from the regular season. He was charged with four runs on five hits and one walk.

The top three spots in the Dodgers' order went a combined 1-for-12, with that hit coming in the ninth inning on a single from Justin Turner. Los Angeles went 0-for-10 with runners in scoring position,



LOS ANGELES: Cody Bellinger #35 of the Los Angeles Dodgers slams down his bat after hitting a popfly out to short stop during the ninth inning of Game Three of the National League Championship Series against the Milwaukee Brewers at Dodger Stadium on Monday. —AFP

including 0-for-3 in the ninth.

Grandal hit a fifth-inning double, but his rough series continued. In addition to striking out in the ninth, he struck out with a pair of runners in scoring

position and one out in the second inning. He also had a passed ball in the eighth inning and could not corral a wild pitch in the sixth that allowed Travis Shaw to score with two outs. —Reuters

Sports

Spain win gives England rare feeling of beating the best

I love scoring goals but winning feels even better: Kane

SEVILLE: Even as the noise swelled and the pressure mounted, Gareth Southgate stood firm as the youngest England side this century recorded a statement win in Spain. After an electric first half that had witnessed three slick breakaway goals, England were creaking, as Paco Alcacer headed in for 3-1 and Jordan Pickford almost gifted Rodrigo a second.

On the touchline, Southgate stayed arms folded, making one change before the 85th minute, and that came in the 76th, Kyle Walker replacing a weary Ross Barkley. Perhaps he believed England could hold on. Perhaps there was merit in giving these players the chance to do it too.

After all, they had reached the World Cup semi-finals, but with the advantage of a fortuitous draw. When Croatia and Belgium, twice, came calling, England came up short. Now they have handed Spain their first competitive defeat at home for 15 years, scoring three times in the first half against a team rejuvenated under a new coach in Luis Enrique.

It was only a month ago Spain had obliterated Croatia 6-0 and, despite the 2-1 scoreline, outplayed England at Wembley too. "It's a beautiful feeling," said Raheem Sterling, who scored twice, along with another from Marcus Rashford. "It was a brilliant team performance."

For Sterling, who had not scored for England since October 2015, and Rashford, who missed a couple of glorious chances in the goalless draw against Croatia, these were confidence-building goals.

WINNING FEELS GOOD

England's third attacker, Harry Kane, who has been fending off criticism that his form has dipped since winning the World Cup golden boot set up two goals. "People always talk about goals and if I don't score I don't play well. But I've contributed to the team and that's important to me," Kane said. "I love scoring goals but winning feels even better."

When the whistle blew after a breathless 98 minutes at the Estadio Benito Villamarin, the talk was of England's most impressive victory since they beat Germany 5-1 in Munich in 2001. There was the shoot-out triumph against Colombia and the summer stroll over Sweden to go within a game of the World Cup final. They have seen off Germany, France and Brazil as well in friendlies.

But in terms of a competitive match, you have to go back 16 years to Sapporo, and David Beckham's penalty against Argentina, for England's last win against a World Cup winner. This was not a World Cup, nor even a European Championship, and Southgate will not pretend the surprisingly compelling Nations League is as competitive as either.

But Spain were desperate to win. When Pickford scrambled the ball off Rodrigo, Spain's players harangued the referee for a penalty. When Sergio Ramos headed home in the 98th minute, they sprinted back to the centre circle, in the hope of one final attack.

England held on, another injection of belief gained for a team that had an average age of just over 23, their youngest since the turn of the century. "With a lot of young players, it's important they have good experiences, that they enjoy playing for England and feel the way we want to play," Southgate said. "They should be able to progress from this, it's up to us now."

WORK TO BE DONE

They could now even win Group 4 if they beat Croatia at home next month but Southgate will know there is work to be done. England's sense of panic in the second half in Seville was reminiscent of their frenzied play under pressure against Croatia in Russia.

Pickford, the instigator of two goals scored, could then have caused two conceded, fumbling for the corner that Alcacer turned in and then overplaying against Rodrigo. "He's got the technical ability to find passes into midfield, although maybe not to do a Cruyff turn in



SEVILLE: Spain's forward Rodrigo (L) vies with England's goalkeeper Jordan Pickford during the UEFA Nations League football match between Spain and England on Monday at the Benito Villamarin stadium in Sevilla. —AFP

his own box," Southgate said with a smile. "It's something to work on."

