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Saudi Crown Prince's visit adds to strong, historic ties

Prince Mohammad bin Salman to hold talks with Amir, Crown Prince

KUWAIT: Saudi Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al-Saud arrives in Kuwait today on an official visit, which includes official rounds of talks with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Prince Mohammad bin Salman's visit to Kuwait is the second since he was named as Crown Prince. He earlier visited Kuwait in 2015 and was received by HH the Amir and senior state officials.

The Saudi Crown Prince's visit stresses the keenness of the two brotherly countries to continuously consult on various issues, developments and ways to strengthen joint cooperation in different fields. This visit comes within the framework of brotherly relations between the two countries due to the historic relationship, geographical proximity and popular

cohesion treasured for over a hundred years.

Over the years, Kuwaiti-Saudi relations have witnessed major developments in various economic, cultural and media fields, such as the 1971 agreement on facilitating the entry and exit of cars between the two countries. Kuwaiti people will always remember with gratitude the kingdom's historic stances and support towards Kuwait, especially the "heroic and decisive" help offered by Saudi Arabia to Kuwait in the struggle against the Iraqi invasion and occupation in 1990-1991 until the liberation of Kuwait and restoration of legitimacy.

In the economic field, the oil policy of the two countries has been consistent and has led to stability in the oil markets as one of the largest producers of oil in the world. Without a doubt, both countries, with their great political and economic components and distinct social ties, have had a great influence in serving Arab and Islamic issues. — KUNA



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman

Hundreds killed as quake-tsunami hit Sulawesi; Amir sends condolences

PALU, Indonesia: Nearly 400 people were killed when a powerful quake sent a tsunami barreling into the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, officials said yesterday, as hospitals struggled to cope with hundreds of injured and rescuers scrambled to reach the stricken region. The national disaster agency put the official death toll so far at 384, all of them in the tsunami-struck city of Palu, but warned the toll was likely to rise. Some 540 people were badly injured, it added.

In the city - home to around 350,000 people - partially covered bodies lay on the ground near the shore, the day after tsunami waves 1.5 m high hit the coast. There were also concerns over the whereabouts of hundreds of people preparing for a beach festival that had been due to start Friday evening, the disaster agency said. Hospitals were overwhelmed by the influx of injured, with many people being treated in the open air, while other survivors helped to retrieve the remains of those who died.

One man was seen carrying the muddy corpse of a small child. The tsunami was triggered by a strong quake that brought down buildings and sent locals fleeing for higher ground as a churning wall of water



PALU, Indonesia: Residents make their way along a street full of debris after an earthquake and tsunami hit Sulawesi island yesterday. — AFP

crashed into Palu, where there were widespread power blackouts. Dramatic video footage captured from the top floor of a parking ramp in Palu, nearly 80 km from the quake's epicenter, showed waves bring down several buildings and inundate a large mosque. "I just ran when I saw the waves hitting homes on the coastline," said Palu resident Rusidanto, who like many

Indonesians goes by one name.

About 17,000 people had been evacuated, the disaster agency said, and that figure is expected to rise. The shallow 7.5 magnitude tremor was more powerful than a series of quakes that killed hundreds on the Indonesian island of Lombok in July and August.

Continued on Page 24

Erdogan opens mega mosque in Cologne

COLOGNE: Thousands of demonstrators hit the streets of Cologne yesterday as Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan opened one of Europe's largest mosques at the end of his visit to Germany, with police out in force to manage rival rallies. The inauguration capped a controversial three-day state visit aimed at repairing frayed ties with Berlin after two years of tensions. During his stay in Berlin, Erdogan met twice with Angela Merkel in talks, with both leaders signalling their interest in a cautious rapprochement. But the

German chancellor stressed that "deep differences" remained on civil rights and other issues.

Before returning home, Erdogan travelled to the western city of Cologne where several thousand critics turned out to protest everything from Turkey's record on human rights and press freedom to its treatment of minority Kurds. Erdogan supporters meanwhile gathered near the Cologne Central Mosque, an imposing dome-shaped building commissioned by the Turkish-controlled Ditim organization.

Cologne police cordoned off a large area around the mosque for safety reasons, but thousands of Erdogan supporters spilled into the side streets, hoping for a glimpse of the Turkish leader. Many waved Turkey's red and white flag or held up pictures of Erdogan, with

Continued on Page 24



COLOGNE: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan gives a speech to officially open the newly-built central mosque yesterday. — AFP

'No progress' in ending Gulf feud; MESA plan at risk

NEW YORK: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo brought the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia and Qatar together Friday for the first time since their diplomatic feud erupted but there was no sign of a let-up in tensions between the Gulf powerhouses. At the start of a meeting with counterparts from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) along with allies Egypt and Jordan, Pompeo said that those present had "a shared interest in a wide range of security issues".

But speaking to reporters later, Qatar's foreign minister said there had been "no progress" in resolving the more than year-long dispute with Saudi Arabia. He insisted that the gas-rich state remained "open to dialogue" with the Saudis and their allies. "We are grateful for the efforts President Donald Trump makes to try solving this crisis but the responses from the blockade countries are not positive," said Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

He added a proposed regional security alliance bringing together the US, Gulf allies, Egypt and Jordan is at risk of credibility if the Gulf dispute is not resolved. The Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) is meant to serve as a bulwark against Iran and extremism, Washington says. But it is unclear how it can get off the ground given the dispute. "Regarding the alliance and the creation of the alliance, by ignoring the

GCC rift, we don't think that, even if it's initiated, that it will be initiated effectively," Sheikh Mohammed said. "There is a serious challenge among the states and we need to address this challenge, in order also to prove the credibility of this alliance. And we believe there's an opportunity over here," he said.

The United States said that all the countries found common cause against Iran, Saudi Arabia's archrival which the Trump administration has been seeking to isolate. "All participants agreed on the need to confront threats from Iran directed at the region and the United States," the State Department said in a statement. In apparent reference to Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the statement called for forging greater cooperation in the Middle East "anchored by a united GCC" which could "advance prosperity, security and stability in the region".

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In my view

My Loulwah

By Farah Abdul Hasan Khajah

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Up until that day, I believed that I had endured my share of pain for this lifetime, and that what I had overcome had made me stronger and grow as a person. But never in my life did I ever imagine that God would put my strength and my ability to grow to the test by taking away my precious daughter, my Loulwah. At four months of age, buckled safely in her car seat, my baby was killed by a reckless, speeding driver.

I remember that day so clearly. You were propped up against the yellow pillow, watching your siblings, your father and I as we played together and solved puzzles. There was a safe place for you in the corner of the couch - a place I had gotten so accustomed to seeing you every day. You were so calm and content, smiling at us and giggling. I can still hear our laughter and feel our happiness.

Later, we prepared to head to the seaside as we usually do on Saturdays. Your father Tareq took your sister Besma and your brother Ahmad in his car, while I tucked you safely in your car seat in my car, your nanny Ma. Cecelia sitting in the rear seat beside you, and we all headed out together. After a short while on the road, I could sense that something was wrong with one of my tires, so I parked my car in the "safety" lane to assess the situation.

I turned on my flashers, checked all four tires, and was figuring out what to do next, when I suddenly found myself flung across the highway. With my body throbbing with pain and covered in blood, I lay helplessly on the hot asphalt, trying to make sense of what had just happened. But in my incoherent state of confusion, I found myself staring intently at your side of the car. It was completely crushed. All I wanted was to walk over to you, to check on you, to hold you in my arms, and to protect you. But alas, God had other plans.

The next morning, as I lay in the hospital bed, your father told me that you left our world and would never, ever, be coming back. I remember that moment clearly, to the minute and to the second. The weeks since the accident have been the most difficult weeks I have ever endured in my life. The feeling of helplessness consumes me every day - physically, mentally and emotionally. I find myself worrying about Besma and Ahmad - what should I say when they ask me about you? I worry about Ma. Cecelia, who barely survived the crash - will she recover? And I worry about your father, Tareq - how are we going to pull through this?

My heart yearns for you Loulwah. I mustered up all the courage I had to enter your room again, and once inside, I found myself searching for you, hoping that I would suddenly wake up from this nightmare, hoping that by sheer magic, you would be there, and that everything would be alright again. I search for your sweet baby scent in your clothes, your bed, your bouncer, your changing table, and in every corner of our home. I want to cling on to anything that is you, to prove you existed, but you were never there. Nothing is the same without you, and nothing will ever be the same without you.

I refuse to believe that your life was in vain. Your short-lived time on this earth was for a larger purpose. Your purpose in life, and mine now, is to protect everyone, children and adults from getting killed or injured while parked in the "safety" lane. Although for a mere four months, you graced us with your presence to make people aware of the dangers of reckless driving. While you were not the first, hopefully you will be the last as your passing has touched the country as a whole.

I cannot understand how there is zero to little respect for life on our streets in Kuwait. I cannot comprehend how the Ministry of Interior passed this complicated rule of allowing the use of the "safety" lane while simple rules against reckless driving have never been respected. Inadequate penalties of limited punishment are currently enforced for highly dangerous traffic violations that put many lives at risk daily by just driving.

How many mothers have to achingly hold their lifeless infants and children in their arms for a change to finally be made? Who will put an end to reckless driving on our streets? Will your passing be the end of this decision to use the "safety" lane and return it to its original purpose, a place where drivers can feel safe in the event of an emergency?

And who will take my guilt away for parking in the "safety" lane on that fateful day, assuming that you, my dearest Loulwah, your nanny Ma. Cecelia, and I would all be safe? I love you Loulouty, and I always will. Loving you was so easy, and it came so naturally from within, and was the deepest love I have ever known. You have been the most beautiful gift to our family. I am sorry that neither I nor our country could protect you on that horrid day, but I promise that I will strive for change. I will do everything I can to make it better for everyone else, for you, Loulouty.

Your loving mother,
Farah

Local

Kuwait condemns Israel's violations, calls for Syrian, Yemeni crises' end

Urged the international community to live up to its responsibilities

KUWAIT: Kuwait condemned Israel's relentless violations of UN resolutions and international law related to the Palestinian cause, called for political solutions to Syrian and Yemeni crises and urged an end to ethnic cleansing against Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar. Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in his address to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) Ministerial Meeting in New York, said Israel has been violating every international law and convention, including the UN charter and resolutions of UN General Assembly (UNGA) and Security Council related to Palestinian cause.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, in the meeting held on sidelines of UNGA 73 Session, urged the international community to live up to its responsibilities to counter Israel's "illegal and inhumane" practices. The UNSC, he added, should stop Israeli "aggression and massacres" against the unarmed people of Palestine. Kuwait, a non-permanent member in the UNSC, coordinated with Palestine and tabled a draft resolution last June to provide international protection for the Palestinian people. "But the Security Council did not approve it," he added.

However, added Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, the collective efforts among Arab and Muslim countries resulted in the UNGA's approval of the draft resolution. On Syria, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled urged the UN, the Security Council and Syria's political parties to double their efforts to peacefully resolve the conflict, which has entered its eighth year, in line with UNSC resolution 2554 and the 2012 Geneva Communiqué in order to honor the aspirations of the Syrian people. Kuwait, he added, has sponsored the UNSC resolution 2401 that called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, safe evacuation for the wounded and delivery of aid for those in need. He reassured Kuwait's full support to Staffan de Mistura, the UN Security General's special envoy to Syria.



NEW YORK: Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, addressing an Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) Ministerial Meeting in New York. — KUNA photos

GCC initiative

Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled extended full backing to the legitimate government in Yemen as well as the political solution that was based on the GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism, UNSC resolution 2216 and outcome of the national dialogue. Kuwait had recently provided USD 250 million to UN agencies, international government and non-government organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to the Yemeni people, he said.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also supported endeavors of UN envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths to resume negotiations between the warring parties. On the other hand, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled called for a swift halt to the ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar, and said international humanitarian organizations should have greater



Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah partakes in GCC, Arab, US meeting.

access to the Rohingya. He said Kuwait had facilitated a visit for the UNSC ambassadors to Bangladesh and Myanmar last May to have a first-hand account of ordeal of Rohingya. He commended the government of Bangladesh for hosting the Rohingya refugees and urged Myanmar to grant the Rohingya full citizenship and allow their return. The Kuwait delegation to the OIC meeting included Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister's office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, Kuwait's permanent representative to the UN Mansour Al-Otaibi and Assistant Foreign Minister for international organizations Nasser Al-Hayyen.

Other meetings

Sheikh Sabah Khaled said the UNGA event had witnessed meetings at the levels of the GCC, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the

Non-Aligned Movement, the G-77 for Asian Dialogue, in addition to many bilateral-level meetings for boosting states' ties and discussing regional and international affairs. He noted Kuwait's particular interest with respect of its participation in the UN Security Council session on nuclear arms — which was presided by the US President Donald Trump. Kuwait remains a member of the UNSC.

At another UNSC session, chaired by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Kuwait addressed the conferees on necessity of the council member states' unity with respect of this crucial issue. Moreover, Kuwait has taken part in a ministerial meeting on difficulties facing the funding for UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, he said, noting that Kuwait declared USD 42 million worth of aid to the agency — thus bringing the total aid provided by the country to the organization this year to 50 million. — KUNA

Saudi CP's visit to Kuwait 'important': Kuwaiti diplomat

KUWAIT: The visit by Saudi Crown Prince to Kuwait will be "another important milestone in the long and historic relations," said a Kuwaiti diplomat yesterday. In a statement to KUNA, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh



Sheikh Thamer Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

last week, the Kuwait Cabinet welcomed the Saudi Crown Prince's visit to the country, noting that his visit is a part of the deep-

rooted relations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and a great opportunity to exchange views over a host of issues of mutual interest and further cement cooperation at different levels.

The strong relations linking Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in the past, the present and future are a great example for Arab nations to follow, said the Ambassador who indicated that the visit would focus on developing ties and would touch on issues of mutual interests as well as development within the region and the world. For his part, Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah told the press that the relation between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia is "distinct and growing". "We are always proud of the development of relations with Saudi Arabia and look admiringly towards the achievements of the Kingdom," Al-Jarallah added. —KUNA

Pakistan-Kuwait JMC session concludes in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The fourth Session of Pakistan-Kuwait Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) concluded in Islamabad on Friday with the signing of several agreements. Kuwait Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan and Pakistani Finance Minister Asad Umar co-chaired the JMC meeting. During the delegation level meeting, the two countries agreed to review implementation status of the decisions of third session held in 2011.

Both countries agreed to cooperate on facilitating visa procedures, trade and investment, as well as bolstering coordination on the security, maritime and aviation domains. Cooperation in the petroleum and industrial sectors, in education and media, in health, science and technology as well as agriculture were also discussed. In a statement to KUNA after the signing ceremony, Pakistani Finance Minister said that the session between the two delegations was very constructive. "We are happy that the JMC session has commenced after seven years. Pakistan and Kuwait are brotherly countries and we have to make sure that the economic relations between them reflect these cemented ties," he added.

He praised the Kuwaiti minister for his vision towards development and trade and ensured that a Pakistani delegation, comprising of businessmen, will soon visit Kuwait to explore investment avenues. During the session, the Pakistani minister invited Kuwaiti businessmen to invest in Pakistan including farmland, milk and food processing plants. He said Kuwaiti businessmen may export agricultural commodities of desired quality to their country and other countries. He said the investors from Arab countries might also benefit from attractive investment opportunities in special economic zones of Pakistan especially in areas like automotive, food processing and textile as well as in oil and gas exploration.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Finance Minister Asad Umar and Kuwait Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan at the Pakistan-Kuwait Joint Ministerial Commission. — KUNA photos

Khaled Al-Roudhan also met with Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan in Islamabad where various issues of mutual interests were discussed. After the session, the Kuwaiti minister told KUNA "The meeting went very well and we discussed number of issues of mutual interest. We discussed all the areas where we should cooperate and enhance cooperation." Al-Roudhan pointed out that there was a lot of room for improvement and advancement in the relationship between the two countries and Kuwait has taken a step forward by coming to Pakistan for the fourth Session of Pakistan-Kuwait Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC). Kuwaiti Minister of Commerce and Industry led a 22-member Kuwaiti delegation in the session. During the session, the two countries discussed cooperation in various areas. —KUNA



Officials and delegates from Pakistan and Kuwait pose for a photo after the signing ceremony.

Nazaha aims to extend cooperation with international academy

VIENNA: The visiting Head of Kuwait Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), Consultant Abdulrahman Al-Nemsh, affirmed Friday the authority's efforts to extend cooperation efforts with the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA). On sidelines of the seventh session of the meetings of the Assembly of Parties in IACA, Consultant Al-Nemsh told KUNA that the authority is keen to strengthen its cooperation with the academy in order to acquire expertise and improve technical capabilities.

Nazaha seeks to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the academy to strengthen future cooperative efforts through development and availability of training programs related to the areas of prevention and anti-corruption in line with the latest methods of scientific and research knowledge.

Regarding the seventh session meetings, Al-Nemsh pointed out that several topics were discussed, including the election of the members of the Bureau of the Assembly of Parties. Kuwait has joined the agreement to establish IACA in 2015 and in cooperation with the academy organized a regional training and education session last year. The training was the first of its kind in the Middle East and over 13 different nationalities participated in it. The meeting of the Assembly of

Parties, which kicked off on Thursday, unanimously elected Kuwait as a Rapporteur of the Bureau for the Asian Group in the Academy for a year.

A senior official at the IACA lauded the tremendous level of cooperation with the State of Kuwait, hoping that the two sides would maintain and continue collaborating in the future. On the sideline of the Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the IACA's Dean and Executive Secretary Martin Kreutner said that the two sides have been working on bolstering ties since they began cooperating six years ago.

IACA's officials continuous visits to Kuwait, the holding of the first regional anti-corruption training session in the GCC country, as well as Kuwait's efforts in countering corruption were crystal indications of the strength of the relations between Kuwait and IACA relations said the official. Kreutner added that the high level of political and social advocacy in this year's gathering was tremendous, affirming that it would contribute to the efforts against corruption worldwide. Dialogue amongst IACA members and the global community as a whole will ensure better management of issues connected with corruption, said the agency senior official. — KUNA



VIENNA: IACA's Dean and Executive Secretary Martin Kreutner during his speech in the Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). — KUNA

Local

Zain concludes its partnership of The Challenge competition

Organized by Engineers Without Borders

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, concluded its strategic partnership of The Challenge competition organized by Engineers Without Borders. The conclusion ceremony was held at Holiday Inn Hotel under the patronage and presence of HE Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh.

Zain's support to the competition came in line with its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, which closely focuses on contributing to the development of the youth sector and the encouragement of various student activities. The company

partners with many organizations, including student bodies, to invest in education, which is considered an essential element of the further progress of national economy.

The Challenge competition, which was organized by Engineers Without Borders and lasted for 10 months, included a series of events and academic activities aimed at engineering students from the College of Engineering and Petroleum. The top 3 winning teams were announced during the competition's closing ceremony in which 25 teams competed for designing the best sustainable housing unit to be applied in refugee camps in Kenya.

Zain's support springs from the company's core Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy. The company believes that supporting initiatives such as this one provides young people with skills and tools necessary to help them highlight and develop their skills, ultimately contributing to the further progress of national economy. As a leading national company, Zain firmly believes in the importance of contributing to the progress of the youth sector, and looks to empower and prepare the nation's youth for the important roles they will play in the further progress of the country.



KUWAIT: Hind Al-Sabeeh honoring Waleed Al-Khashti for Zain's support.

Strategy needed to lessen impact of Kuwait's public debt

KUWAIT: A clear strategy is needed to moderate Kuwait's public debt and to lessen its impact on the country's economy and finances, said a specialized economic study on Friday. The study, prepared by Development Study Center Kuwait (DSCCK), said that Kuwait's public debt reached KD 4.7 billion (USD 15 billion) in 2017, around 13 percent of the national budget.