Individually, Harry Winks plugged a playmaking gap in midfield while Harry Kane, Rashford and Sterling found their finishing touch up front. Joe Gomez, Liverpool's talented 21-year-old, was assured in central defence. Most of all, England discovered how it feels to

beat one of the best. "It is good to come to places like this for the young lads," said Kieran Trippier, England's oldest player at 28 until Walker, who is also 28 but three months older, came on.

"You want to play against the best and we want to be the number one team. It was a great night and now we have to move forward." —AFP

Arnold kicks off second Australia stint with victory over Kuwait

MELBOURNE: Graham Arnold's second stint in charge of Australia started smoothly with a thumping 4-0 win over Middle Eastern minnows Kuwait in a friendly on Monday but the Socceroos boss was disappointed that his team left more goals out on the park.

Apostolos Giannou, Tom Rogic and debutant Awer Mabil all scored after a 12th-minute own goal by defender Khalid Mohamed Ibrahim gave the visitors a perfect start over the 159th-ranked hosts in Kuwait City. Arnold saw "a lot of positives" in the 43rd-ranked Socceroos' first match since a 2-0 loss to Peru at the World Cup, but their finishing was not among them. "You can see we worked hard on our rotations, the penetration and the pressing," he told reporters. "We still need the icing on the cake which is the finishing. The execution is coming. The performance was promising but we've still got a lot of work to do." Australia, who will defend their Asian Cup title in the United Arab Emirates in January, may have a better gauge of their progress in a month's time when they host 55th-ranked South Korea in a friendly in Brisbane.

There were still encouraging signs in Kuwait City for a side seeking to regenerate following the retirements of long-serving forward Tim Cahill and captain Mile Jedinak. Arnold, back in charge of the Socceroos after an ill-fated stint in 2006-07, started with a 4-3-3 formation and much of the same squad that exited the World Cup's group stage. He retained the same back four that performed admirably against champions France, Denmark and Peru, but there was change at both ends with Danny Vukovic in goal and Cyprus-based Giannou beating out Tomi Juric and Daniel Arzani as starting striker.

The 28-year-old Giannou capitalised on a defensive error to grab his first goal in his sixth Socceroos appearance in the 21st minute with a clean finish. But he did little



KUWAIT CITY: Australia's Tom Rogic (C) kicks the ball past Kuwait's Dhari Saed (C) and Sultan al-Enizi during a friendly football match between Kuwait and Australia at the Kuwait Sports Club Stadium in Kuwait City on Monday. — Photo by Yasser Al Zayyat

else to trouble the Kuwait defence before being substituted after the hour mark and may not be the answer to the Socceroos' search for a potent forward. Arnold promised Rogic would have more freedom to express himself on the eve of the match and the attacking midfielder duly delivered with a dominant all-round display capped by a long-range strike in the 80th minute. Socceroos fans may have been most encouraged by the effectiveness of Arnold's substitutions, with Juric, Arzani and Mabil proving a handful when they came off the bench in the last half-hour.

Mabil, who was raised in a refugee camp in Kenya, cel-

brated a fine goal on debut, finishing off a neat move by Juric to steer the ball into the left corner. With Australia unable to score a goal in open play at the World Cup, Arnold said he had eschewed defensive drills during the team's first training camp in Turkey and concentrated solely on honing their attack. "It's all been about rotations and the new style," he said. "We're playing with three nines and the fullbacks giving us width, and it's about getting more men in the box. "I can only judge the players' performance by what we practised at training and if I do that I give the boys a good mark." — Reuters

Kerber splits with coach

BERLIN: Reigning Wimbledon champion Angelique Kerber has split from coach Wim Fissette, the player's entourage announced yesterday. "Despite the success of the cooperation since the start of the season, this step is needed because of differences of opinion as the future direction," a statement read.

Former coach of Kim Clijsters (2009-11), current world number one Simona Halep (2014) and Victoria Azarenka (2015-16), Fissette joined forces with Kerber in November 2017. With the Belgian by her side, the 30-year-old Kerber, who reached No.1 in the rankings in 2016 but now sits third, reached the semi-finals of the Australian Open before going on to win Wimbledon.