The DSCCK said that since 2013, public debt was on an upward trend, reaching around KD 1.5 billion (about USD 4.9 billion). "Creating an economic atmosphere for debt management connected with the state's economy will set the suitable rates for the public debt", a representative from the center said. He went on to say that creating a comprehensive tax system that is connected with economic activities and standards of living was the

correct path to seek.

In regards to the current level of public debt, the DSCCK affirmed that it was within international standards; however, "public debt is likely to increase due to the decrease in oil prices." The center study said that any enormous increase in public debt will have "negative connotations" on the country, affirming that it was important to diversify the state's earnings to include non-oil revenues, which in turn would decrease borrowing to cover the debt.

The DSCCK suggested the formation of an efficient market for debt to decrease spending mid and long term debt management, leading to an increase in hedge funds and investment base. The center indicated that coordinating finance and monetary policies would achieve interest rates, stability and prevent pressure on the volume of liquidity. It called on the government to share regular statistics on public debt and interest rates in addition to other data to better manage public debt. The DSCCK is a recently formed center aimed at encouraging economic, political, and social coordination amongst the government and private sectors and civil society organizations. —KUNA

Kuwait humanitarian aid slow-paced but ready for fresh start

KUWAIT: Kuwait humanitarian aid for refugees and people in need witnessed a much-needed swift to a slower pace this week, but is gearing up for a fresh new start. Thus, such activity this week was largely limited, but it was marked by prominent Kuwaiti positions in the humanitarian field. On September 22, a delegation from the Salwa Zakat Committee of Kuwaiti Charity Association launched a relief program providing assistance to Syrian refugees, patients, orphans and needy families in Jordan.

Director of Resources and Development of the committee and head of the delegation to Jordan, Omar Al-Shaqra told KUNA that their current visit aims to cover some of the needs of Syrian families suffering from difficult circumstances. Al-Shaqra added that he and his accompanying delegation met with Kuwait Ambassador to Jordan Aziz Al-Dehani, who praised efforts by the committee for the Syrian refugees.

On September 23 in New York, Deputy Director General of Al-Najat Kuwait Charity Dr Jaber Al-Windah said that participation in the humanitarian events held on the sidelines of the General Assembly of the United Nations came due to the importance placed by the charity on working as a team globally, along with



Deputy Director General of the Kuwaiti Charity Association Dr Jaber Al-Windah

the goals of sustainable development, set by the UN.

In a statement to KUNA, Al-Windah said that the Al-Najat Charity represented Kuwait in the meetings and conferences on achieving sustainable development goals in countries surrounding Chad Lake, which started on September 20, under auspices of the African Union (AU), institutions and universities, including regional and international organizations. Al-Windah noted that the association's participation and chairmanship come from the belief in the need for collective action and strategic partnership among NGOs, government bodies and international institutions to achieve goals of sustainable development in accordance with UN resolutions 2030 and 2063. —KUNA



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Wang Di hosted a reception on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary of the founding of the China at Jumelrah Messilah Beach Hotel over the weekend. Higher officials, diplomats, the Chinese community in Kuwait and media persons attended the event. —Photos by Joseph Shaqra



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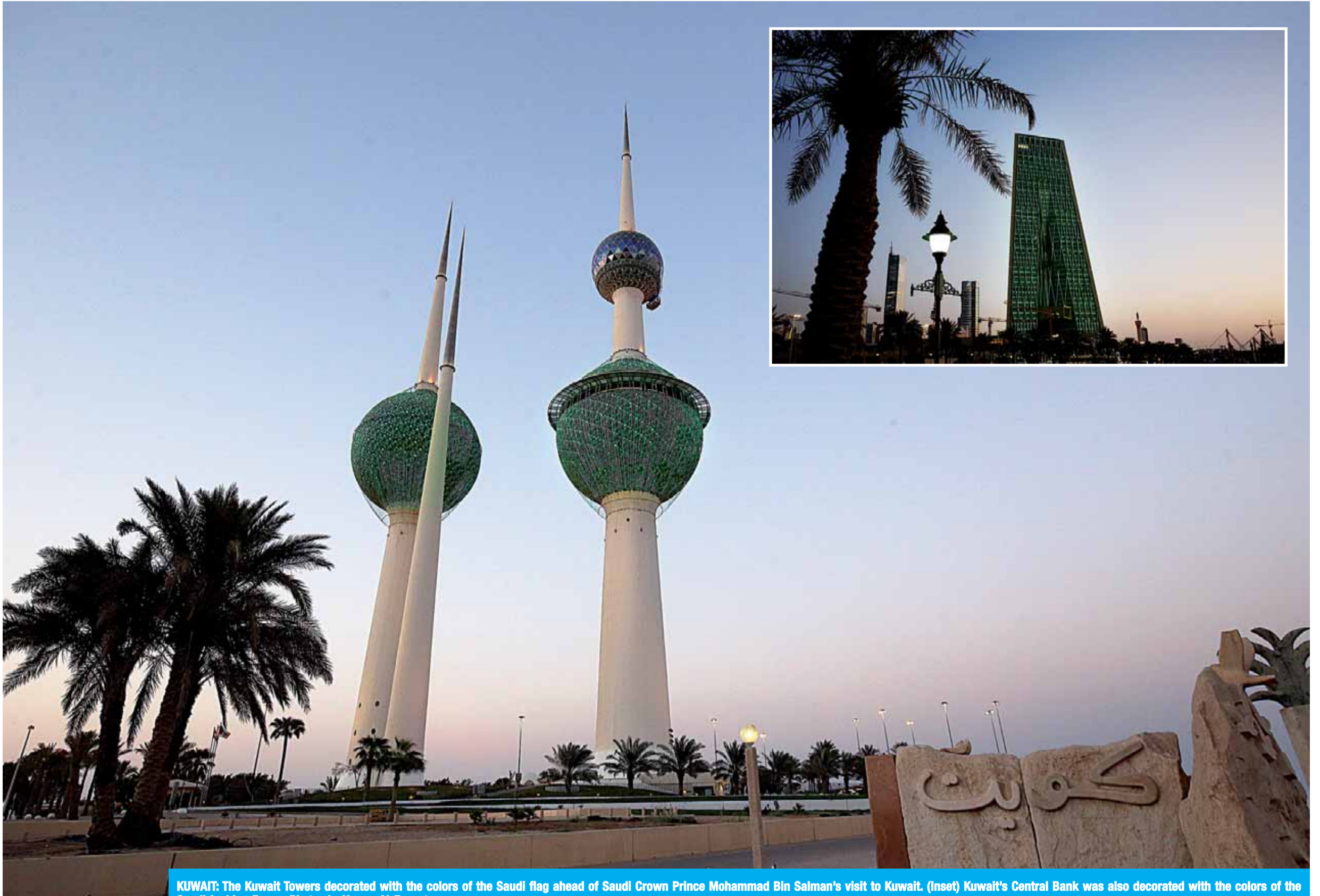


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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Towers decorated with the colors of the Saudi flag ahead of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman's visit to Kuwait. (Inset) Kuwait's Central Bank was also decorated with the colors of the Saudi Arabian flag. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KIB sponsors the 'Art Meditation' workshop for cancer patients

As part of its strategic partnership with Al-Sidra association

KUWAIT: KIB recently sponsored the 'Art Meditation' workshop which was organized by the Al-Sidra Association for the Psychological Care of Cancer Patients, as part of its strategic partnership with the Association. This initiative came as part of the Bank's program which aims at supporting cancer patients, as well as awareness raising initiatives and activities. This unique workshop provided participants with the opportunity to utilize art in a meaningful way to help them channel their feelings and emotions through art. In doing so, the workshop helped spread awareness about the importance of different methods of psychotherapy for cancer patients.

KIB noted that this sponsorship came as a part of its ongoing commitment to participate in events that impact diverse segments of the local commu-

nity. As a leading financial institution, KIB has always sought to spread awareness throughout the community about the importance of regular health check-ups in identifying early signs of health issues, especially cancer.

With its strategic partnership with Al-Sidra Association, KIB continues to devote a particular focus to promoting health consciousness. The Association is dedicated to providing psychological counseling and healthcare to cancer patients, reflecting the Bank's commitment to its social responsibility program and humanitarian duties. KIB continues to add to its track record of activities aimed at the local health sector, stemming from its belief in the vital role the health sector plays in the well-being of all members of the community.



EPA highlights significance of the 'Green & Clean Environment' Expo

KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) called to further the continuous attention put towards environmental issues and problems. In this regard, the 'Green & Clean Environment Forum', is set to open on Tuesday. It is to be organized by the Leaders Group Company for Consultancy and Development in collabo-

ration with the EPA and a number of relevant ministries and bodies at Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Center from October 2nd to 3rd.

EPA's PR manager Shaikha Al-Ibrahim issued a statement emphasizing the significance of the forum, the accompanying expo and the topics to be discussed noting that the topics can form short and long term patriotic priorities. Al-Ibrahim added that the forum could achieve many goals if the issues were well taken care of with the ultimate goal being the protection of natural resources and the further development of clean environmental resources in order to make the environment greener and resources more sustainable.

Furthermore, Al-Ibrahim stressed that the EPA has always focused on sustainable environment practices and encourages various initiatives calling for keeping pollution at the minimum possible levels while at the same time

copied with the demands of urban expansion, population increases and the growing need for power generation and transport. Finally, She stressed that the success of such activities and the spread of a new environmental awareness culture would greatly help the EPA impose environment laws and protect the environment, especially as recent estimates of annual plastic wastes in Kuwait have reached an alarming 44 tons.



EPA's PR manager
Shaikha Al-Ibrahim

Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan hit four-month high

TOKYO: Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan in August hit a four-month high of 8.28 million barrels, or 267,000 barrels per day (bpd), becoming Japan's fourth-biggest oil provider, according to government data showed Friday. Kuwait's crude oil bound for Japan jumped 34.0 percent from a year earlier, up for the first time in four months, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report.

The figure was the highest since April, when it recorded 8.77 million barrels (292,000 bpd). Japan's overall imports of crude oil increased 5.9 percent year-on-year to 3.39 million bpd for the first gain in three months. Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 89.2 percent of the total, up 1.4 percentage points from the year before. Saudi Arabia remained Japan's No1 oil supplier, although imports from the kingdom shrank 14.1 percent from a year earlier to 1.16 million bpd, followed by the United Arab Emirates with 1.00 million bpd, up 14.2 percent. Qatar ranked third with 289,000 bpd and Iran fifth with 177,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's-third biggest oil consumer after the US and China. —KUNA

Municipality continues to remove unlicensed camps

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality announced yesterday that it has intensified its efforts to remove violating camps around the country, whose owners set them before the official start of camping season. The efforts have so far resulted in removal of 14

unlicensed tents in Jahra governorate, Rasheed Al-Bader, head of the municipality's central emergency team, stated.

The operations are ongoing in cooperation with the Municipality's specialized departments in all six governorates, in addition to ministries and state bodies related to the spring camps committee, Al-Bader said. The Municipality urges all citizens and residents to commit to the official camping season. The kick off date for the season is to be announced soon and will be made available through various media outlets, he noted.

As the camping season approaches, environment police began increasing their patrols in desert areas to monitor any environmental violations as they usually increase during this season. Police received a call about a rubbish fire in Wafra desert, so firemen were called in to put out the fire. It was determined the fire was deliberately started to get rid of rubbish. The environment law 32/2014 bans such practices, which carries a fine anywhere up to KD 500-10,000. The environment police said they will apply the law strictly against those who burn rubbish in the desert. —Agencies

Minister takes decision prior to Jaber Hospital opening

KUWAIT: A recent decision by Kuwait's Minister of Health (MoH) Dr Bassel Humoud Al-Sabah, which involved the transfer of a number of health executives, was made in preparation for the opening of Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Hospital, said the Ministry of Health in a statement yesterday. According to a press release, the ministry added the other decisions taken included the necessary relocation of medical equipment and manpower in preparation for the opening of the new hospital in South Surra area. Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Hospital, a project costing around KD 304 million (approximately USD 1 billion), was handed by contractors to the ministry back in July. —KUNA

Local

Kuwait to partake in the Arab Energy Conference

Minister Al-Rashidi will chair the second technical session

local spotlight

Tipping in Kuwait



By Muna Al-Fuzal

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Last week I wrote an article about a recent decision by the municipality to deport any street cleaner who is caught begging. After the story was published, I got some questions related to a topic related to begging - tipping. David, a Kuwait Times reader, sent me this letter: "Dear Muna - I have a question related to your article about street cleaners begging for money. I routinely see people giving 'tips' to street cleaners performing their cleaning duties as they pass by in their cars. I have done this too. Since begging is prohibited by Kuwait law, am I in danger of being arrested if a law enforcement officer sees me 'tipping' these laborers?"

Well, here is what I think. In my earlier column, I spoke about those who decide to give money, clothing or food to such cleaners as charity and an act of kindness. I don't see any harm in such fine behavior. I agree that many people do so every day and I don't think they will stop for any reason.

But, there is a difference between begging and tipping. With the latter, you decide whether to give money or not to whomever you want to due to their satisfactory services. So, if you decide to give money as a tip, or old clothes or food, then such an act has nothing to do with the decision of the municipality.

I believe that begging is an insult to the state and the reputation of the country. It is good to prevent and fight such an ugly phenomenon because it is based on paying money, whether the beggar is honest or a crook. The spread of begging in any country opens the way for robberies and gangs to exploit women and children to make it a career that threatens the whole nation, especially tourists. But tipping is a matter of debate between supporters and opponents, and both have a point of view that deserves attention.

In Kuwait, it seems the issue of tipping depends on the service you receive and personal satisfaction. The tip is never mentioned in black and white on a cafe or restaurant menu. There is no policy that forces anyone to tip. It depends entirely on the customer's satisfaction, but does not exceed a dinar or two. I think sometimes it seems unreasonable to pay an additional amount after you have received the required service. Many local companies do not impose tipping guidelines, as in some cases it's a source of infighting among employees.

I am personally against tipping, and here is why. It is one of the worst habits that has spread in our Arab countries, to the extent that it has become like a bribe. So only if you pay the bribe, others will carry out their duties. The ministry of commerce in Kuwait has made a good decision to prevent all restaurants and shops from charging fees for the services they provide to customers by imposing a minimum value of orders, or what is known as a mini charge.

There are some attempts to get rid of this habit. Iceland is a good example of this, and the practice of tipping in this country is declining. If you visit Iceland, you should know that tipping in a restaurant is viewed as an insult. So how can we prevent the habit of tipping becoming common and acceptable behavior? It is simple - don't pay more for something or to someone when you don't have to. Giving money to a worker in a restaurant because of good service and encouragement is different from giving money to a cleaner on the street. The latter is charity, while the former is encouragement, and both are optional. You have the choice.

KUWAIT: Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rashidi will participate in the first ministerial session of the 11th Arab Energy Conference, which will be held from 1 to 4 October in the Kingdom of Morocco, Kuwait Oil Ministry said yesterday. In a press statement, the ministry said that the meetings will address several topics, most important of which are changes in the oil and natural

gas markets, including consequences if any to Arab oil exporting countries.

The statement noted that Minister Al-Rashidi will chair the second technical session dealing with the subsequent petroleum industries on the Arab and international levels. The delegation will include Kuwaiti Ambassador to Morocco Abdul Latif Al Yahya, Acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil

Sheikh Talal Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Mohammad Al-Juwaiser, Acting Director of Energy Research Fuad Mohammad and Public Relations Controller and Acting Petroleum Media Supervisor Sheikh Tamadur Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The conference will be attended by official delegations from Arab nations and headed by the ministers of

energy, oil, gas and electricity as well as a number of secretaries-general in international and Arab organizations specialized in energy and economy, in addition to the participation of Arab and foreign experts. The idea for convening Arab Energy Conference was decided by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) in May 1977. — KUNA

Meeting between Iraqi, Kuwaiti border officials

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A meeting was held between Iraqi and Kuwaiti border officials. The Kuwaiti side was headed by Director General of the Land Security Department Maj Gen Faisal Al-Essa, and the Iraqi side by commander of the fourth zone Maj Gen Salam Kazim. Both sides discussed means of achieving security integration between border security departments in a way that guarantees the security of land borders, besides increasing coordination and cooperation in the field of monitoring borders.

Municipality citations

The Municipality's PR department said Jahra municipality public cleanliness department removed 128,079 cu/m of rubbish and debris, besides distributing and changing 711 containers. The department also issued 522 citations and warnings and 569 signs were removed, in addition to 60 abandoned cars. The Municipality's PR department added Mubarak Al-Kabeer municipality removed 78,166 cu/m of debris, placed 358 stickers on abandoned cars and 17 abandoned cars were removed, while 59 citations were issued to roaming vendors and for public cleanliness, in



addition to issuing 13 licenses.

Detour on Sheraton Roundabout

The traffic department said a detour was opened on Fahd Al-Salem (Sheraton) Roundabout, and urged motorists to follow proper traffic instructions and be cautious while maneuvering through the detour.

He has sustained several injuries and his condition has now stabilized.

Nephew steals KD 400

A Gulf national accused her nephew of stealing KD 400 and an expensive watch from her house during a visit. Police is preparing the case and is set to summon the suspect for questioning.

Moroccan caught with drugs

Police has sent a Moroccan to the Drugs Control General Department for being in possession of hashish joint and a bag containing marijuana. Police had stopped the man during a routine check and asked him for his IDs. They noticed that he was acting strangely and proceeded to investigate his vehicle in which they found the bag with the drugs inside.

Citizen pulled over

Hawally traffic patrolmen noticed a vehicle with accident marks. It was pulled over to issue a citation and then the police noticed the driver, a citizen, was in an abnormal condition, and after further evaluation was in debt of KD 300. The patrolmen had also found undisclosed drugs on him and he was sent to concerned authorities.

Reward for stolen car

A citizen put out a KD 500 reward for anyone who provides any information about his stolen vehicle which was taken by an unknown person in the Ahmadi governorate. Police are currently looking for the suspect.

— Al-Rai/Al-Anbaa



Al Sayer Group yesterday sent flowers and a cake to congratulate Kuwait Times on its 57th anniversary.

Ex-MP's son stabbed during fight in Andalus

KUWAIT: Mohammed Saleh Al-Mulla, son of the former MP, Saleh Al-Mulla, was yesterday stabbed during a fight with three other citizens in Andalus, said security sources. The sources added that along with two of his friends, Mohammed fought with three others and was rushed to Al-Sabah hospital's ICU where his condition is now stable. The sources also explained that the other five juveniles involved in the fight were arrested and are pending further legal actions.

Held at knife point

Two Bangladeshi nationals told Sulaihiya police station they were mugged by a man at knife point. The mugger held his knife firmly to the neck of one of the individuals and proceeded to rob them. They managed to give police the mugger's license plate number of the car he was driving. The suspect robbed KD 80 from the victims.

Fireman run over

A fireman narrowly escaped death when he was accidentally run over by an expat. He was rushed to Amiri hospital and was in critical condition. The fireman was off duty and was hit while crossing the road.



KUWAIT: Kuwaitis gather on the lawn outside the National Assembly building in Kuwait City yesterday, in protest against the government's new censorship regulations on publications, which resulted in several books being banned from entering the country. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

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Israel leader lashes Iran, claims 'secret atomic warehouse'

Conflict and drought ravage Iraq's prized date palms

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SADR CITY, Iraq: Abu Hauraa (right), a licensed Iraqi arms seller watches as a client inspects a pistol in his shop in the capital Baghdad's eastern Sadr City district. —AFP

US shuts consulate in Iraq's Basra

Washington pulls diplomats from Iraqi city, cites threats from Iran

WASHINGTON: The United States announced yesterday it will effectively close its consulate in the Iraqi city of Basra and relocate diplomatic personnel assigned there following increasing threats from Iran and Iran-backed militia, including rocket fire. The decision adds to mounting tension between the United States and Iran, which is the target of increasing US economic sanctions. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, as he explained the move, renewed a warning that the United States would hold Iran directly responsible for any attacks on Americans and US diplomatic facilities. It followed recent rocket attacks that Pompeo said were directed at the consulate in Basra. US officials said the rockets, however, had not impacted the consulate, which is located on the Basra airport compound.

"I have made clear that Iran should understand that the United States will respond promptly and appropriately to any such attacks," Pompeo said in a statement. Pompeo did not explicitly say whether a US response was imminent, however, and other US officials did not

disclose potential response options. Still, Pompeo said the threats against US personnel and facilities in Iraq were "increasing and specific" and added that Washington was working with Iraqi forces and US allies to address them. "We look to all international parties interested in peace and stability in Iraq and the region to reinforce our message to Iran regarding the unacceptability of their behavior," he said.

"Chaos, death, destruction" In a statement, the US State Department said the consulate was placed on "ordered departure," which technically involves a draw-down in staff. Although some personnel could remain on the diplomatic compound, the move is believed to effec-

tively close the consulate, at least temporarily. The decision came days after US President Donald Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani exchanged taunts at the United Nations General Assembly, with Trump vowing more sanctions and accusing Iran's leaders of sowing "chaos, death and destruction." Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, speaking at a nearby event in New York on Tuesday, warned "there will indeed be hell to pay" if Iran crosses the United States, its allies or harms US citizens.

In May, Trump withdrew the United States from an international deal to put curbs on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for easing sanctions. France, Britain, Germany, China and Russia have

stayed in the pact, vowing to save it despite the restoration of US sanctions. The rial has lost 40 percent of its value against the US dollar since April. Iran has blamed US sanctions for the currency's fall, saying the measures amount to a "political, psychological and economic" war on Tehran, and accused the United States and Israel of involvement in a deadly attack at a military parade in southwestern Iran this month.

Basra has already been rocked by violent protests seen by experts as a rejection of the Iraqi political establishment that has held on to power—with the support of the United States and Iran—despite failing to improve people's lives there. Protesters in Basra ransacked and torched Iraqi government buildings this month and the Iranian consulate was set alight by demonstrators shouting condemnation of what many see as Iran's sway over Iraq's affairs. For the first time in several years, mortar shells also landed this month inside Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, which houses parliament, government buildings and many foreign embassies. —Reuters

“ US would hold Iran responsible for any attacks ”

Macedonia - the country that may change its name

SKOPJE: A small, poor and landlocked country, Macedonia has struggled for a quarter of a century to win recognition for its name despite protests from neighboring Greece. Today its citizens will vote on whether to rename their country "The Republic of North Macedonia" as part of a compromise with Athens, which has its own northern province called Macedonia. Here are five things to know about the Balkan state.

Name debate

Macedonia's official name at the United Nations is the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM, the result of its 27-year-long row with Greece. A number of countries have recognized the Balkan state under its constitutional name of Macedonia, including the US, Russia and even China, but not the European Union.

Deceptive flags

Macedonia is home to around two million people, mostly Orthodox Slavs and an ethnic Albanian minority that makes up around a quarter of the population. Passing through the northwest of Macedonia, a traveler might think they were in Albania. Under a 2005 accord, residents have the right to fly the red and black Albanian flag and the two-headed eagle is prevalent in a number of villages. Having avoided inter-ethnic war during the bloody break-up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Macedonia found itself facing conflict in 2001 when ethnic Albanian rebels launched an insurgency. Up to 200 people were killed during the seven-month conflict with Macedonian armed forces. The internationally-brokered Ohrid agreement, reached in August 2001, provided greater rights for Macedonia's Albanian minority, including power-sharing, better representation in the public sector and official status for the Albanian language.

Emigration

Macedonia is one of the poorest countries in Europe with an average salary of 400 euros (\$470). A quarter of its active working age population is unemployed. Youngsters



SKOPJE: Two girls walk past a campaign poster reading 'A safe future for our children' displayed on the window of the office of the coalition that supports the 'yes' in the upcoming referendum on whether to change the country's name to 'Republic of Northern Macedonia'. —AFP

are particularly badly affected and many have emigrated. Authorities do not have official figures on emigration and have not organized a census since 2002, but according to the World Bank about a half a million Macedonians—or a quarter of the population—are living abroad.

Heroes

Two historic personalities make Macedonians especially proud: Mother Teresa and Alexander the Great. Both, however, are disputed, with Mother Teresa also claimed by Albania and Alexander by Greece. Although Mother Teresa was born in Skopje under the Ottoman Empire, she was of Albanian ethnicity.

Sunshine state

The national flag is a stylised yellow sun on a red field. Macedonia boasts 280 sunny days a year, according to the Meteorological Institute. However, Macedonia is the European nation that produces the least solar energy: 0.04 percent of total production, says the Agency for Energy. The mountainous country is a paradise for hikers with three national parks, 50 lakes and thousands of kilometers of trails. Its cuisine—a mix of Ottoman, Mediterranean and Austrian-Hungarian influences—is reputed to be among the finest in the Balkans. As is its wine. —AFP

Under pressure, Trump orders FBI Kavanaugh probe

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump, under intense pressure from moderates in his own party over his Supreme Court nominee, on Friday ordered an FBI investigation into sexual misconduct allegations against Brett Kavanaugh at the request of Senate Republicans, a move that will delay the contentious confirmation process by a week. The key player in a day of dramatic and unexpected developments was Senator Jeff Flake, a moderate Republican retiring from the Senate in January who provided the decisive vote to approve Kavanaugh's nomination in the Judiciary Committee and send the matter to the full Senate.

But Flake, after urgent consultations with colleagues including Democratic Senator Chris Coons, cast the vote only after asking the Republican-led panel to request that the Trump administration pursue an FBI probe lasting up to seven days of the explosive allegations against Kavanaugh. Trump, who had previously rebuffed Democratic demands for an FBI probe, granted the request, ordering the "supplemental investigation" to be "limited in scope and completed in less than one week." "Just started, tonight, our 7th FBI investigation of Judge Brett Kavanaugh. He will someday be recognized as a truly great Justice of The United States Supreme Court!," Trump said in a Twitter post late on Friday.

Flake's move came a day after an extraordinary hearing in which university professor Christine Blasey Ford detailed her sexual assault allegation against Kavanaugh. Flake's action also came only hours after two protesters who said they were sexual assault survivors cornered him in an elevator and castigated him for announcing he would vote for Kavanaugh in the committee. "That's what you're telling all women in America - that they don't matter, they should just keep it to themselves," one of the protesters shouted at Flake, a frequent Trump critic who looked shaken by the encounter.

Flake, who had a pained expression when he made his request for an FBI probe in the committee after forcing a brief delay in the scheduled vote, was supported by two oth-

er Republican moderates, Lisa Murkowski and Susan Collins, both of whom have not announced whether they would support Kavanaugh. The allegations against Kavanaugh, with the backdrop of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment and assault that has toppled a succession of powerful men, have riveted the country even as they have imperiled his confirmation chances.

Trump's nomination of Kavanaugh, a conservative federal appeals court judge, for a lifetime job on the top US court had appeared to be going along smoothly until Ford's allegation surfaced last week. He has denied her allegation and accusations of sexual misconduct made by two other women. The committee vote followed a jarring and emotional hearing on Thursday in which Ford accused Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her in 1982 when both were high school students in Maryland. Kavanaugh denied the accusation and accused Democrats - who have opposed his nomination from the outset - of a "calculated and orchestrated political hit."

In a statement issued by the White House, Kavanaugh said he would cooperate with the FBI investigation. If confirmed, Kavanaugh would consolidate conservative control of the nation's highest court and advance Trump's broad effort to shift the American judiciary to the right. The controversy has unfolded just weeks ahead of the Nov 6 congressional elections in which Democrats are trying to seize control of Congress from the Republicans.

'Ripped apart'

"This country's being ripped apart here," Flake told his fellow senators about the nomination fight. "I think we can have a short pause," he added. "We ought to do what we can to make sure that we do all due diligence with a nomination this important," Flake said. Even before Flake's move, it was unclear if Republicans had the votes to confirm Kavanaugh on the Senate floor. Republicans hold a slim 51-49 majority in the Senate, making the votes of Murkowski and Collins crucial.

Trump can afford to lose the vote of only one senator in his own party if all the Democrats vote against Kavanaugh and Vice President Mike Pence casts a tie-breaking vote. Trump said Murkowski and Collins must do what they think is right. Moderate Democrats Joe Manchin and Heidi Heitkamp, who have not yet announced how they will vote on Kavanaugh, also supported Flake's move. Trump indicated he was sticking with Kavanaugh, saying he has not thought "even a little bit" about replacing him. —Reuters

International

Palestinians ask UN court to revoke 'Jerusalem embassy'

UN calls on Israel, Hamas to rein in violence

JERUSALEM: Palestinian foreign minister Riyad Al-Maliki said yesterday the Palestinians have petitioned the UN's top court, alleging that the US inauguration of an embassy in Jerusalem was illegal. The Palestinians have filed a lawsuit at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) "for violating international law by moving its embassy in Israel to the occupied city of Jerusalem", he said, quoted by the official Palestinian news agency Wafa.

In December, US President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, despite Palestinian claims on part of the city and breaking with longstanding US policy. Palestinians have since refused all contact with the Trump administration. The US embassy was transferred from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on May 14, a day marked by mass protest in the Gaza Strip, where about 60 Palestinian protesters were killed by Israeli fire in border clashes. Israel occupied east Jerusalem along with the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War and later declared the entire city its united capital.

Palestinians claim the predominantly Arab eastern area as the capital of a future Palestinian state. UN resolutions call on countries to refrain from moving their embassies to the city until its status is resolved in an Israeli-Palestinian deal. "The ICJ was asked to declare that moving the embassy to occupied Jerusalem constituted a violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," Wafa wrote in English. The court said the Palestinian suit, filed on Friday, asked the body "to order the United States of America to withdraw the diplomatic mission from the Holy City of Jerusalem and to conform to the international obligations flowing from the Vienna Convention".

Gaza violence

Meanwhile, the UN called yesterday for Israel and

Hamas rulers to rein in violence a day after border clashes in which the Gaza health ministry said seven Palestinians were killed. "I am deeply saddened by reports that seven Palestinians, including two children, were killed, and hundreds of others injured, by Israeli forces during demonstrations in the Gaza Strip yesterday (Friday)," the UN's humanitarian coordinator for the Palestinian territories, Jamie McGoldrick, said in a statement.

"I call on Israel, Hamas and all other actors with the ability to influence the situation, to take action now to prevent further deterioration and loss of life." Two boys aged 12 and 14, were among those killed in the clashes Friday, the bloodiest day of border protests since May 14, when more than 60 Palestinians died in violence accompanying the inauguration of the US embassy in Jerusalem, a move that enraged Palestinians.

The Israeli army said in a statement yesterday that some 20,000 "rioters and demonstrators" had gathered at multiple sites along the Gaza-Israel border and that people had hurled "over 100" grenades and explosive devices at troops and the at the border fence. The military said troops fired "in accordance with standard operating procedures" and that Israeli aircraft also struck two positions belonging Gaza's Islamist rulers Hamas. "Hamas is responsible for the violent riots and their consequences," it said. It declined to comment directly on Friday's reported deaths.

Palestinians have been protesting almost weekly along the Gaza border since March 30 in what they call the "Great March of Return". At least 193 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since then, the majority during border protests, while one Israeli soldier has been shot dead by a Palestinian sniper. "I call on Israeli forces to ensure that their use of force is in line with their obligations under international law," McGoldrick said. "All



GAZA: Mourners carry the body of Mohammed Al-Houm, 14, who was killed during a protest along the Israel-Gaza border fence, during his funeral in the Bureij refugee camp, in central Gaza yesterday. — AFP

actors must ensure that children never be the target of violence and neither be put at risk of violence, nor encouraged to participate in violence." In yesterday's

statement the Israeli army said Hamas was "endangering children by sending them to the security fence as a cover for terror activity". — Agencies

Israel leader lashes Iran, claims 'secret atomic warehouse'

UNITED NATIONS: Israel's prime minister has accused arch-enemy Tehran of harboring a secret atomic warehouse, making deft use of ample props and vowing that his country would never let Iran develop nuclear weapons. Iran "hasn't abandoned its goal to develop nuclear weapons," Benjamin Netanyahu told the UN General Assembly, where his annual appearance has frequently focused on Israel's chief enemy, the Islamic republic. "Israel will never let a regime that calls for our destruction to develop nuclear weapons. Not now, not in 10 years, not ever," he said. "Israel will do whatever it must do to defend itself against Iran's aggression." "What Iran hides, Israel will find," the prime minister added.

Israel bitterly opposes the Iran nuclear deal, brokered by the United States, Russia, China and European nations in 2015 and has congratulated President Donald Trump for walking away from the deal. Netanyahu opened his speech by claiming that Iran had a secret atomic warehouse in Tehran, holding up a map and a photograph of an outwardly "innocent looking compound" which he urged the UN atomic agency to inspect. "Today I'm disclosing for the first time that Iran has another secret facility in Tehran, a secret atomic warehouse for storing massive amounts of equipment and material from Iran's secret nuclear weapons program," he said.

He also claimed that the Iranian-linked Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah had positioned three missile sites near Beirut airport, holding up what he called "a picture worth a thousand missiles" and titled "Beirut Precision Guided Missile." Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif later ridiculed Netanyahu's allegations, saying that previous claims by Israel had not stood up to scrutiny when investigated by the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency.



NEW YORK: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York. — AFP

"Netanyahu has to explain how Israel, being the only regime that has nuclear weapons in the region, can so cynically level such allegations against a country whose nuclear program's peacefulness has been repeatedly certified by the IAEA," Zarif told Iran's official IRNA news agency. "The only purpose of this is to undercut the reality that Israel is the biggest threat to the region and Netanyahu himself has stood in a facility that produces nuclear weapons and threatened the annihilation of other nations."

'European appeasement'

Netanyahu also accused Iranian agents of plotting attacks in the United States and Europe, as well as being an aggressor in the Middle East. He accused the Iranian regime of brutally oppressing its own people for four decades, and of waging violence in Iraq and Syria, arming

Hezbollah in Lebanon, financing Hamas in Gaza and firing missiles into Saudi Arabia. He tore into Europe for its policy of "appeasement" with Iran, a word that evokes in history European capitals' reluctance to stand up against Adolf Hitler in the run-up to World War II. "Have these European leaders learnt nothing from history? Will they ever wake up?" Netanyahu hector. "We in Israel don't need a wake-up call because Iran threatens us every day." He said Israel was "deeply grateful" to the Trump administration for withdrawing from the Iran deal, an agreement which he claimed had had the "unintended consequence" of bringing Israel closer to its Arab neighbors. "By empowering Iran, it brought Israel and many Arab states closer together than ever before ... in an intimacy and friendship that I've not seen in my lifetime and would have been unimaginable a few years ago." — AFP

Conflict and drought ravage Iraq's prized date palms

BASRA: Sweet Iraqi dates adorn tables in homes across the country, but the fruit tree and national symbol has come under threat from conflict and crippling drought. Shopping in the southern city of Basra, Leila only buys "the queen of dates"—those produced in the surrounding province. Her husband Mehdi, 68, said the couple have the sweet fruit "every lunchtime, and also for snacks between meals". The pair devours a kilo over two to three days, at a cost of 5,000 dinars, or just over \$4 (3.40 euros). But high unemployment and price hikes mean not all families can afford such luxury. For trader Salem Hussein, who has been selling dates for 40 years, the decline set in long ago—before the drought and even this century's series of deadly conflicts.

Imports fill the gap

The 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war decimated the groves of date palms on Iraqi soil, he said, dressed in a sky blue robe and white skullcap. The majority of trees lining the Shatt al-Arab waterway, marking the border between the two countries, were incinerated by shells and rockets. Hussein once dreamt of expanding palm groves and introducing even more varieties than the 450 already boasted by Iraq, which used to be known as the land of 30 million palm trees.

The country's dates were long exported "to the United States, Japan and India", recalled the 66-year-old. "We thought of developing and doubling the number of palms, but the figure only falls." Official estimates put the decline at 50 percent of pre-1980 numbers. "We hoped for a better future—and it got even worse," Hussein lamented. Iraqi agriculture has been especially hard hit by drought this year, resulting in an official ban on the growing of rice and cereals which require a lot of water and the deaths of thousands of animals.

With Iraqi farmers hiking their prices due to the drought, seller Aqil Antuch has adapted to keep his cash-strapped customers happy. He now sells dates imported from Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait at his central Basra shop, which he has run for 25 years. "The



BASRA: An Iraqi man picks up dates from a palm tree at a farm in the southern Iraqi city of Basra. — AFP

Saudis, who produce a high quantity, want to sell their merchandise and lower the price to 1,500 dinars per kilo," said Antuch, 52. It's a far cry from decades past. Saddam Hussein "never let a foreign date enter Iraq", he said of the former dictator, who presided over the Iran-Iraq war and was deposed by the US-led military invasion in 2003.

Sick palms once 'like patients'

Shopper Mehdi remembers palm trees in his garden during the dictatorship, when Iraq was under an international trade embargo. "We would go to the agriculture office with a sick palm tree and they would examine it like a patient at the doctor's," he said. But, in recent years, farming has also been hit by an exodus from rural areas, as Iraqis flock to cities and informal neighborhoods. Irrigation channels have

become open sewers and the rows of trees which once provided shade have disappeared. Palm groves have also been ripped up to make way for oil installations, the country's biggest source of revenue. Other groves have been snapped up for construction of new buildings. In a cruel irony, the majority of dates now sold in Iraq come from trees which first took root in the country, before being replanted in other Gulf states decades ago.

One Basra grower, Raed Al-Jubayli, said surviving producers have been hit by a double "tragedy"—drought and pollution from oil installations. "Buying a palm tree costs around \$250. The maintenance then costs about \$12 per season, while its four kilos of dates don't sell for more than \$3.50," he said. But Jubayli remains proud of the date palm's "ancestral heritage" and its diverse uses. — AFP

Education hothouse Singapore seeks to ease the pressure

SINGAPORE: Singaporean schoolchildren will take fewer exams from next year under reforms unveiled Friday aimed at easing pressure on stressed-out pupils in a country obsessed with high achievement. The tiny city-state regularly tops global rankings when it comes to taking tests—but has faced criticism for putting pressure on students from a young age, and for a focus on rote-learning that curbs creative thinking. From 2019, students in the first two classes of primary school, aged six to eight, will no longer take exams, the education ministry said.

Mid-year examinations will also be removed for some other levels of primary school as well as for those in the first and third years of secondary school. Outlining the reforms, Education Minister Ong Ye Kung said that teachers were "on a high-speed train... I think it's time to take a pause." "It will send a strong signal that we are at a strong position of rigour, and can afford to unwind a bit without undermining the performance outcomes," he was cited as saying in local media.