Meanwhile, Romania's world number one Simona Halep yesterday withdrew from the Kremlin Cup, a joint WTA and ATP event, due to concerns over an ongoing back injury. "I tried everything I could to be ready here as I really wanted to play," Halep said. "But unfortunately the back is still causing me pain and I don't want to take any unnecessary risks." The 27-year-old's appearance in Moscow and the WTA Finals had been in doubt when she withdrew from Beijing two weeks ago and was diagnosed with a herniated disk in her back.

Halep, who has already qualified for the WTA year-ending finals in Singapore, said she needed more time to recover completely from her back injury. "While it's disappointing to withdraw, I know it's important to put my health first," she added.



Angelique Kerber

Halep this year played two Grand Slam finals, winning the French Open crown at Roland Garros, and won titles in Shenzhen and Montreal, leading the rankings for 40 weeks this year. — AFP

Champions France defied poor stats at World Cup, says FIFA report

LAUSANNE: Passing, running and ball possession were not key in producing victories at the 2018 World Cup, but accurate shooting and clear tactics were, according to a FIFA report released yesterday. It showed that champions France were only 19th among the 32 teams in possession percentage, 16th in total number of passes completed and 28th in distance covered per game, but were second, behind only hosts Russia, in the percentage of shots that scored. "France did not win the trophy on the back of one performance: they won it over seven matches," said the report by FIFA's seven-man Technical Study Group, including Dutch great Marco van Basten and Brazilian World Cup-winning coach Carlos Alberto Parreira.

"France did not rely on ball possession, but rather focused on getting into the opposition's half as fast as they could. And they had the players to do just that."

"The successful teams had a distinct way of playing based on their players and coaching philosophy," Parreira, who led Brazil to victory in the 1994 tournament, said of the four semi-finalists. "They had a game plan and believed in it."

The report also said that the World Cup was short of classic playmakers, but the two who caught the eye both reached the final.

"We saw less of the so-called playmakers at this World Cup, perhaps as a result of the way teams played," the report said. "However, there were still some outstanding individuals in this area, Paul Pogba of France excelled, but Luka Modric stole the show."

"Playmakers can impose themselves on games, speed up or slow down the tempo, switch play, create and make things happen," Parreira. For many teams turning possession or passes into victories was a struggle. "The team with the most average ball possession per match, Spain (69%), failed to progress from the round of 16," pointed out the report.

Germany, whose title defence ended in the group stage, were second in possession followed by Argentina, eliminated in the last 16, and another team that played only three matches, Saudi Arabia.

Spain also completed the most total passes in the tournament (804) in just four matches, followed by two teams who played only three times: Germany (668) and Saudi Arabia (613). France completed just 460 in their seven games.

Germany (84%) and Spain (81%) were the only two sides to complete better than four-fifths of their passes. France completed 70 percent.

"Serbia were the hardest-running team at the tournament, covering an average of 113 km per game," said the report. "By contrast, France were 28th in this respect, averaging 101 km per match."

Russia scored a goal from every 4.5 shots, France were second with a goal from every six attempts followed by Colombia with one from every 6.5. Germany had by far the worst conversion rate, scoring just two goals despite 72 shots.

The report added: "Shooting efficiency from outside the penalty area improved dramatically: the average strike rate was a goal per 29 long-range attempts, compared to one in 42 at Brazil 2014."

But it also said that the way defences were organised limited long-range shots and the number from outside the area has dropped 32 percent since the 2010 World Cup. In all, 15 teams did not score from outside the area. —AFP

Mourinho charged by FA over comments following Man Utd win

LONDON: Jose Mourinho was charged by the Football Association yesterday over comments he made after Manchester United's victory against Newcastle and faces a potential touchline ban if found guilty.

The United manager spoke into a camera after his side came from behind to triumph 3-2 at Old Trafford, easing the immediate pressure on him after a string of poor results. "Jose Mourinho has been charged following Manchester United's game against Newcastle United on October 6, 2018," said an FA spokesman.