In addition, students will no longer be told their academic position in class and in their school, to allow them to focus on learning and discourage comparisons with their peers. The reforms are aimed at moving away from an over-emphasis on academic results, the ministry said. Many young pupils in Singapore are sent to expensive private tutors outside regular school, reducing the time they have to play, and it is not unusual to see parents studying with their children on the subway. Many welcomed the move, with Punitha Govindasamy commenting online: "About time too! Children can now have a more rounded childhood. Hopefully parents see the value in this." — AFP

Malaysia's Anwar faces sodomy accuser in election

PORT DICKSON: Malaysian leader-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim started campaigning yesterday for a poll set to return him to frontline politics—but faced a surprise challenge from an ex-aide whose sodomy allegations landed the political heavyweight in prison. Anwar is expected to easily win the local election on October 13 and re-enter parliament as an MP, just months after being released from jail following his alliance's shock win at national polls.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, 93, has pledged to step aside within two years to hand power to Anwar, his former nemesis with whom he teamed up to oust scandal-plagued Najib Razak and his long-ruling coalition at the May election. Following the vote, Anwar, 71, received a royal pardon releasing him from prison where he was serving a sentence for sodomy in a case that his supporters said was politically motivated.

He needs to be elected as an MP to qualify to take over from Mahathir, and earlier this month a lawmaker from his party vacated his seat in the coastal town of Port Dickson to make way for Anwar, a former deputy premier. Yesterday, hundreds of flag-waving supporters of the ruling Pact of Hope alliance marched to a hall in the town as Anwar and the other candidates formally registered for the poll. But there was shock when it emerged that one of his six rivals in the election is Mohamad Saiful Bukhari Azlan, a former volunteer in his office whose accusations of sodomy led to him being jailed in 2015.

The ex-aide, who is running as an independent candidate, was booed by Anwar supporters when he registered his candidacy with some of the crowd reportedly shouting: "Have you no shame?" Anwar shrugged off the prospect of Saiful using the decade-old sodomy allegations to attack the veteran politician during the poll race.

"That is his issue, and I don't want to interfere. I want to focus on my work, and I think the leadership is taking the same decision as well," he was cited as saying in The Star newspaper. — AFP

International

Cameroon migrants grapple with Libya trauma and debts

Beatings, rapes and slavery - haunting recollection

YAOUNDE: In early January, with Christmas lights still twinkling in the streets of Yaounde, Cameroon's capital, Christelle Timdi received the phone call she had almost given up hope of getting. Returning home to Cameroon from Libya two months before, gaunt, weak and clutching her baby girl born just days after she had bought her freedom from a Tripoli detention centre, she burst into tears at the memory of what she had been through. On top of beatings, the trauma of witnessing rapes and her friends sold off as slaves, her most haunting recollection was seeing her boyfriend Douglas falling into the dark waters of the Mediterranean during an attempted crossing to Europe.

But that night in January, it was his voice on the line. "He's not dead!" she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by text message after Douglas called to say he had survived. "He was kidnapped, sold, and thank God, soon he'll be in Cameroon." Timdi, 33, and Douglas are among thousands of African migrants who, after failing to reach Europe in search of a better life, have been flown home from North Africa by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with funding from the European Union.

In the past two years, the IOM and the EU have ramped up support for Africans to return to their countries, driven by the deaths of thousands on sea crossings to Europe and some governments there seeking tighter rules to stem the influx. But seven to 10 months after going home to Cameroon, returning migrants interviewed by the Thomson Reuters Foundation are struggling to get their lives back on track. Many are battling alone the trauma of the torture, sexual violence and slavery they endured in Libya. In addition, they face harsh discrimination from fellow Cameroonians, and are struggling to repay family debts owed to their Libyan jailers and torturers.



Cameroonians narrate their Libya ordeals

hard, if not impossible here", she said. But for now the couple still live with their parents in separate cities, as neither earns enough to move out. Timdi's family spent 1 million CFA francs - collected from relatives and neighborhood savings and loans groups - to free her from her captors in Libya. The debt left her parents in a precarious financial position, and she is trying to help them slowly pay it back. "I feel guilty, really guilty," she said.

Sold as a slave

After Timdi's partner disappeared under the waves, he was fished out by human smugglers who held him for ransom of about \$800 in a detention centre in Tripoli. Once back in Cameroon, Douglas spent two months in and out of hospital

Business support

In late 2016, the EU and the IOM launched their biggest repatriation project yet: a 174 million-euro (\$204 million) fund to help bring back migrants and jump-start their lives in a way that would remove the need to head for Europe. The program has so far returned more than 45,000 people to 14 African countries. Of those, 37,000 have received basic post-arrival assistance, and about 7,000 support to start a business.

Since June 2017, the IOM has helped almost 2,200 Cameroonians go home, providing health check-ups on their return and equipment to set up small businesses. More than 800 have received livestock, tools and other assistance, worth about 700,000 CFA francs (\$1,264) each, for farming and other new ventures, the IOM said. IOM's Cameroon office head Boubacar Seybou hopes the scheme will show migrants they can make a living at home and smooth their integration back into their communities.

Timdi, for example, has set up a small fashion boutique and a grilled fish stall. Without the IOM help, "life would have been very hard, if not impossible here", she said. But for now the couple still live with their parents in separate cities, as neither earns enough to move out. Timdi's family spent 1 million CFA francs - collected from relatives and neighborhood savings and loans groups - to free her from her captors in Libya. The debt left her parents in a precarious financial position, and she is trying to help them slowly pay it back. "I feel guilty, really guilty," she said.



YAOUNDE: Christelle Timdi grilling fish at her stall in Yaounde, Cameroon. —AFP

to treat the illnesses and injuries he suffered in Libya. "This only increased the costs my family had to pay for me," he said. He applied for IOM business assistance in February, but by late September had yet to receive a response. In the meantime, he started running a small chicken, duck and fish farm with his uncle and brother.

But business is slow, and the cost of living high. "Here the salaries are pathetic," he said. In Cameroon, laborers earn about 150 euros a month compared with 150 euros a

week for a seven-hour day in Morocco, he said. At night, he sleeps badly, disturbed by his experiences in Libya, where he was kidnapped twice and auctioned off as a slave, then forced to work for two months building homes. "Your days are spent working without pay," he said. "Often you just think: 'I wish I was dead.'" Since coming home, he has also been ridiculed and shunned by some locals. "People say that you've become like a rebel, since in Libya there are only rebels," he said. —Reuters

Cameroon's anglophone conflict rooted 100 years ago

YAOUNDE: Cameroon elects its president on October 7 against the backdrop of bloody violence in its two separatist English-speaking regions, which have vowed to not let voting take place. Tensions can be traced back to events a century ago when Britain and France occupied Cameroon, taking over Germany's major colony in West Africa. Some background:

World War I split

Cameroon was a German colony until 1916, when British and French troops forced the Germans out. The two countries divided it into separate spheres of influence that were later formalized by the League of Nations, the forerunner to the UN. The much larger French colony gained independence in 1960. A year later, the British colony also gained independence. Some of the English-speaking areas chose to join newly formed Nigeria, others to become part of the federation of Cameroon. In 1972 the Cameroon's federal structure was scrapped and it became one state.

English-speaking minority

Cameroon's two mainly English-speaking southern provinces are home to around a fifth of its 23 million population. Named the Northwest Region and Southwest Region, they jut into southeastern Nigeria. The English-speaking areas are allowed some self-governance and national authorities have made concessions to their language, for example opening bilingual schools. But many English speakers complain of discrimination at the hands of the francophone majority in education, the justice system and the economy.

Disputed 'unity'

Calls for a breakaway English-speaking state mounted in the 1990s, with demands for a referendum on independence accompanied by low-level unrest. In 2001 banned protest rallies turned violent. Several people were killed when security forces moved in and secessionist leaders were arrested. The separatist Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC) set up a "government" in Britain and leaders moved into exile.

2016 flare-up

There was a new outbreak of tensions in November 2016. Lawyers in two regions, which are also strongholds for the political opposition, went on strike to demand the right to use Anglo-Saxon common law. Teachers followed, protesting at the appointment of francophones in the regions' education system. The following month the national flag was torched at protests and a separatist version hoisted. Demands for greater autonomy were rejected by President Paul Biya, in power for more than 35 years, leading to an escalation.

In 2017 anglophone separatists took up arms, attacking security forces and torching symbols of the administration, such as schools. They kidnapped police officers, civil servants and businessmen, sometimes foreigners. Biya branded the secessionists "a band of terrorists" and ordered a crackdown with curfews, raids and other restrictions. In January 2017 senior secessionist activists were arrested and charged with terrorism and rebellion. In an apparent effort to calm the situation Biya halted the secessionists' trials in August. In October separatists made a symbolic declaration of independence. "We are no longer slaves of Cameroon," said Sisiku Ayuk Tabe, the self-declared "president" of a new republic called "Ambazonia". —AFP

Tensions in Barcelona as thousands protest

BARCELONA: Thousands of people demonstrating both for and against Catalan independence shut down parts of central Barcelona yesterday, two days before the anniversary of a vote on secession last year that polarized the wealthy Spanish region. Tensions remain high in the independence-minded region a year after the October 1 vote deemed illegal by Madrid but celebrated by separatist Catalans.

Pro-independence groups camped out overnight on Friday to prevent a demonstration in support of police deployed in Catalonia during last year's failed bid to split from Spain. Catalan authorities said

Cameroon holds its breath as separatists' anniversary looms

LIMBE: Cameroon is nervously awaiting the first anniversary tomorrow of a declaration of independence by its English-speaking minority less than a week before the country plunges into presidential elections. Attacks are occurring daily in the two regions that are home to this French-speaking country's anglophones, and many say they are afraid. In the worst-affected areas, some people have fled with whatever possessions they can carry.

Others say they rarely venture out of their homes, fearing separatists as well as the security forces. On October 1 2017, radicals declared the creation of the "Republic of Ambazonia," covering two English-speaking regions incorporated into francophone Cameroon in 1961. The declaration went largely unnoticed outside Cameroon, and "Ambazonia"-named after a bay at the mouth of the Douala River-has been recognized by no-one.

But the move marked the start of a

crisis that has cast a shadow over the October 7 elections, in which 85-year-old president Paul Biya, who has ruled the country for 35 years, is seeking a seventh straight term in office. "The army killed lots of people on October 1," Monsignor Emmanuel Bushu, bishop of the Buea, capital of Southwest Region, said at the time. "For nearly two weeks, they shot at people like you shoot at birds."

Narcis Termes, 68, an electrician attending the separatist protest with his wife said he was no longer hopeful about the prospects of Catalonia gaining independence. "Last year we lived through one of our best moments. I watched my parents cry with joy at being able to vote but now we are stuck," he said. Over several hours pro-independence groups chanting "Neither forgetting nor forgiveness" faced off with unionist protesters chanting "Long live Spain" ahead of a weekend of further demonstrations planned to mark last year's vote. Joan Puig, a 42-year-old mechanic, recording the protest in support of the police on his phone, said that the conflict had been stoked by politicians on both sides. "It's getting more and more tense," he said. —Reuters

Mounting toll

Biya's crackdown coincided with a surge of bloody attacks by the separatists, gunning down troops and police and burning schools and other perceived symbols of the Cameroonian state. At least 400 civilians have been killed this year, according to the International Crisis Group think-tank. The government says 109 members of the security forces have been killed since the end of 2017.

Atrocities have been committed on both sides, according to watchdogs. "The brutal attacks against ordinary people and security forces are further proof of the horrific escalation of violence," Amnesty International said on September 19. According to UN figures, 246,000 people in the Southwest Region have fled their homes, and 25,000 have sought shelter in neighboring Nigeria, many of them living

Dutch terror suspects 'had 100 kg of fertilizer for car bomb'

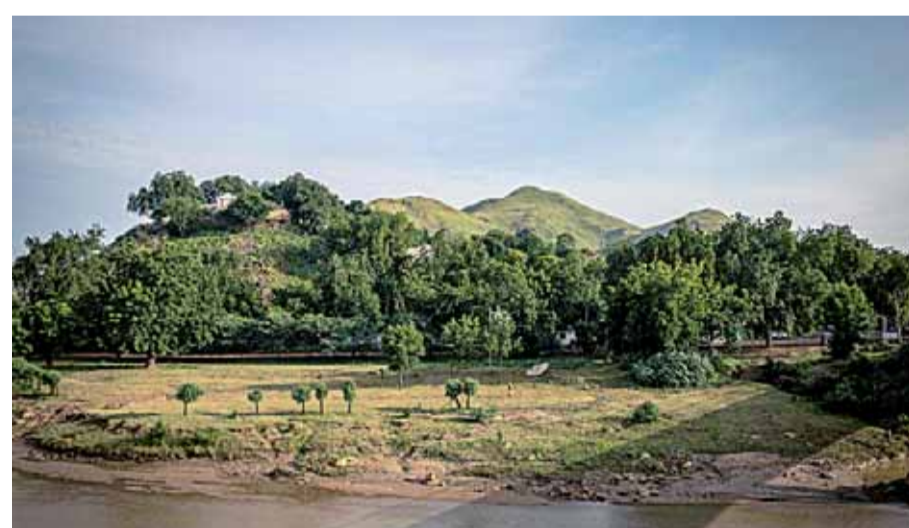
THE HAGUE: Dutch investigators said yesterday they found a large quantity of bomb-making materials including fertilizer likely to be used in a car bomb following the arrest of seven terror suspects. The seven were seized Thursday in the cities of Arnhem and Weert by elite Dutch anti-terror units and are sus-

pected of wanting to carry out a "major" attack in the country. The suspects briefly appeared for the first time in the Rotterdam District court on Friday on terror-related charges, where their case was remanded until next week. The men, who range from 21 to 34 years, were not named and will remain under maximum security conditions-which means they are only allowed to talk to their lawyers. During Thursday's search "police confiscated a substantial amount of raw materials to make bombs at the suspects' homes," the Dutch public prosecution service said Friday. Officers also found "100 kilograms of fertilizer, possibly for use in a car bomb," the prosecutors added in a statement. Officers had previously placed a group of people under surveillance, including a 34-year-old Dutch man of Iraqi origin who was convicted in 2017 of attempting to reach territory controlled by the jihadist Islamic State group.

The suspects came from Arnhem, the port city of Rotterdam



BARCELONA: Catalan regional police 'Mossos D'Esquadra' officers clash with separatist protesters during a counter-protest against a demonstration in support of Spanish police in Barcelona yesterday. —AFP



MAROUA, Cameroon: Photo shows the Kallio River in downtown Maroua, the regional capital of the Far North Region. Eight candidates are running in the October 7 elections against 85-year-old President Paul Biya, who has ruled the country for 35 years and is seeking a seventh straight term in office. —AFP

from hand-to-mouth in the forests. Estimates of displaced people in the neighboring Northwest Region-the other restive anglophone region-are not available.

The government has imposed tight controls, including over the mainstream media, and both sides are fighting for public opinion in the domain of social media. The economic damage, too, has

been severe. The state-run palm oil company Pamol has deserted some of its plantations, and cocoa and coffee production has stopped because villages have abandoned their crops, the Cameroon NGO Human Is Right said in July. The government has set up an emergency aid fund for the two regions, to which many Cameroonians have given generously. —AFP

and villages close to those two cities. Two others in the group also had convictions related to attempts to travel to Iraq or Syria. The men are suspected of wanting to attack civilians at a major event in the Netherlands, the Dutch secret service (AIVD) said, but a possible target was not named. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte during his weekly press conference told journalists "a drama has been prevented in our country". "These arrests show how important it is to remain vigilant," Rutte said, adding it meant the chances of a terror attack in the Netherlands "remained a reality".

The Netherlands has been largely spared the kind of terror attacks which have rocked its closest European neighbors in the past few years, but there has been a series of recent scares. Thursday's arrests came three months after two men were arrested in Rotterdam on suspicion of preparing attacks in France and the Netherlands. —AFP

International

Beijing eyes anti-terror force to protect overseas interests

'Turbulence' in ties threatens US-China security meeting

BEIJING: China is working to develop a first-class, crack anti-terror force that can operate at home and abroad and protect the country's overseas interests, a senior Chinese officer said in comments carried by state media yesterday. In late 2015, China passed a new anti-terrorism law that allows the military to venture overseas on counter-terror operations, though experts have said Beijing faces big practical and diplomatic problems to actually execute such an action.

China says it faces a threat not only from home-grown Islamists in its far western region of Xinjiang, but also from militants in the Middle East, some of whom it says are from Xinjiang. In November 2015, Islamic State said it had killed a Chinese citizen it had taken hostage in the Middle East. In an interview with the official Xinhua news agency, Zhang Xiaoqi, intelligence chief at China's paramilitary People's Armed Police which is part of the Chinese military, said developing special forces was an important component of the country's overall military modernization. "The mission scope of the special forces stretches from land to sea, from home to abroad," Zhang said.

He said that "anti-terror fight preparations" must be ready

to safeguard national strategic interests anywhere. "We must work hard to build an internationally first-rate counter-terror crack force," Zhang added, without giving details. China,



China alleges threats from home-grown Islamists

which has consistently said that it does not interfere in the affairs of other countries, is the only permanent member of the UN Security Council which has not taken military action in Syria. The government is yet to specify how any overseas military, counter-terror operation would work.

'Turbulence' in US ties

Meanwhile, a key diplomatic and security meeting between China and the United States next month may not take place due to tensions in relations, sources briefed on the matter said, potentially the latest casualty of worsening ties. Beijing and Washington are locked in a spiraling trade war that has seen them level increasingly severe rounds of tariffs on each other's imports.

Friction between the world's top two economies is now moving beyond trade, with US President Donald Trump accusing Beijing this week of seeking to interfere in congressional elections, marking what US officials told Reuters was a new phase in an escalating campaign by Washington to put pressure on China. On the military front, China has been infuriated by the United States putting sanctions on the People's Liberation Army (PLA) for buying weapons from Russia, and by what Beijing sees as stepped up US support for self-ruled Taiwan, claimed by China as its sacred territory.

Two Beijing-based diplomatic sources familiar with the plans said US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis were both due in Beijing

next month for the US-China Diplomatic and Security Dialogue, which first took place last year in Washington, a reboot of earlier high-level talks under previous administrations. However, both sources said that this meeting was now in doubt. "There is a lot of uncertainty because of the turbulence in the relationship," said one of the sources. The second source said that the People's Liberation Army was especially unhappy with the United States at the moment because of the US sanctions on the Chinese military and US support for Taiwan, including approving a new round of arms sales this week.

"The PLA is fed up over the Taiwan issue. They're increasingly hardline on this," the source said. Both sources spoke on condition of anonymity as the trips have not been made public. They also cautioned the meetings may still take place as planned, and that no final decisions have been reached. China's Defense Ministry said it was talking to the United States about the dialogue. "China and the United States have all along maintained communication about the diplomatic and security dialogue," it said in a statement to Reuters, without elaborating. — Agencies

'Save Tsukiji': Japan protesters cry out

TOKYO: Braving steady typhoon-driven rain, several hundred protesters held a demonstration yesterday in Tokyo against the closure of Tsukiji, the world's biggest fish market and a lucrative tourist magnet. The two-hour protest drew fishmongers, clients and fans of the market, which is due to close its doors on October 6 after 83 years to move to a site in Toyosu, several kilometers east.

"Save the culture of Tsukiji" and "Tsukiji can live for another 100 years" were among the slogans chanted by the protesters, who have filed a legal suit in a bid to prevent the move. Lawyer Kenji Utsunomiya told AFP he had "always argued for Tsukiji to stay in Tsukiji." "The new site at Toyosu is not suitable for wholesalers. There are going to be a lot of problems," said Utsunomiya, who ran to

be mayor of Tokyo in 2012 and 2014. Critics worry about soil contamination at Toyosu, which delayed the move from its original date of 2016. Tokyo mayor Yuriko Koike insisted earlier this month that the new complex, located on a former gas plant, would be safe and provide a "cutting-edge" environment for the selling of fish. Utsunomiya however said that protesters could not understand why Tokyo would get rid of a site like Tsukiji which has a "global reputation and which all the foreign tourists will want to visit, especially as we approach the Tokyo Olympics in 2020."

Proponents of the move argue that Tsukiji is no longer fit for purpose, especially when it comes to modern-day hygiene and fire regulations. But Asunaro Suetake, one of the protesters, said it was "strange to move the world's biggest fish market to a polluted site, especially when the majority of fishmongers are opposed." Tsukiji market opened in 1935 and is famed for its pre-dawn tuna auctions, with one fish going for more than \$320,000 at the market's final New Year's auction last year. The new Toyosu market will officially throw open its doors on October 11. — AFP



TOKYO: Demonstrators protest against the impending move of the Tsukiji fish market to Toyosu in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Powerful typhoon batters Okinawa, churns to Japan mainland

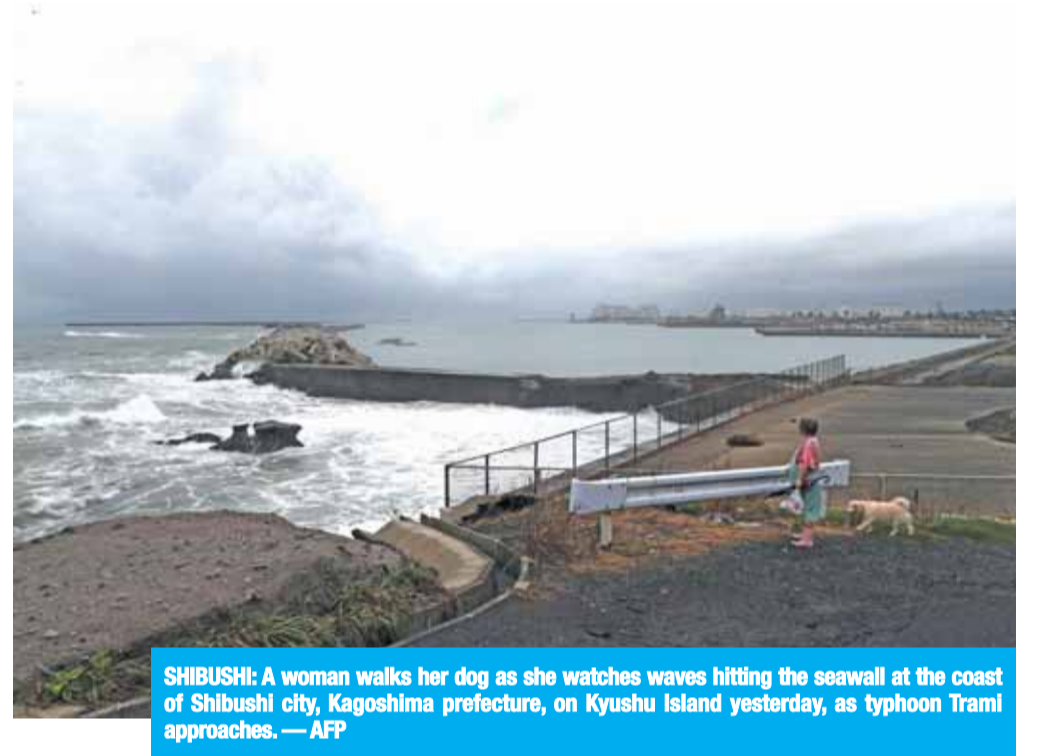
SHIBUSHI: A powerful typhoon pummeled Japan's southern island of Okinawa yesterday, injuring at least 17, as weather officials warned the storm would rip through the Japanese archipelago over the weekend. Typhoon Trami, packing maximum gusts of 216 kilometers per hour near its centre, was forecast to hit the mainland today and cause extreme weather across the country into tomorrow.

Television footage showed branches ripped from trees by strong winds blocking a main street in the regional capital Naha, as well as torrential horizontal rain and massive waves splashing over breakwaters on a remote island in the area. Local policemen in rain jackets wielding chainsaws were battling the furious wind to remove fallen trees. The gusts were strong enough to overturn a truck and smash the glass windows of a bank. Some 700 people were evacuated to shelters in Okinawa and electricity was cut to nearly 200,000 homes, public broadcaster NHK said.

At least 386 flights were cancelled, mainly in western Japan, according to NHK. West Japan Railway said it would suspend all services in the Osaka region and cancel some Shinkansen bullet trains by noon today. Seventeen people suffered minor injuries in storm-related accidents in Okinawa and several houses suffered some damage but no one was feared dead, local officials said. "The number may rise further as we are in the middle of sorting out figures," said Masatsune Miyazato, an official at the island's disaster-management office. "People in Okinawa are used to typhoons but we are strongly urging them to stay vigilant," he said.

'Very strong force'

The weather agency warned people



SHIBUSHI: A woman walks her dog as she watches waves hitting the seawall at the coast of Shibushi city, Kagoshima prefecture, on Kyushu Island yesterday, as typhoon Trami approaches. — AFP

across Japan to be on alert for strong winds, high waves and heavy rain.

"The typhoon is feared to bring record rainfalls and violent winds over large areas," agency official Yasushi Kajiwara told reporters. "Please stay on alert, evacuate early and ensure your safety," the official said. After raking the outlying islands, the typhoon is forecast to pick up speed and approach western Japan today "with a very strong force" as it barrels over the mainland, he added. There have already been heavy downpours in large areas of western and eastern Japan, including the capital, as the storm spurred a seasonal rain front.

The weather agency issued a warning of landslides in Wakayama, western Japan, where local authorities separately announced that a local river had reached "dangerous levels". Fishermen in Kagoshima bay, where the typhoon is expected to make landfall, were already making preparations, tying down their boats as Trami approached—even as forecasters warned that

another typhoon was following in its course. Angler Masakazu Hirase told AFP: "It's dreadful because we already know there's another typhoon after this one but you cannot compete with nature. We do what we can to limit the damage." If the forecast holds, it will be the latest in a series of extreme natural events to strike Japan.

Western regions are still recovering from the most powerful typhoon to strike the country in a quarter of a century in early September. Typhoon Jebi claimed 11 lives and shut down Kansai Airport, the main regional airport. Officials at Kansai were already making preparations, placing sandbags and warning that they may be forced to close the airport. Deadly record rains also hit western Japan earlier this year and the country sweltered through one of the hottest summers on record. Also in September, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake rocked the northern island of Hokkaido, sparking landslides and leaving more than 40 people dead. — AFP

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Washington Watch

Trump's two-state
solution: News
that was no news

By Dr James J Zogby

If we've learned anything about President Donald Trump, it's that for him words have no meaning, or at least not their obvious meaning. Because he's a performer/salesman, he loves being on stage, knowing that the things he says will get a reaction. In many instances he'll say something to shock, knowing that it will cause a distraction that can divert attention from something else. As a result, when I hear Trump make some outrageous remark at a rally or in a tweet, or appear to break new ground at a press conference - instead of taking it at face value - I first ask the question, "Why did he say that?"

This being the case, when I heard Trump this past week twice make reference to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I didn't get excited, as did some Israeli commentators on the right and the left. I took it with a grain of salt, trying to figure out what game was being played. His first mention of two states came during remarks that accompanied his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In answer to a question as to whether or not he supported a two-state solution, he responded "I like the two-state solution. I like the two-state solution," repeating it twice, as if for emphasis.

Then looking at Netanyahu he again said, "I like the two-state solution. Yeah, that's what I think works best. I don't even have to talk to anybody, that's my feeling. Now, you may have a different feeling - I don't think so - but I think two-state solution works best." Later, at another press event, in remarks that were rambling and at times incoherent, he said, "I think we're going to go down the two-state road, and I'm glad I got it out... You know what I did today? By saying that I put it out and if you ask most people in Israel, they agree with that, but nobody wanted to say it. It is a big thing that I put it out. Now the bottom line, if the Israelis and Palestinians want one state, that's okay with me. If they want two states, that's okay with me. I'm happy if they're happy. I'm a facilitator... I think probably two states is more likely..."

"I think it is in one way more difficult because it is a real estate deal because you need metes and bounds and you need lots of carve-outs and everything. It's actually a little tougher deal, but another way it works better because you have people governing themselves." What, you may rightly ask, was he trying to say? On the one hand, nothing earth shattering. Trump gave no indication that what he was supporting could be construed as fulfilling the Palestinians' minimum requirement of an independent sovereign state based on the 1967 borders with its capital in East Jerusalem.

As Netanyahu made clear, shortly after Trump's remarks, "Everyone defines the term 'state' differently. I am willing for the Palestinians to have the authority to rule themselves without the authority to harm us." In line with that, Netanyahu insisted that Israel would never surrender security control of all the territories "west of the Jordan River" - a concern, Netanyahu said was understood by the US President. Speaking the next day, US Ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, added "Where Palestinian autonomy and Israeli security intersect, we err on the side of Israeli security."

If anything, what Trump's vague two-state framework suggests is more reminiscent of Menachem Begin's Camp David plan for Palestinian Autonomy - a situation in which self-governance meant that Palestinians would control themselves and their domestic needs, but would not control land, resources, or borders and security. These are reserved for the Israelis. Seen in this light, Trump's intention was not to break new ground, but rather to resurface and try to breathe new life into an old and discredited approach by calling it a "two-state solution." If it meant so little, then why did President Trump throw out these words at this time and in this way?

Deliberate

In the first place, it was not an inadvertent slip of the tongue. This was deliberate. Since he repeated it over and over again, the phrase was obviously in his talking points. And because he boasted that saying it "is a big thing", he clearly wanted it to be noticed and cause a reaction.

Calling for "two states" was not intended to embarrass Netanyahu or push him to make concessions to the Palestinians. Nothing in Trump's body language or in the rest of his love-fest with the Israeli leader would lead to that conclusion. And nothing in recent US policy actions (moving the Embassy to Jerusalem, cutting aid to UNWRA and the Palestinian Authority, and their announced intention to redefine who is a Palestinian refugee, and efforts to delegitimize the PLO) or inaction (refusal to speak out against massive settlement construction and the demolitions of Palestinian homes and villages) would suggest that this Administration was tilting in a pro-Palestinian direction.

It seems safe to say that the mention of two-states, at this time, was said more for affect than as a serious recognition of Palestinian rights. But toward what end? It might have been intended to make it appear that the long awaited (but no longer highly anticipated) "ultimate deal" was still worth waiting for.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute



Guards may turn attack into political win

An attack on a military parade in Iran is a blow to the image of its Revolutionary Guards, but the elite force could yet turn the bloodshed to its advantage, using public sympathy to bolster itself at the expense of President Hassan Rouhani. Twelve Guards were among 25 people killed on Sept 22 when gunmen fired on a viewing stand as military officials watched a ceremony in the city of Ahvaz marking the start of Iran's 1980-1988 war with Iraq. The bloodshed exposed vulnerabilities of the Guards, custodians of clerical rule since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, who have sought to project an image of invincibility.

Initial responses from ordinary Iranians have been largely sympathetic, however, with many posting on social media to express support for the security forces. "The fact that the attack took place on the anniversary of Iraq's invasion of Iran is likely to prompt a nationalistic backlash among Iranians," said Ali Vaez, Iran Project Director at the Crisis Group think-tank. Iran lost hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the war with Iraq. Pictures of soldiers shielding women and children with their bodies or carrying them away from the scene were widely shared, while more than 20 newspapers used a photograph on their front pages of a commando cradling a baby while holding an AK-47.

"See how a member of the Revolutionary Guards helps a child without fear. Salute to your courage!" read one Twitter post, typical of thousands. But a small number of Iranians shared pictures of the harsh suppression of protests in 2009, when the Guards shot and ran down civilians in the streets. The public reaction was similar to that seen last year after Islamic State militants attacked Iran's parliament and the mausoleum of the Islamic Republic's founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, killing 18.

Rouhani could be loser

The Ahvaz incident could prove more of a setback for Rouhani, a pragmatist leader whose position within Iran

has been severely weakened by the US withdrawal from a nuclear deal with world powers that he engineered and which the Guards and other hardliners opposed. "The Guards will blame Rouhani for the lax situation and shore up their own agenda in the country," said Ali Ansari, director of the Institute for Iranian Studies at the University of St Andrews. "Rouhani is a lame duck. He's long lost the possibility of challenging the Guards," Ansari added. "He lost it with the [nuclear deal] and they've hammered him. That's the one gift that [US President Donald] Trump has given to the Guards, further ammo."

The attack is nevertheless an alarming security breach for the Guards, who influence Iran's approach to its neighbors and control a multi-billion-dollar stake in the economy. The Ahvaz National Resistance, an Iranian ethnic Arab separatist movement, and Islamic State have both claimed responsibility, though without presenting evidence. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the five gunmen were paid by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and that Iran would "severely punish" those behind the violence. Saudi Arabia and the UAE are predominantly Sunni Muslim while Iran is mostly Shiite Muslim. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have rejected Khamenei's allegations.

History suggests the Guards will react by oppressing dissidents, an approach that political activists warn could fuel further violence in the southwest, where the attack took place, and where long-standing grievances have led to sporadic protests. To deflect attention away from Iran, they may strike abroad, an approach used by the Guards before. On Sept 8, they fired seven missiles at a Kurdish opposition group in northern Iraq, killing 15 people. The judiciary executed three Kurdish dissidents hours later. The two actions were intended as a message to Iran's Kurdish community after recent militant clashes with security forces and can be seen as a blueprint for the Islamic Republic's likely response to the parade attack.

Regional rivalries

Iran has had tense relations with its minorities, including Kurds, Arabs, Azeris and Baluch, and has accused them of aligning with neighboring countries rather than Tehran. The missile attack against the Kurdish opposition group was also a warning to Iran's foes Saudi Arabia, Israel and America, analysts, activists and opposition groups say. Iran and Saudi Arabia are engaged in a battle for influence in the Middle East, backing opposing sides in the conflicts in Yemen and Syria as well as rival political groups in Iraq and Lebanon.

An Islamic State cell could have also carried out the parade attack, said an Iraqi military intelligence officer, who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue. After recent military defeats in Iraq, some of Islamic State's leadership crossed the mountainous border into Iran, heading for Afghanistan and Pakistan, said the officer, who has participated in the interrogation of Islamic State detainees. They may have helped form and train small groups to launch guerrilla attacks. "[Islamic State] managed to launch terrorist attacks in the West through its self-dependent lone elements and carrying out such attacks inside Iran will be much easier profiting from feelings," the officer said.

For now, the Revolutionary Guards are tightening their grip at home. Human rights activists say they have arrested hundreds of Sunni activists and members of Arab separatist groups that have claimed responsibility for past attacks on oil pipelines. Yaqoub Al-Tostari, spokesman for one of two groups that call themselves the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahwaz, denies any links to Gulf Arab states. "I can tell you that carrying and using a gun is a common practice among Ahwazi Arab people," he told Reuters by WhatsApp. "After the cruel suppression of the civil movements, if our nation decides to resort to guns, it can deliver blows much bigger than this." — Reuters

Comoros' embattled oppn facing crackdown

The voice of dissent in Comoros is increasingly being stifled - opposition figures, a writer and even military leaders have been arrested while the media has been silenced by the government of President Azali Assoumani. He is accused of trying to extend his rule "at any cost" and in July won 92.74 percent of votes cast in a referendum on increasing his powers that was boycotted by the opposition. His victory meant that the constitution was amended so that he can now seek two consecutive terms in office instead of the previous single stint.

Initially he was elected in 2016 for five years but is thought to be pushing for fresh polls next year which he would consider the first to be subject to the amended constitution. That could see Assoumani rule until 2029. "The referendum was the most scandalous electoral charade of recent years," said the Third Way Collective, a group of activists critical of the government. The modest turnout of 63.9 percent highlighted the extent of opposition to the changes. "The polling stations were deserted but the ballot boxes were full. We are truly a banana republic," said former vice-president Mohamed Ali Soilihi.

The vote also highlighted the deep tensions that divide the Indian Ocean archipelago nation that has been rocked by several coups. The last putsch was in 1999 when Assoumani, then the head of the army, seized power for the first time. He gave up power in 2006 before being

elected in 2016. Since the referendum, police have carried out a wave of arrests. "More than twenty," estimated Interior Minister Mohamed Daoudou. "They were arrested for different reasons but they're all linked to the destabilisation of the country," he said. Since the middle of August the offices of the main opposition Juwa party have been shuttered.

A 'terrorist act'

Six of its leaders including the current chief and former head of state Ahmed Abdallah Sambhi have been prosecuted for corruption and held in jail or under house arrest. "Since August 28, I have been unable to confer openly with my client as there is always a police officer eavesdropping," said Sambhi's lawyer, Ahmada Mahamoudou. Five other individuals, including the deputy head of the army colonel Ibrahim Salim, were arrested in August for a "terrorist act" and an unspecified "plot".

Writer Said Ahmed Said Tourqui has been held in isolation accused of attempting a coup. Threatened with the same fate, several of his contemporaries have opted to flee. Former vice-president Djaffar Said Ahmed Hassane headed to Tanzania after being made the target of an international arrest warrant. Some opposition figures who stayed behind have opted for silence. "We are extremely scared of being arrested," said one opposition activist who declined to be named.

The media has also borne the brunt of the government's crackdown on dissent with more than 20 radio stations closed while the editor-in-chief of government newspaper El Watan, Ahmed Ali Amir was demoted to the rank of general reporter. "The regime has ushered in a climate of fear and intimidation," said seven action groups in a joint statement condemning the "dictatorial power grab". But Assoumani's supporters insist the criticisms are fake news. — AFP

The scandals bedeviling Facebook

Facebook is at the center of controversy yet again after admitting that up to 50 million accounts were breached by hackers. Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said engineers discovered the breach on Tuesday, and patched it on Thursday night. "We don't know if any accounts were actually misused," Zuckerberg said. "We face constant attacks from people who want to take over accounts or steal information around the world." Facebook reset the 50 million breached accounts, meaning users will need to sign back in using passwords. It also reset "access tokens" for another 40 million accounts as a precautionary measure. Here is a roundup of the scandals dogging the social media giant.

Cambridge Analytica

In Facebook's telling, everything goes back to 2013 when Russian-American researcher Aleksandr Kogan creates a personality prediction test app, "thisisyourdigitallife", which is offered on the social network. Around 300,000 people download the app, authorizing access to information on their profile and also to the data of their Facebook friends. In 2015 Facebook makes changes to its privacy policy and prevents third-party apps from accessing the data of users' friends without their consent.

The same year the social network discovers Kogan has passed on the information retrieved via his app to the British company Cambridge Analytica (CA), which specializes in the analysis of data and strategic communication. In 2016 CA is hired by Donald Trump's US presidential campaign. Facebook says it was assured by CA in 2015 that the data in question had been erased. But it estimates the firm could

have had access to the data of up to 87 million users, most in the United States, without their consent, and mined this information to serve the Trump campaign.

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

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

Political manipulation

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

It is accused of spreading disinformation and propaganda including via postings - often in the form of sponsored ads that target users based on their personal data - that could influence opinion, for example over immigration. According to Facebook, more than 120 million users had seen such content. Facebook is in particular accused of not having been vigilant enough on monitoring the content and authenticity of pages and political ads that it carries. — AFP

Business

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BUDAPEST: People hold up posters and banners as they take part in a demonstration against the Hungarian government's housing policy yesterday. —AFP

Saudi legal revamp offers hope for investors

But concerns about Saudization, implementation of rules persist

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's first comprehensive bankruptcy law went into effect last month, one of many reforms to the legal system that economists say may be more important in the long run than high-profile privatizations.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030 push to diversify the economy away from oil has grabbed attention for its big-ticket initiatives, such as a \$500 billion business zone and a plan, now shelved, to sell part of the state oil firm.