"It is alleged that his language at the end of the fixture, as captured by the broadcast footage, was abusive and/or insulting and/or improper. He has until 6:00 pm on October 19, 2018 to respond to the charge."

The match was played in a tense atmosphere, United having denied a report earlier in the day that Mourinho would be sacked that weekend regardless of the result. United recovered from 2-0 down to complete a dramatic comeback with a last-gasp goal from Alexis Sanchez. The victory ended a run of four games without a win.

Footage shows Mourinho saying something, apparently in Portuguese, while at one point looking into a camera, as he headed towards the tunnel after the final whistle. He also made a gesture with his right hand while speaking, pointing with his little finger. —AFP

25 Pressure growing on new USA Gymnastics chief

26 Fakhar, Sarfraz lead Pakistan fightback after Lyon strikes

27 Spain win gives England rare feeling of beating the best



Packers rally to beat 49ers 33-30

Crosby lift Packers over San Francisco in NFL thriller



GREEN BAY: Marquez Valdes-Scantling #83 of the Green Bay Packers runs with the ball against Fred Warner #48 and Adrian Colbert #27 of the San Francisco 49ers in the fourth quarter at Lambeau Field on Monday in Green Bay, Wisconsin. — AFP

CHICAGO: Mason Crosby, who missed four kicks a week ago, connected on a 27-yard field goal as time expired Monday to lift the Green Bay Packers over San Francisco 33-30 in an NFL thriller. Aaron Rodgers completed 25-of-46 passes for 425 yards and two touchdowns to Davante Adams, guiding the Packers on a tying touchdown drive then leading Green Bay on an unlikely march for Crosby's game-winning redemption field goal.

"Awesome game to bounce back," Crosby said. "I was hoping I would get a lot of chances. I'm broken up about it. It's unreal. That was a gutsy win right there. I just went back to my fundamentals and the process. I was rushing last week. It felt so smooth today. What a great win."

The Packers improved to 3-2 with one drawn while

San Francisco fell to 1-5. Robbie Gould kicked a 46-yard field goal to end the second quarter that gave the 49ers a 24-20 half-time lead. Crosby answered with a 51-yard field goal but Gould responded from 43 and 44 yards to boost San Francisco's edge to 30-23 with 13:08 to play.

The 49ers stopped Green Bay at the 4-yard line to deny the Packers a touchdown but San Francisco couldn't manage a first down and Green Bay battled back to delight a home crowd at Lambeau Field.

Rodgers connected with Adams on a 16-yard touchdown pass with 1:55 remaining and Crosby kicked the conversion to equalize. Green Bay's Kevin King intercepted a C.J. Beathard pass at the Packers' 10-yard line with 67 seconds remaining and Rodgers then drove the Packers 81 yards in 10 plays, the march capped with

Crosby's winning field goal.

"He had a rough one last week but we love Mase," Rodgers said. "The guys have wrapped their arms around him all week. We had faith in Mason from everywhere. To get him even closer made that kick almost a certainty."

RAMS NEXT FOR PACKERS

Rodgers, nagged by a left knee injury suffered in the season opener, now enjoys an off week before the Packers face the unbeaten Los Angeles Rams and New England the following week. "It's a nice win going into the bye week," Rodgers said. "We're going to find out what kind of team we are."

San Francisco drove 75 yards in seven plays after the opening kickoff and scored on Matt Breida's 3-yard

touchdown run. The Packers answered just 1:42 later on Ty Montgomery's 2-yard touchdown run with Rodgers connecting on a 60-yard pass to rookie Marquez Valdes-Scantling to set up the score.

Green Bay recovered a fumble on the ensuing kickoff that led to a 29-yard Crosby field goal for a 10-7 Packers lead. Rodgers connected with Adams on a 9-yard touchdown pass to boost Green Bay's lead but the 49ers answered quickly on Beathard's 67-yard touchdown toss to Marquise Goodwin that pulled San Francisco within 17-14 after a wild first quarter.