The legal reforms have attracted less media coverage because they are highly technical, but they are extensive, ranging from new laws to the creation of courts and training of judges, and they have accelerated over the past couple of years.

The new bankruptcy law creates a clear way for struggling companies to obtain relief from creditors while they restructure—or for firms to be liquidated—and may free up billions of dollars now frozen in debt disputes.

There are still concerns about the legal system, highlighted by the detentions of top Saudi businessmen and officials in a corruption crackdown last year, but the reforms are changing the playing field for companies. "While the headline setting Vision 2030 continues to be the face of change in Saudi Arabia, the driving force behind it remains the tangible and

impactful modifications done to local laws and regulations that drive investment," said Bruce McAlister, a general counsel for industrial conglomerate GE, a top foreign investor.

He cited the bankruptcy law, new laws on government-private sector partnerships, and rules allowing 100 percent foreign ownership of trading firms. "The legal reform process is progressing. It's a work in progress and it will take more time, but the environment is clearly changing," said Grahame Nelson, head of the Riyadh office of Al-Tamimi & Co.

New foreign direct investment in Saudi Arabia totalled just \$1.4 billion in 2017, below smaller countries in the region such as Oman. Privately, businessmen have said that in addition to low oil prices, the unpredictable legal system swayed their decisions.

Sharia compliant

For decades, Saudi Arabia did little to develop its commercial law because it depended heavily on state-led investment in the oil industry. Also, the legal system is based on sharia, a set of Islamic principles that stresses the idea of fairness and gives little weight to legal precedent; many foreign firms come from a common law tradition where precedent is important.

The reforms don't change the religious basis of the system, but they aim to make commercial matters

smoother and more predictable with new institutions and procedures. For example, a committee of experts will oversee bankruptcy cases. This could eventually speed the resolution of long-running disputes such as a \$22 billion, nine-year-old impasse over debts left by collapsed Saad Group and Ahmad Hamad al-Gosaibi & Bros Co, bankers say.

Tim Callen, International Monetary Fund mission chief to Saudi Arabia, said its forecast for non-oil economic growth to accelerate from 1.1 percent last year to over 3 percent early next decade was based partly on the legal reforms.

Specialized commercial courts and appeal chambers were established last year, with judges trained to handle specific types of business dispute. In 2016 the Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA) opened, offering the services of about 125 arbitrators working in 11 languages.

Hamed Hasan Merah, the center's chief executive, said it was meeting the biggest Saudi and foreign companies to persuade them to include recourse to SCCA arbitration in their contracts.

Enforcement

Such efforts aim to improve commercial judgments within Saudi Arabia. Other reforms seek to reassure foreign firms by connecting the country more closely to

the legal system abroad. In the past, Saudi courts rarely enforced the judgments of foreign courts and arbitration centers against Saudi companies. This has been changing; the country received 163 applications to enforce foreign judgments worth \$667 million last year.

Among several successful applications in recent months, a Riyadh court enforced a US ruling for a Saudi tourism firm to pay \$3.8 million, and a Jeddah court ordered a Saudi miner to pay a Chinese firm \$10.1 million, the Justice Ministry said without naming the firms.

Authorities have also started to use a 2013 enforcement law that gives judges less room to use their discretion, so foreign firms seeking restitution may now get a result in a few months, said Glenn Lovell, partner in Riyadh for lawyers Clyde & Co. Concern over the Saudi legal system has not disappeared. Much depends on how quickly and consistently courts can implement new laws; the bankruptcy legislation has not yet been tested in practice, for example.

Many remaining worries for foreign investors are linked to the government's drive to push Saudi citizens into jobs held by foreigners, via quotas and fees for residency permits. Companies find it hard to obtain permits and visas for foreign workers and their dependents, and hope authorities will operate the system more smoothly and transparently. —Reuters

Italy's deficit rattles markets in Europe

NEW YORK: Plans by Italy's new populist government to loosen the budgetary belt a few notches roiled markets in Europe, while Tesla shares took a beating after CEO Elon Musk was charged with fraud.

With the spending plans putting the Italian government on a collision course with the European Commission, Milan took the brunt of the blow in equity markets, dropping by more than 4.6 percent at one point and ending the session 3.7 percent lower. Thursday's budget deal that calls for a 2.4 percent deficit for the next three years came after warnings from the EU to rein in spending and it vastly exceeds the 0.8 percent deficit foreseen by the previous, center-left government.

"The Italian budget continued to cast a shadow over the markets on Friday, setting up a rocky end to a rocky month," noted Connor Campbell, financial analyst at Spreadex trading group.

"Investors are distancing themselves from Italian bonds and stocks, and risk-off sentiment is spreading

across Europe," said market analyst David Madden at CMC Markets UK.

"The severe sell-off in European financial stocks is reminiscent of the eurozone debt crisis," he added.

The trading of shares in some Italian banks was briefly suspended amid heavy price falls, with Banco BPM leading the way down with a drop of 9.4 percent.

The top two Italian banks, UniCredit and Intesa Sanpaolo, lost 6.7 and 8.3 percent respectively.

Shares prices of major European banks outside Italy also slumped, with French lender Credit Agricole down 4.4 percent, Deutsche Bank sliding 3.8 percent and Barclays losing 2.8 percent.

Meanwhile, the yield on Italian government bonds jumped and the euro also dropped heavily against the dollar. Italian government bonds "have unsurprisingly been under pressure" said analysts at UniCredit in a note to clients.

The spending plan "creates several important challenges, from a confrontation with the EC to the possibility of a downgrade of the sovereign credit rating," they said, adding that volatility in Italian bond prices was likely to continue, especially as the European Central Bank winds down expanding its purchases of government bonds. —AFP

China CB vows to ensure liquidity amid trade row

BEIJING: China's central bank pledged to maintain its "prudent and neutral" monetary policy and to use multiple tools to keep liquidity ample, as the world's second-biggest economy comes under increasing pressure from a heated trade dispute with the United States.

On its website following a quarterly meeting of its monetary policy committee, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said yesterday it will fine tune monetary policy in a pre-emptive way and control the pace of deleveraging. The PBOC is expected to keep policy relatively loose to support a slowing economy as China faces increased headwinds from

trade frictions with Washington.

The central bank said it would strike a balance between interest rate, exchange rate and international balance of payments. The PBOC will continue to closely watch broad changes in international and domestic economic trends and guide reasonable growth in money supply, credit and total social financing.

"The prudent monetary policy will be kept neutral, neither too loose nor too tight," it said.

The United States and China imposed fresh tariffs on each other's goods on Monday as both sides showed no signs of backing down from an increasingly bitter trade dispute that is expected to hit global economic growth. Investors and policy makers worry that the tariff row could further hurt China's already slowing economy.

Economists have noted that disruptions in supply chains are likely to be more company specific, and will take time to be reflected in broad economic data and corporate earnings reports. —Reuters

Business

NBK announces winners of 'Car of Your Choice' and the winner of KD 250,000

NBK celebrates exciting and fun-filled mega day, holds Al-Jawhara draws



Mohammed Al Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group and Hanadi Khazal, Chief Marketing Officer, during the announcement of the winner of KD 250,000 in Al-Jawhara's quarterly draw. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



Mohammed Al Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group and Emad Al-Ablani, General Manager-Group Human Resources during the announcement of the five winners in the "Car of Your Choice" campaign.

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait celebrated its exciting, fun-filled annual mega day on Friday (28th September) at the Grand Avenue, The Avenues, in the presence of officials from the Bank, comprising Salah Al-Fulaij, Chief Executive Officer, NBK-Kuwait, Mohammed Al Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, Emad Al-Ablani, General Manager- Group Human Resources, National Bank of Kuwait and Hanadi Khazal, Chief Marketing Officer, National Bank of Kuwait. The event received a great attendance from customers and visitors, giving them a chance to win valuable prizes in the activities that were planned during the day.

NBK also announced during the event the winner of KD 250,000 in Al-Jawhara account's quarterly draw, in addition to the five winners in the Summer Campaign's "Win a Car of Your Choice" and the winners in the Zlatan draw campaign. The draws were held live in the presence of representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Five winners of a car of their choice

The Mega Day kicked off at noon with activities hosted by presenter Salman Al-Nejadi and covered live by Kuwait Pulse FM 88.8, interacting with the crowds to take part in fun-filled games and win immediate prizes. At 4 pm, the performances began with a special show organized in partnership with KidZania, followed by a performance by a traditional band for everyone to enjoy. Live competitions then took place to win valuable cash prizes as well as prizes from stores participating in NBK's Rewards Program.

Winners in the draws of the campaigns launched since the beginning of summer were also announced. The five winners in the "Win a Car of Your Choice" draw as part of NBK's Summer Campaign are: Hamad Mohamed Yousef Al-Sabah, Rabih Said Mekadachi, Ghadeer Salem Hussain Al-Haddad, Ali Naser Ali Mohammad Ali and Mun Soo Park. The 5 winners were awarded with an NBK Prepaid Card loaded with KD 20,000 to be spent on the car of the winner's choice at any vehicle dealership inside Kuwait. The quarterly draw of Al-Jawhara account was also held live, in addition to the winners in the Zlatan campaign exclusive to holders of the FIFA World Cup Visa Prepaid Card, in which the winners took home jerseys signed by the famed football player, Zlatan Ibrahimovi.

Winner of KD 250,000

During the event, the quarterly draw of Al-Jawhara account was held live, announcing Ahmad Nassim Mahmoud Eid as the winner of KD 250,000. The draw was held in the presence of the representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

NBK allows customers to automatically enter the draws of Al-Jawhara account, giving them a chance to win KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and a KD 250,000 grand prize quarterly, for every KD 50 deposited into their account. The minimum amount that can be deposited in the account is KD 400 and the maximum is KD 500,000. If no withdrawals or transfers occur on the account during the required period, customers will receive an additional chance to enter the draw for every KD 50 held in the account, doubling their chance to win.

Continued success and excellence

Sharing the excitement of the crowds at NBK's Mega Day, Mohammed Al-Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, said, "We have once again concluded a unique Mega Day in which we aimed at rewarding our loyal customers through activities, draws and prizes. This year's event distinguishes itself with the quality of competitions, offers and cash prizes that were distributed to winners. The event comes as part of our continued commitment to interacting and engaging with our customers and provide them with a fun-filled day for the whole family to enjoy."

Al-Othman added, "This year, we ensured to introduce the technologically-advanced services that were recently launched by the Bank, enabling our customers to complete their transactions in simple steps through NBK Online and Mobile banking services, without having to visit their nearest branch."

Commenting on the success of the event, Hanadi Khazal, Chief Marketing Officer, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, said: "We are very happy with the positive response received during our Mega Day. We wanted to engage with our loyal customers by dedicating a day for them and their families while also holding our draws live to announce in front of the crowds the names of winners in our biggest campaign for the year, the "Win a Car of Your Choice" which was designed to give our customers the opportunity to choose and personalize the car they want to own."

"The success of NBK's Mega Day is a proof of our



Area Managers at NBK: Ali Hasan, Ali Al-Mulla and Hamad Alwera during the announcement of the winners in Zlatan Ibrahimovi campaign.

commitment to customer satisfaction and to providing them with the best level of service through advanced products, campaigning and events," added Khazal.

Advanced technologies

During the event, the crowds were introduced to NBK's technologically-advanced services, starting with the Tap & Pay feature available at ATMs which enables customers to withdraw and deposit money with a simple tap and without inserting their card when using the NBK Tap & Pay. In addition to this new feature, customers can also enjoy cardless cash withdrawals using their Civil ID or mobile phone number. They can also update their Civil ID details through the ATMs. The Bank also introduced the latest updates to NBK's Online and Mobile banking services, in addition to the direct Video Chat service allowing customers to speak face-to-face with NBK Service Officers.

Two New Campaigns: Cashback and Win a GAC Car

NBK concluded the Mega Day with an announcement of two new and upcoming campaigns: The cashback campaign and another campaign launched in collaboration with GAC Motor.

NBK customers will have the opportunity to win a car from GAC Motor by simply downloading and using the NBK's Mobile Banking Application or making transactions through the ITM machine. Al-Shabab account holders will be eligible to enter a separate draw to win a car from GAC Motor.

NBK holds the Mega Day every year to reward its customers through an entertaining day that targets them and their families, in addition to announcing the winners of NBK's largest campaigns during the year. The Bank aims to remain their first choice when looking for the banking experience that best suits their needs.



Children during their participation in the event



From the event



Announcing a new campaign in collaboration with GAC Motor



A special booth to introduce NBK's advanced technological services



One of the activities



KidZania characters on stage

Business

NBK analyses Kuwait's upgrade, inclusion in FTSE Russell index

Dr Husayn examines recent trend for passive investing among investors

KUWAIT: Dr Husayn Shahrur, Managing Director of the MENA Asset Management Division at NBK Capital, presented on Kuwait's upgrade and subsequent inclusion to FTSE Russell's emerging market index. His presentation focused on three main areas:

Passive investing theme - Dr Husayn, spoke at length on the recent trend in preference for passive investing among investors and shared an insightful analysis on the increasing popularity of passive investment strategies in developed markets as seen in trend in asset flows across the globe. The ongoing trend in passive investing supports the growing importance of globally followed benchmarks like MSCI Emerging Market index and FTSE Russell Emerging Market index, which track sizeable assets across emerging equity markets. He emphasized that Kuwait, a FTSE Russell Emerging Market constituent and a potential entrant in MSCI EM index, is likely to be immensely benefit in terms of notable flows going forward thus paving way for greater foreign participation.

Index Classification - He further presented on the major global index providers / indices that play a critical role in shaping and influencing investment strategies globally. He also discussed the rationale behind country classification, delved deep into developed, emerging and frontier countries as classified by MSCI and FTSE, and provided an insight on the constituents of the emerging market indices.

Kuwait's upgrade to emerging market status and its implications going forward - Dr. Husayn also spoke on Kuwait's recent upgrade to emerging market status and its implications for the local stock market going forward.

He highlighted how the recently announced upgrade and subsequent inclusion to FTSE Russell's emerging market index is likely to be an important development for the country's stock market in more than one way. Dr. Husayn expects that the FTSE upgrade will likely lead to overall improvement in the investing environment in Kuwait through increased presence of institutional investors. This could in turn result in multiple positives - positive market sentiments, improved liquidity, increased transparency/governance, increased number of IPOs / equity issuances, increased focus on improving shareholder's returns, lower cost of capital due to lower equity risk premium, increased market sophistication by introduction of derivatives and similar hedging tools etc. He highlighted that the success of the FTSE upgrade has been a function of a slew of reforms achieved by Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and Boursa Kuwait. He briefly touched upon notable initiatives like change in settlement cycle, change in tick sizes, market segmentation etc. which have been successfully achieved over the recent past. He lauded the ongoing initiatives of Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and Boursa Kuwait, which broadly aims at reforming the existing regulatory, operational and organizational framework to align with international standards which is also likely to make the investment case for Kuwait stronger.

He further commented on expected flows and discussed in detail the inclusion process for Kuwait. He highlighted that Kuwait's inclusion is likely to attract passive inflows of around USD 800 - 900 million in addition to active flows. Dr. Husayn also spoke about

Kuwait's potential inclusion in MSCI EM index, which could happen by June 2020, provided MSCI decides to upgrade Kuwait to emerging market status by June 2019. This is likely to further support Kuwait's overall investment case, which offers investors the right mix of fundamental attractiveness and fund flow related catalysts. He highlighted that high oil prices, solid macro-economic outlook resulting in healthy earnings growth across key sectors is likely to underpin Kuwait's fundamental outlook. This when supported with the second tranche of FTSE flows (expected to be around USD 400-450 million) which will be effective from 24th December 2018 (majority of trading expected on 20th December 2018) is likely to strengthen the case for Kuwaiti equity market. He highlighted that these structural developments will be key for the GCC region as a whole and its increased prominence among global investors going forward. The region's potential increased weight on the index coupled with relatively low foreign ownership of companies will likely lead to increased participation from foreign institutional investors.

Dr. Husayn concluded his presentation with a discussion on institutional investors and their role in shaping any market.

Finally, in response to questions from members of the media teams, Dr. Shahrur clarified the following: Managers of passive funds typically have some flexibility of rebalancing their portfolios and do not necessarily have to buy all the quantities they require on the day of the upgrade implementation. Typically, ahead of passive flows, active managers



Dr Husayn Shahrur

try to capitalize on the upgrade event and position their funds in the stocks that are expected to be part of the index. Consistent with this, the Kuwait Bourse saw an 80% increase in foreign funds flows in the first eight months of 2018 as compare to the same period of 2017.

It is expected that there were significant foreign inflows in September, especially on Sep 20. When the September data is released, this will be evident. However, the net figures need not be very close to the amount expected from passive funds. It is possible that the net foreign fund flows in September were lower or higher depending on whether active managers were net buyers or sellers in September. This is especially so given that it is believed that active foreign managers were net buyers in the first eight months in 2018 as evident by the increase in net foreign inflows.

Bayan Weekly Market Report

Boursa Kuwait witnesses mixed performance

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week with mixed performance. The Premier Market Index closed at 5,345.74 points, down by 0.32 percent, the Main Market Index increased by 0.11 percent after closing at 4,762.03 points, and the All-Share Index closed at 5,138.52 points down by 0.18 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 59.34 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching around KD 20.81 million, whereas trading volume average was about 104.18 million shares, recording a decrease of 35.16 percent.

The Premier Market Index and the All-Share Index declined last week affected by the strong selling pressures executed on many listed stocks in the Boursa, headed by the leading and operational stocks listed in the Premier Market, while the Main Market Index was able to record limited weekly gains supported by the random purchasing operations executed on some small-cap and mid-cap stocks.

In addition, the overall performance of the Market during the last week took a selling trend, as many traders tended towards profit collections, and the selling operations concentrated on the leading companies' stocks, especially the ones that joined FTSE Russell Index lately, whereas after the positive performance and the noticeable increases witnessed by such stocks during the previous period, that came in parallel with the optimism state that was present in the Market after promoting the Boursa to the emerging markets: some sessions last week witnessed strong profit collection operations executed on such stocks which contributed into its decrease to a great extent, especially on the

first session of last week, which witnessed a drop in the three Boursa indices, especially the Premier Market Index that recorded in the same session its highest decrease since its launch with the application of the new market segmentation phase last April.

Moreover, the market capitalization of the Boursa recorded a weekly loss of KD 48.95 million, as it reached by the end of last week around KD 28.75 billion, down by 0.17 percent of its level in the previous week, where it was KD 28.80 billion. The market cap gains since the application of the new market segmentation reached around KD 897.47 million, or 3.22 percent. (Note: The market capitalization of the listed companies in the Market is calculated based on the weighted average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements).

Last week witnessed trading over 151 stock out of 175 listed stock in the Market, where prices of 56 stock increased against prices of 80 stock decreased, and prices of 39 stock remained at no change.

Sectors' Indices

Nine of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, while the other three recorded increases. Last week's highest loser was the Technology sector, as its index declined by 8.59 percent to end the week's activity at 851.18 points. The Health Care sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.01 percent, closing at 985.51 points, followed by the Industrial sector, which index declined by 0.98 percent, closing at 981.76 points.

On the other hand, Last week's highest gainer was the Oil & Gas sector, achieving 3.16 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,134.70 points. The Basic Materials sector came in the second place, as its index closed at 1,170.03 points recording 1.84 percent increase, followed by Real estate sector, achieving 0.11 percent growth rate as its index closed at 893.60 points. — Prepared by the Studies & Research Department, Bayan Investment Co.

Mexico says US, Canada could reach new NAFTA deal in 48 hours

MEXICO CITY: The United States and Canada have told Mexico they could reach a compromise within 48 hours on keeping the updated North American Free Trade Agreement a three-country deal, the Mexican economy minister said Friday.

Speaking as he presented the Mexican Senate with the current US-Mexican agreement to update NAFTA—which does not include Canada, the third member of the original

deal-Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo said Washington and Ottawa were making a "very serious," last-ditch attempt to bridge their differences. "For the first time, we're seeing a real effort by both sides," he said.

"In the next 48 hours, we will know if we are going with a trilateral agreement."

Guajardo, Mexico's top negotiator for "NAFTA 2.0," insisted that even if no 11th-hour US-Canadian deal is reached, a three-way deal would still be possible at some point in the future. But that would mean "going ahead with a bilateral agreement and then later defining what legal actions we would have to take to maintain the possibility of a three-way deal," he said. A Canadian government source told AFP that Canada's top negotiator, Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland, "is in constant communication with the Americans, both formally and informally." —AFP

CBK receives winners of draws

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently received at its headquarters the winners

of its final 'Your Trip Your Way' draw launched by the beginning of the summer to reward its cardholders. The reception was also attended by MOCI representative.

The winners were received by CBK's cards center manager, Abdul Aziz Malak who congratulated them for winning flight tickets, cash prizes and gold.



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Business

All-new Ford truck F-MAX to offer power, efficiency and cutting-edge technology

The 2019 International Truck of the Year winner

KUWAIT: The all-new Ford Trucks F-MAX launched at the 67th IAA Commercial Vehicles in Hanover, Germany. The F-MAX takes its name from Ford's legendary F Series, and stands out in terms of its size, high level of comfort and durability. These attributes helped the F-MAX win the prestigious International Truck of the Year award, a competition adjudicated by 23 judges from 23 European countries. This award marks outstanding success for the new F-Max.

The F-MAX will set a new benchmark and will make a name for itself among the leading global brands in the heavy commercial segment. The new F-MAX was designed and tested by 500 Ford Otosan engineers over a 5-year period. Tests were carried out in 11 countries on 4 continents using 233 prototype units. This involved 15,500 hours of lab testing and 5 million kilometers of road testing.

"Ford Trucks has a very challenging promise. Saying "sharing the load" as a brand promise, we commit our self to understand customers' needs and share all kind of load that they might have," said Haydar Yenig, CEO of Ford Otosan. "We developed our new tractor with Ford's principles of comfort, power, efficiency and technology at its heart. To ensure that the design guarantees the most, in terms of efficiency and practicality, we examined every part and every detail over and over again."

Comfort of home

The F-MAX offers comfort and luxury with its 2.5m-wide cab along with its modern

design and driver-focused approach. The design of the cockpit-style dashboard ensures all functions are within easy reach. Even minor details are incorporated to enhance the pleasure of the driving experience. The sense of spaciousness in the cab is key.

The F-MAX provides all of this with its flat floor providing 2160mm of floor-to-ceiling height and 260 mm of seat adjustment. Furthermore, the F-MAX offers drivers very generous airplane-style patented storage, and an innovative and groundbreaking 90 degree foldable upper bed. It even has a braking feel that is similar to that of a car. Furthermore, it offers best-in-class NVH and interior quietness thanks to its best-in-class torsional cab stiffness, lower engine noise and sound absorptive trim design.

The new F-MAX offers a range of storage that is roomy and easily accessible. Airplane-style over bed storage, spacious overhead storage and exterior storage areas on both sides of the vehicle are all easy to use and easy to clean. The vehicle's three-level door opening angle means that when it comes to getting into and out of the cab, the F-Max is amongst the leaders. The fully sealed and water/dust-proof step cover make drivers feel that they are stepping into their own homes.

The powered interior lighting controls from the bed area and driver compartment, automatic climate control systems and steering wheel adjustment features; all offer comfort in the cabin. A mini fridge and coffee maker included in some models offer drivers additional comfort.



Power & Efficiency

Cost of ownership is a key factor for the new F-MAX. F-MAX covers the three areas of cost of ownership. The new F-MAX offers a high performance engine with 500PS, 2500Nm and 400 kW braking power. Superior aerodynamics, powertrain calibration and technical features also ensure outstanding performance in terms of fuel consumption with a 6 percent margin of improvement over previous models. Technical features include E-APU technology, eco-roll function, predictive cruise control (Max Cruise). Up to 7 percent reduced

maintenance costs and long service intervals reduce the total cost of ownership. F-MAX's Ecotorq engine offers maximum performance and minimum fuel consumption under any road conditions.

Cutting-Edge Technology

Ford Trucks offers a revolutionary technology "ConneCTruck" with the new F-MAX. ConneCTruck offers a wide-range of benefits, which include remote monitoring of the vehicle using remote diagnostic and over-the-air software, special topographic map means that F-MAX is able to analyze road conditions, allow-



ing the vehicle to drive at optimum speeds, thereby reducing fuel consumption by up to 4 percent. Furthermore, F-MAX's ConneCTruck Module & Ford Trucks cloud to act as a data gateway for third-party fleet management systems to access selected vehicle data. The F-MAX offers drivers invaluable assistance on the road thanks to features such as Adaptive Cruise Control, Predictive Cruise Control (Max Cruise) with speed tolerance choices, Advanced Emergency Brake System, Hill Launch Assist, Lane Departure Warning, Adjustable Speed Limiter Device and Electronic Stability Control.

AUB wins 'Best Governance Bank in Kuwait 2018' award

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced that it has won the 'Best Governance Bank in Kuwait 2018' award from Capital Finance International Magazine.

The award, which was granted by Capital Finance International, a leading business and financial services publication, reaffirms the appreciation of international institutions for AUB's leading position in this vital field. The award-giving process reviewed corporate governance practices by focusing on a number of elements that include processes and policies followed in corporate governance applications, as well as internal and external auditing, protecting shareholders' rights, the overall and independence of the board, risk management and transparency levels. Capital Finance International acknowledged that AUB, since its inception in 1941, is the oldest financial services provider of the country, sustaining a rich legacy that keeps it at the forefront of the banking sector.

The magazine highlighted that the Bank fully understands there is a need for regular communications with its stakeholders and reinforcing its relationship with regulatory authorities are both key to adapting to various industry requirements.

AUB's commitment towards achieving corporate governance excellence is shown in its operating results and the Bank's overall strong performance. The Bank continues to drive a leading position across the wider industry in terms of return on share and assets.

Commenting on receiving this award, Mai Mohammed Al-Saghir, AUB's Board Secretary and Head of Corporate Governance said, "The recent accolade reflects the Bank's excellence in corporate governance applications in 2018, and one which reaffirms its continued commitment to adhering to the strong corporate governance standards. We are pleased to have received this important award, and the recognition that AUB operates within a robust governance framework, which is a priority for the Bank, and a guiding principle for our operations. We will continue to manage this important recognition in the years to come."

Al-Saghir also pointed out that, "AUB is committed to adhering to the policies placed by regulatory authorities in Kuwait with the underlying objective of achieving the excellence in what the Bank delivers to its audiences. The Bank also works with its employees to explain what these policies are to ensure the highest forms of transparency and governance are applied. We believe that effective governance across banks is an important and determining factor to drive business success, along with it being the core foundation of long term sustainable economic prosperity."



Inclusion of Boursa Kuwait in FTSE Russel highlight of the year: Markaz CEO

KUWAIT: Manaf A Alhajeri, CEO of Kuwait Financial Centre "Markaz" stated, during his key interview at Euromoney Kuwait Conference 2018, that the inclusion in FTSE Russel has been the highlight of the year. He stressed on the importance of asking ourselves about the coming steps in order to achieve sustainable liquidity in the Kuwaiti market.

Alhajeri said, "The inclusion in FTSE Russel is a necessary step for market reforms. However, it is not the only step. We need to ask ourselves, what is next? The country's efforts to attract foreign investments through borrowings or foreign investments do not only aim to attract foreign liquidity but also to raise the standards of our practices."

He added, "I think Kuwait's inclusion in FTSE Russel is about confidence, bringing better practices to the market, institutional investing and shifting the mindset from speculation to institutional investing. I genuinely believe that this should not stop at the stock market itself. It should find its way to other parts of the financial practices in Kuwait such as M&As or AGMs. These could be more professional if they include a multiplicity of institutional investor through mutual funds for example, which should play a much more important role in the future to dance with the international money, in addition to institutional funds from abroad."

Asked about governance in the private sector, he said: "Listed companies are under thorough regulations by the Capital Market Authority, especially the financial sector institutions including banks and other financial companies like Markaz which are regulated by the Central Bank of Kuwait. I think the financial sector, banks and non-banks, is certainly the best regulated sector in the GCC economy and in Kuwait. I do not think it is over regulated, because they need more transparency, more alignment of interest and more accountability, which leads to higher economic competency. The governance culture in the financial sector has witnessed a huge transformation since the establishment of the CMA. We can do much better in terms of restoring confidence in the stock market."

Alhajeri stated, "Now that we attracted foreign funds: I think we need to go back to the domestic institutional funds with a specific strategy for restoring their active role in the market. I am not just talking about domestic funds: I am talking about portfolio managers and key financial institutions in Kuwait, who have played a major role in the genesis of the stock market, even before the advent of the CMA, and should continue with these policies which proved yield strong

Warba Bank announces winners of Al-Sunbula draw

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its week 35th draw for Al-Sunbula Account. The draw announced the 5 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Bank officials.

The bank proudly announces the lucky 5 winners who received KD 1,000 each are: Ghaydaa Jassim Hasan Al-Dabi, Aeshah Obaid Banaib Al-Orf, Najat Najem Habeeb Abdullah, Yousef Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Ateeqi and Yousef Mansour Marzouq Al-Azmi.

Al-Sunbula Account is the perfect choice for all customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while simultaneously have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. Due to the high traffic on this account, for its offerings of unparalleled opportunities, Warba Bank has worked on enhancing Al-Sunbula account to provide customers with more benefits. Such enhancements include increasing the number of winners and the



Manaf A Alhajeri

returns," Alhajeri pointed out that Kuwait has many success stories in the financial sector in comparison with the broad economy which included more challenging topics such as education and health. He stressed that the inclusion in FTSE Russel, in addition to other measures in the same direction, will help in closing the gap between the status of frontier markets and developed markets, which has been a key challenge for the financial sector. "I have to say that the achievements of this sector

since the establishment of Kuwait Investment Authority represent key milestones, like in the 1990s when KIA actually launched the mutual funds industry in Kuwait. There have been successes and we need to capitalize on these successes," he noted.

About the diversity in geographic allocation for Kuwaiti investments, he said: "most of the Kuwaiti investors are either listed companies or family offices, who derive their main wealth from Kuwait, specifically in the local real estate sector, which yields high returns overpassing those in developed countries, but the latter is better in terms of geopolitical stability. These companies require local asset managers to manage their assets and liabilities efficiently. In Markaz for instance, we diversify our investments in different asset classes globally. The general trend so far has been to go to international players who are active in the family office business. With time, we realized that these international managers will come to us, sometimes the family offices themselves, because there are real-life constraints that cannot be overcome without the support of what we offer. The international investment manager does not have the right expertise in the local real estate management for example, which is the largest part of the Kuwaiti investors' assets."

When it comes to the challenges that investment companies face in Kuwait in the financial technology field, Alhajeri said, "There are many challenges facing the financial sector like Fintech and adaption to technology trends in this sector. However, I think Fintech is not something new; it is an area where we keep investing in with more time and resources, especially in the fields of cyber security and client interface." He added, "Looking at the business model of a company like Markaz, a company that is in the business of asset management largely institutional and family office money, in addition to investment banking, we and other investment banks, actually incubate the companies you see today in the stock market. Some of them have made it to the global ranking in the FTSE index. Whereas the international money has 16 companies in the premier market, we actually have full view of the 175 companies.

frequency of the draws. Now, on every Thursday the Bank holds draws for 5 weekly winners of KD 1,000 each. In addition, the Bank continues its monthly draws held on the first Thursday of every month, with cash prizes of KD 30,000 divided amongst 4 winners: two winners getting KD 10,000 each, and two winners getting KD 5,000 each.

Thus, the new development of Al-Sunbula account has increased the total number of winners to 24, and the total amount of prizes to 50,000 KD instead of KD 30,000. As for the chances for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10. It is noteworthy, that Warba Bank has recently launched the Al-Sunbula Fixed Deposit, which provides depositors with high returns of up to 3 percent, as well as getting monthly chances to win in Al-Sunbula Account draws.

Furthermore, Warba Bank has launched its latest Customer Onboarding solution, in line with its ambitious five-year strategy that enables non-Warba Bank customers to request opening Al-Sunbula account in an easy electronic manner through the Bank's website without having to visit any of the Bank's branches, by following 5 simple steps that might take up to 5 minutes. New customers will be able to request opening the account at any time, anywhere, and the Bank will receive, process and pass the new application for approval through whole new and unique electronic system used to implement this service. Warba Staff will then contact the customer to determine the appropriate time to visit the branch to get required signatures, verify the customer's identity, deliver his/her debit card, and activate the account.

Gulf Bank announces Al-Danah's third quarterly winner of KD 500,000

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank announced Safiya Merza Murad Amin, as the winner of its third quarterly Al-Danah draw, taking home a cash prize of KD 500,000. The announcement was aired live on Wednesday (26th September 2018) at the 'Diwanayat Al-Yaqaout and Al-Ansari' program on radio station Kuwait Pulse (88.8 FM).

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

Al-Danah offers several unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their daily, weekly and yearly chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah final draw for KD 1 million will be held on 10 January 2019, when the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

KFH concludes program for exec management

KUWAIT: "Kuwait Finance House (KFH) is working on building leaders and outstanding expertise that keep abreast of the accelerating growth of KFH-Group businesses. This reinforces the prestigious status of the Bank, while contributes in achieving sustained success," said KFH-Group CEO- Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh.

Al-Nahedh statement was made during the last session of the advanced High Performance Leaders program that was tailored specifically for KFH senior management. The program was held in three phases in efforts to efficiently achieve the maximum benefits where the seniors make the bigger impact they can on their team, organization, and customers.

He added in a press release, that investing in human capital is the best investment, considering KFH human resources the core asset of the Bank. KFH is keen on continually qualifying a well-trained and fully equipped team that can deal with the latest developments of the Islamic finance industry as per highest standards of professionalism and commitment. This is the major pillar for KFH to achieve the set targets in accordance with its strategy in different fields on the level of the Group that span different regions across the world.

It is worth noting that the last phase of this advanced program was organized and delivered by one of the world's leading and largest graduate business schools- INSEAD, located in France, whereas the first two phases were held by IMD business school for management and leadership located in Switzerland. The program was delivered by a number of well-known lecturers and global business leaders such as Prof Michael Yajazi, Dr Anand Narasimhan, and Prof Neil Jones.

Technology

Thousands of customers gather at Ooredoo's iPhone launch event

Customers get free cover, screen protector with every purchase



Ooredoo senior officials during the launching ceremony of iPhone XS yesterday — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Continuing its annual Apple launch event since 2014, Ooredoo Kuwait took the lead in launching Apple's latest devices: iPhone XS and XS Max; at midnight on Saturday amidst a vast number of customers who came to the headquarters in the heart of Kuwait City in order to get the devices which were paired with an exclusive unprecedented offer making this the biggest and most exciting launch event in Kuwait.

The head office branch welcomed thousands of customers who went above and beyond to ensure that they gain from this exclusive offer which was available for 8 hours only. The offer consisted of the KD40 Shamel Mobile package with either an iPhone XS or an iPhone XS Max inclusive of unlimited local calls, unlimited internet, 12 free Ooredoo Passports in addition to a free subscription to Ooredoo's digital entertainment partner from StarzPlay for 24 months, offering a huge library of Hollywood and Bollywood movies and TV shows plus dedicated Arabic content. In addition, customers enjoyed a KD100 referral voucher that enables them to receive further discounts on both iPhone XS models.

Social Media

In addition to the heavy attendance of customers; a number of celebrities participated in the launch including Aboudka, Hamad Qalam, Ahoud Al-Enizi, Dana Altuwairesh, Hamad Al-Rahmani, Yaqoub Boushehri, Mahmoud Boushehri, and the television hostess Amani Al-Kanderi. They ensured to convey a vivid picture of the event with details before and after the launch.

Apple's representatives

Representatives of Apple were also present at the event and joined the leaders of Ooredoo: employees and customers in the launch of the latest devices. They also praised the activities of this celebration and expressed their thanks for the efforts of all employees involved in the success of the launch. The representatives also stressed on the continued strong partnership between Apple and Ooredoo Kuwait.

Small businesses and cafes

The company was also keen on ensuring that the customers received special hospitality while they waited in line and allocated a place for restaurants and cafes where the audience enjoyed the most delicious and best food vendors in Kuwait varying from burgers and pizza to ice cream, coffee and others.

In addition, the company in collaboration with Chips store, gifted each customer a special iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max cases and screen protector after their transaction was complete. The customers praised this gesture and chose from a variety of cases that were available to them at a special booth placed near the exit of the event.

Five consecutive years of success

Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Al-Ayoub said: "We are pleased to be celebrating with our customers for the fifth year in a row the launch of the new iPhone, in the biggest event in Telecoms for this year. This year we ensured that we continue to give customers the

best and latest packages with competitive advantages and products; this comes from our values of caring and connecting. We also ensured that each customer who purchased the best offer in Kuwait receives a gift as gratitude for their attendance and support."

Due to the high demand of the packages and arrival of thousands of customers; Ooredoo ensured that their employees would also be a part of this launch; and from their end multiple employees volunteered at the event which started at 10pm on Friday evening and ended at 5am this morning. The employee volunteers supported in organizing the queues inside and outside the branch alongside the external volunteers from Ooredoo's volunteer program where they set an example in facilitating the entry and exit of customers into the branch; helping them and answering any inquiries they might have.

Special Relationship

From his end, Bader Al-Bader, Marketing Manager at Ooredoo Kuwait, stated that the success of these events are a reflection of the strong and strategic relationship between us and Apple. We are keen on cooperating continuously with Apple in order to provide our employees with the best experience in the world of telecommunications in tandem with the most exclusive offers that best suit the needs of our customers.

New generation of iPhone

iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max are the most advanced iPhones ever, taking the vision for the future of the smartphone to a new level, featuring stunning 5.8-inch and 6.5-inch Super Retina displays that offer remarkable brightness and true blacks while showing 60 percent greater dynamic range in HDR photos. iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max bring an improved dual camera system that offers breakthrough photo and video features, A12 Bionic chip with next-generation Neural Engine, faster Face ID, wider stereo sound, longer battery life, splash and water resistance*, the most durable glass ever in a smartphone, a beautiful new gold finish that joins silver and space gray, and introduce Gigabit-class LTE for even faster download speeds. iPhone XS Max offers a more immersive experience with over three million pixels for videos, movies and games, offering the largest display ever in an iPhone. Both phones introduce Dual SIM to iPhone through the use of a nano-SIM and digital eSIM.

Ooredoo praised the Ministry of Interior for all its hard work; headed by Director of the traffic department in the Capital Governorate Col. Nayef Al-Hajraf and Acting Director of the general security department in the Capital Governorate Col. Nasser Al-Adwani; as they were present throughout the night and supported in keeping the customers safe.