Crosby added a 39-yard field goal for the Packers but Goodwin, a 2012 US Olympic long jumper, grabbed a 30-yard touchdown throw from Beathard and the 49ers seized a 21-20 lead with 6:05 remaining in the first half. — AFP

Microsoft co-founder, Seahawks, Blazers owner Allen dies at 65

SAN FRANCISCO: Paul Allen, who founded Microsoft with Bill Gates in the 1970s and later went on to become an investor, philanthropist and sports team owner, died Monday after his latest battle with cancer at age 65.

"My brother was a remarkable individual on every level. While most knew Paul Allen as a technologist and philanthropist, for us he was a much loved brother and uncle, and an exceptional friend," Allen's sister Jody said in a statement announcing his death.

In recent years, Allen was known as the owner of the NFL's Seattle Seahawks and the NBA's Portland Trail Blazers, and part owner of the Major League Soccer team the Seattle Sounders, along with a variety of business and charitable ventures.

One of the world's wealthiest billionaires, Allen also founded Stratolaunch Systems, which built the world's largest plane designed as a colossal rocket-launching aircraft touted as the future of space travel.

The craft was on track for its first launch demonstration

as early as 2019. Allen died just two weeks after publicly revealing that non-Hodgkin's lymphoma he fought into remission nine years ago had returned. The incurable cancer affects white blood cells. He never married and had no children.

CLASSMATE OF GATES

Allen was a high school classmate of Gates in Seattle, and later, while working as a computer programmer, persuaded his friend to drop out of Harvard to create Microsoft, which became the world's most valuable company in the 1990s. A "heartbroken" Gates remembered Allen as "one of my oldest and dearest friends." "Personal computing would not have existed without him," Gates added. "He was fond of saying, 'If it has the potential to do good, then we should do it.' That's the kind of person he was." Allen had left Microsoft by 1983 for health reasons but held on to shares that made up the bulk of his fortune, estimated at some \$20 billion. "All of us who had the honor of working with Paul feel inexpressible loss today," said a statement by Vulcan, the investment firm that managed his operations. "He possessed a remarkable intellect and a passion to solve some of the world's most difficult problems, with the conviction that creative thinking and new approaches could make profound and lasting impact."

Microsoft said Allen's "contributions to our company, our industry and to our community are indispensable." "As co-founder of Microsoft, in his own quiet and persistent

way, he created magical products, experiences and institutions. And in doing so, he changed the world," added the company's CEO Satya Nadella.

While Gates attended Harvard, Allen studied at the University of Washington and invested heavily in research projects in his hometown of Seattle. He invested \$100 million to found the Allen Institute for Brain Science in 2003.

A decade later, he founded the Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence to study the impacts on society of new technologies and the Allen Institute for Cell Science to fund research for treatment of diseases.

BIG MAN IN SPORTS

In the world of sports, Allen in 1988 bought the Trail Blazers, taking the team to the NBA finals twice. "Paul Allen was the ultimate trail blazer-in business, philanthropy and in sports," said NBA commissioner Adam Silver.

"As one of the longest-tenured owners in the NBA, Paul brought a sense of discovery and vision to every league matter large and small." He was also credited with putting Seattle on the map for the NFL. "Paul Allen was the driving force behind keeping the NFL in the Pacific Northwest," NFL commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement. "His vision led to the construction of CenturyLink Field and the building of a team that played in three Super Bowls, winning the championship in Super Bowl XLVIII."

His personal charitable foundation gave to a diverse array of causes, including anti-poaching initiatives in

Africa, climate and energy research, and projects on homelessness, as well as the arts and culture.

Actor and environmentalist Leonardo DiCaprio hailed Allen as a "strong advocate for environmental protection." "His legacy lives on via his incredible work as a philanthropist and investor," he added. Amazon, Blue Origin and The Washington Post owner Jeff Bezos said Allen's "passion for invention and pushing forward inspired so many. He was relentless to the end." In his 2011 memoir "Idea Man," Allen described a somewhat stormy relationship with Gates in the early days of Microsoft.

Allen wrote that he had expected a 50-50 split in the new company, but Gates insisted on taking 60 percent, and later raised it to 64 percent, claiming that Gates schemed to "rip me off." He played guitar since he was a teenager and played for a blues-rock album with his group the Underthinkers in 2013 that was reviewed by Rolling Stone, which said Allen "curls some twang and grit into the blues-rock track." — AFP



Paul Allen