Ooredoo geo filter on snapchat

Ooredoo designed a special geo filter for this event on snapchat on the night of the launch; the filter had the Ooredoo building with the hashtag of the night along with the company's logo. This filter was used by all who attended the event and also by people around the area who were able to find the filter by location.



Health

Andorra, one of Europe's last abortion holdouts

In Andorra, abortion punishable by up to six months in prison

ANDORRA LA VELLA, Andorra: Andorra is best known as a ski destination and tax haven—but it's the tiny principality's status as one of Europe's last countries with an abortion ban that activists want to highlight on International Safe Abortion Day. Even in cases of rape or when their lives are in danger, women in the country of 85,500 people nestled in the Pyrenees mountains between France and Spain, have no right to an abortion.

Only Malta, the Vatican and San Marino, another micro-state surrounded by Italy, have the same rules, putting them in a group of outliers which lost a key member this year when Ireland voted to overturn its near-total abortion ban. In Andorra, having an abortion is punishable by up to six months in prison. "I had a baby that was at risk of dying in my stomach, but I didn't have the right to have it removed," said Sonia, who learned in the fifth month that her fetus had an incurable disease and would likely not survive the pregnancy.

Sonia—her name has been changed—had already announced the pregnancy to her friends and family, but ultimately decided to make the "difficult" decision to abort. "I would have had to wait for him to die, keep him inside me for several days before realizing, and then give birth to a dead baby," said Sonia, who is in her thirties. Like some 120 other women who head across the border each year to Spain to terminate pregnancies, she travelled to Catalonia—Catalan is the official language of

Andorra—to have the procedure.

"You come to our country to buy cigarettes—we come to your country to buy our rights," reads a slogan on a pro-legalization poster shared on social media. "It's a form of torture," said Vanessa Mendoza Cortes from the Stop Violencies (Stop Violence) group which is campaigning for the legalization of terminations.

On Saturday, the group is organizing Andorra's first ever street protest in favor of decriminalizing abortion. "We should have the right to have an abortion in our hospi-

Spanish doctor in an envelope. Maria, who had an abortion at 18, said she was "lucky" her family were able to scrape the cash together, but she is well aware that for many women "this is far from the case". Today, aged 27, she recalls her shock at her Andorran gynecologist forcing her to listen to her fetus' heartbeat, trying to dissuade her from ending the pregnancy.

The journey back from the abortion clinic in Spain took three hours by road, during which she was doubled over with abdominal pain. She returned deeply distressed, but "there was no psychological or medical support afterwards", she added.

Doctors risk jail

Andorran doctors risk up to three years in prison and a five-year ban from practicing if they are caught performing abortions. Even giving patients information or the address of a clinic abroad is against the law, doctor Eric Sylvestre Dolsa said. "In cases where the mother's life is in danger, it would clearly pose a huge ethical problem for me as a doctor if you were to apply the law strictly," said the general practitioner. He is one of few Andorran doctors openly backing legalization, "no matter the motivation" for ending the pregnancy.

Many doctors are reluctant to debate abortion frankly due to fear of the instability that could arise from the issue blowing up in a principality with a unique political set-up, he said. Although it is a parliamen-

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It's a form of torture

”

tals, and not have to go to Barcelona with guilt and shame," said Mendoza Cortes, who wants to make it an issue in next year's legislative elections. She decried the local system as "hypocritical", with the authorities turning a blind eye to women heading abroad for the procedure.

It's an option that's only open to women who can pay between 600 and 1000 euros (\$700-\$1,160), usually handed to the



NEW YORK: Prime Minister of Andorra, Antoni Martí Petit, speaks during the General Debate of the 73rd session of the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York —AFP

tary democracy, Andorra has two "co-princes" as head of state: French President Emmanuel Macron, and Joan-Enric Vives, a Catholic bishop staunchly opposed to abortion. Vives has threatened to abdicate if abortion is legalised, noted Elisa Muxella, head of Andorra's Human Rights Institute.

"The government is hiding behind this

excuse and saying that if we had abortion it would put our institutions in peril," said Muxella. Sonia said she'd like to see Macron take a public stance on the issue. "Do something for Andorran women," she implored him. "I don't want to see my daughters go through the same thing as me." —AFP

World's first human case of rat disease found in Hong Kong

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong man has developed the world's first ever human case of the rat version of the hepatitis E virus, according to new research from one of the city's leading universities. There had previously been no evidence the disease could jump from rats to humans, the University of Hong Kong said Friday, warning the discovery had "major public health significance". "This study conclusively proves for the first time in the world that rat HEV can infect humans to cause clinical infection," the university added.

Rat hepatitis E virus is very distantly related to human hepatitis E virus variants, HKU said. The disease was found in a 56-year-old man who persistently produced abnormal liver function tests following a liver transplant. He could have contracted the illness through food infected by rat droppings, researchers said, according to details of the findings reported in the South China Morning Post.

The man lived in a housing estate where



HONG KONG: A woman walks past a block of the of the Choi Wan public housing estate in Hong Kong where there were signs of rat infestation outside the home of a 56-year old man who has developed the world's first ever human case of the rat version of the hepatitis E virus, according to new research from one of the city's leading universities. — AFP

there were signs of rat infestation outside his home. He is now recovering after being treated for the virus, the SCMP added. The human version of hepatitis E is a liver disease that affects 20 million people globally each year, according to the World Health Organization. It is usually spread through contaminated drinking water.

Symptoms include fever, vomiting and jaundice, and in rare cases liver failure.

Rodent problems in Hong Kong have escalated in recent months because of a sustained spell of hot and humid weather. Hong Kong has been hit hard by disease outbreaks in the past. In 2003, almost 300 people died from SARS-severe acute respiratory syndrome. The bubonic plague, carried by rats, swept through mainland China and Hong Kong in the late 19th century killing thousands. —AFP

Science, tourism clash on Great Barrier Reef

SYDNEY: A row is raging over Australia's warming-damaged Great Barrier Reef, with firms worried that scientists' apocalyptic warnings are scaring visitors out of the water. Every year, more than two million snorkel-wielding tourists head to Australia's famed coral ecosystem, generating revenues of \$4.3 billion and supporting 64,000 local jobs. But damage done by higher temperatures—which turn patches of the reef ashen white—has threatened to put a break on the number of tourists willing to wrestle their way into a wetsuit.

There was surprise then, when the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre recently published a markedly more optimistic report, heralding "significant signs of recovery" at major dive sites around Cairns and prompting a flurry of upbeat news coverage. If the report's findings seemed out of kilter with other studies about the reef, that was by design. It was part of an effort to show that not all of the Great Barrier Reef is an aquatic wasteland, according to Col McKenzie of tourism industry lobby group AMPITO, which helped carry out the research.

"Overall, are we seeing a drop in visitation because of the negative press, absolutely we are, there's no doubt about that," McKenzie said. He suggested visitor numbers to the reef and nearby islands had dropped by 10 percent in 2017 and were on track to plunge by a further 15 percent this year. Although government data shows that the number of visitors to the broader region has actually increased, those figures are older and don't include coral-viewing activities.



QUEENSLAND: This file photo shows an aerial view of the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of the Whitsunday Islands, along the central coast of Queensland. —AFP

McKenzie said it was vital to get the message out that some areas of the massive ecosystem are still teeming with color and life. "What people miss with our reef system is... it's a massive structure," he said. His comments are the latest salvo in a battle between ecologists and the tourism industry, as they struggle to come to terms with competing interests and new realities on the reef. Professor Terry Hughes of James Cook University, who leads the surveys of bleached corals, cautioned that while some damaged coral regain their color within several months, more badly damaged reefs can take a decade to recover.

"It's very early days yet," he said, describing a patchy recovery that makes generalizations difficult. "Basically we are in year one in the middle of the reef, or year two in the northern reefs, in the decade-long process of recovery." The government's Australian Institute of Marine Science says coral cover has "continued to decline due to the cumula-

tive impacts of multiple, severe disturbances over the past four years".

The same institute showed that apart from the risk of extreme sea surface temperatures—with some areas more affected, the reef is also grappling with the impacts of farming run-off, development and severe tropical cyclones.

Conflicting interests

Even within government there are conflicting interests at play, as well as rolling debates about how best to respond. Canberra has so far successfully-urged UNESCO to hold off listing the reef as an endangered World Heritage site, fearing it would have an adverse economic impact and lead to tougher restrictions on local industry. It has allocated some \$1.4 billion to protect the site, but at the same time backed a huge coal project nearby by Indian mining giant Adani and moved away from legislating climate targets under the Paris Accord. —AFP

WHO revises DR Congo Ebola risk to 'very high'

GENEVA: The World Health Organization on Friday announced it had revised its Ebola risk assessment in the Democratic Republic of Congo from high to "very high". The WHO cited transport links and population movements as potential risk factors in offering its latest assessment while stressing that the global risk remained low. "As the risk of national and regional spread is very high, it is important for neighboring provinces

and countries to enhance surveillance and preparedness activities.

"WHO will continue to work with neighboring countries and partners to ensure health authorities are alerted and are operationally ready to respond," the body stated. On Tuesday, the WHO's deputy director general for emergency preparedness and response Peter Salama warned that neighboring Uganda faced an "imminent" Ebola threat following a case in a border town near Lake Albert.

DR Congo's tenth Ebola outbreak since the first known case in 1976 came on August 1 in a highly restive northeastern region home to a clutch of armed groups near the border with Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan. The latest outbreak has killed 101 people, according to a latest WHO tally. —AFP

Over 300 endangered turtles hatch in Singapore

SINGAPORE: More than 300 hawksbill turtles have hatched on beaches in Singapore this month and been released into the sea, authorities said Friday, in a boost for the critically endangered creatures. They hatched on three beaches across the tropical Southeast Asian country, according to the National Parks Board, which oversees parks and nature reserves. Over 100 turtles hatched on Sentosa Island, a popular tourist destination, according to the organization that manages the island. After their nest was discovered in July, a barrier was

erected around the site to protect it from monitor lizards and crabs

It was the fourth time since 1996 that eggs of the critically endangered turtles have hatched on Sentosa. The other turtle nests were discovered at a beach on the east coast and on Satumu island south of the Singapore mainland, the parks board said. A total of 321 turtles hatched over a 10-day period from September 15. Hawksbills get their names from their narrow pointed beaks and are found throughout the world's tropical oceans, mainly around coral reefs.

They are threatened by damage to their natural habitats from pollution and coastal developments, and are also targeted by poachers. Their body parts are used to make turtle soup and their shells are crushed into powder for use in jelly dessert. The Hawksbill shell is also used to make products like combs and ornamental hairpins. The International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies the turtles as critically endangered. —AFP



SINGAPORE: Baby Hawksbills turtles make its way to the sea on the beach at Sisters' island marine park in Singapore. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



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What's On

ACK alumni win Engineers without Borders competition

A team of four Engineering alumni from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) won first place in the Kuwait national "Challenge" competition organized by Engineers without Borders. The prize includes the opportunity to attend the annual conference of the "World Federation of Engineering Organizations" (WFEO) in London as well as present a paper in the "Young Engineers Future Leaders Committee".

Members of the winning ACK team were Hanadi AlHouli, Huda Al Qahtani and Shabnam Mahmoudi who graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Civil) and Omayma Al Fassam who graduated with Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Mechanical). The competition required students to submit a design to improve conditions in refugee camps. The focus of the ACK entry covered sustainable housing units for the

Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya that has around 250,000 refugees.

The Head of the ACK Civil Engineering Department, Dr. Sayed Soleimani, mentored the alumni during their research for their entry and he expressed his deep pride in their achievement commenting that it is very pleasing when young people are able to use their knowledge and skills for community development.

The submission from the ACK alumni covered detailed aspects of the housing including water, sanitation, weather factors and use of sustainable local materials wherever possible. The members of the team were required to make a formal presentation as well as respond to questions from the judging panel. ACK has both Diploma and Bachelor Degree level courses in Civil, Electrical, Mechanical and Petroleum Engineering.



Celebrate every event in a special way at Hilton Kuwait Resort



From cozy gatherings and large-scale soirees, to business meetings, workshops and Exhibitions, you can count on Hilton Kuwait Resort to provide you with the best convention facilities to ensure your event is always extra special. Hilton Kuwait Resort offers a wide range of venues for corporate functions and ceremonies, starting with the Al Dorra Ballroom that features a grand space of 1,100 sq. meters and can cater for up to 1,500 guests.

The hotel has 13 meeting rooms, capable of accommodating up to 80 guests each and equipped with the latest technology for presentation and entertainment. Visitors can

also enjoy coffee breaks and a range of delicious cuisines prepared by the hotel's highly experienced culinary team. Hilton Kuwait Resort also provides a variety of amenities including Wi-Fi access in all meeting rooms and public areas of the resort, a fully-equipped Business Centre, ample parking, private entrances and modern A/V equipment.

The hotel's beautiful seaside resort, with its breathtaking surroundings, offers the perfect location for corporate events, product launches and open days. The space is ideal for sports activities like football, basketball, volleyball and two tennis courts,

providing everything you need for team-building and outdoor group activities.

Whether it is a small celebration or an extravagant affair, Hilton Kuwait Resort offers a diverse range of wedding packages to appeal to all tastes and requirements. The Al Dorra Ballroom serves as a stylish ceremony venue for weddings. Considered one of the largest convention venues in Kuwait, the Al Dorra Ballroom can be divided into three separate halls, a special stage setup that accommodates around 900 guests, a huge foyer, as well as two private Diwanis, a private entrance and huge private parking.

Gear up for action-packed Thursdays, only on OSN

Start your weekend with heart-thumping thrills as OSN, the region's leading entertainment network, premieres a string of new and returning action dramas to watch this Super Season. Your Thursday night entertainment will reach new levels, all from the comfort of your couch with OSN Series First HD. TV fans that love high speed cop car chases, stand-offs and shootouts will be hooked by these shows:

Lethal Weapon, S3

Premieres September 27, 8pm (KSA)

The buddy-cop series follows a pair of unlikely police partners. Season 3 sees the introduction of Murtaugh's (Damon Wayans) new partner, Wesley Cole, played by Seann William Scott of American Pie fame.

NEW: Magnum P.I. S1

Premieres October 4, 7pm (KSA)

This series remakes the 80s show which starred Tom Selleck as the charming private investigator. The titular Thomas Magnum is now played by Jay Hernandez (Suicide Squad) and the series charts how the ex-Navy SEAL returns home from Afghanistan and uses his military skills to become a private investigator in Hawaii. With the first episode directed by Fast & Furious', Justin Lin, expect full throttle action from the beginning.

S.W.A.T S2

Premieres October 4, 9pm (KSA)

S.W.A.T follows local lieutenant, Daniel Hondo (Shemar Moore), as he is torn



between his loyalty to the streets of South Central LA and his duty to the force. After a successful debut season, season two will pick up from the events of the last episode which saw officer Jim Street (played by Alex

Russell) plotting revenge after he was expelled by Hondo for disobeying orders.

Catch up on your favourite shows and watch live TV anytime, anywhere with OSN Play and OSN On Demand.

MMF Kuwait elects new office-bearers

Malayali Media Forum (MMF) - Kuwait, a forum of journalists from Kerala, held its annual general body meeting and elected its office-bearers for the year 2018-2019. Sajeev K Peter (Kuwait Times) has been elected as the General Convener while Nixon George (Asianet TV) and Jalin Triprayar (Jai Hind TV) have been

elected as Convener. The general body also reconstituted the MMF executive committee for the year. The office-bearers were elected unanimously at the meeting which was overseen by Sathar Kunnil.

Earlier, outgoing General Convener T V Hikamat presided over the meeting while Convener Girish Ottapalam presented the annual report and Convener Nijas Kasim presented the financial statement. The meeting observed that MMF tried its best to discharge its social commitment as a dedicated Indian association in Kuwait. The meeting also took note of its humanitarian activities during the year including its support to help the flood-affected people in Kerala.



NIXON GEORGE

SAJEEV K PETER

JALIN TRIPRAYAR

Greetings

It was memorable day at the Life Abundant International Fountain Church yesterday as families, friends and well-wishers gathered for the wedding ceremony of Mr/Mrs Kokou. We pray that God will guide, protect and blessing your marriage Amen.



Baked Rice with Barberries

Ingredients:

3 cups long-grain white rice
2 tbsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
1/2 cup canola oil, plus more
1/2 tsp. crushed saffron
4 egg yolks
3 tbsp. unsalted butter
3/4 cup barberries or dried cranberries
1/2 cup currants
2 tbsp. sugar
1 tbsp. rose water

Instructions:

Rinse rice in a strainer under running water until water runs clear. Transfer to a bowl with 2 tbsp. salt, cover with water, and soak for 2 hours; drain. Boil 6 cups water in a 4-qt. saucepan over high heat.

Add rice; cook until it begins to rise to the surface, about 12 minutes. Drain and rinse until water runs clear.

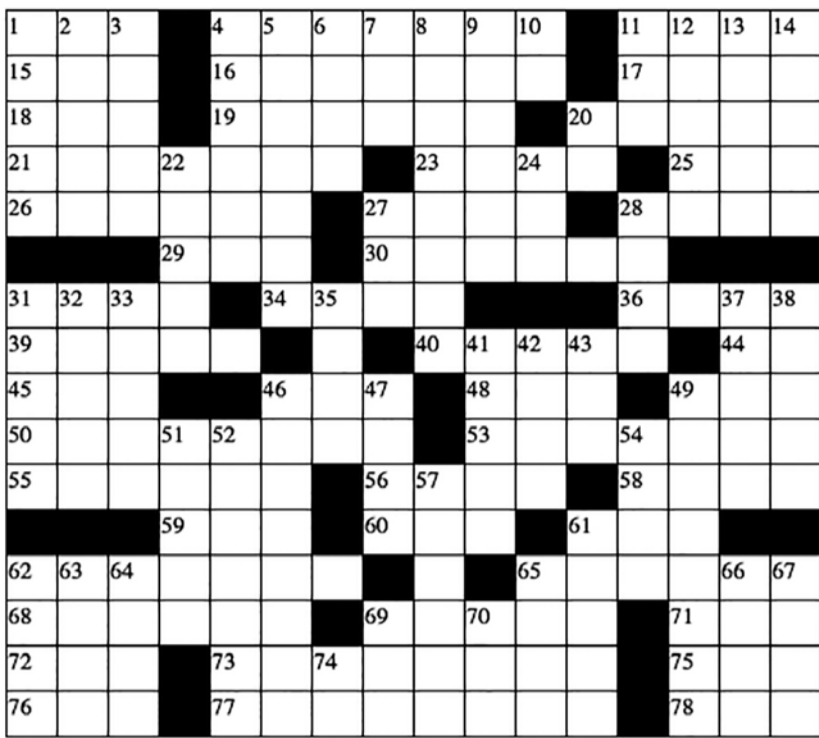
Heat oven to 350 degrees. Transfer rice to a bowl; stir in yogurt, oil, saffron, yolks, and salt. Pour rice mixture into a greased 9" x 13" baking dish; smooth top and cover with foil. Bake rice until a golden-brown crust forms on bottom, about 1 hour, 45 minutes. Uncover, and run a knife between rice and dish to loosen crust; place a platter over dish and invert. Cut rice into squares.

Heat butter in a 10" skillet over medium-high heat. Add barberries, currants, and sugar; cook until hot. Add rose water; cook for 1 minute; remove from heat. Garnish rice with berries and currants.



Stars

CROSSWORD 2021



- ACROSS: 1. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles. 4. Tropical American vine having roots that hang like cords and cylindrical fruit with a pineapple and banana flavor. 11. Not in good physical or mental health. 15. Of or relating to a member of the Buddhist people inhabiting the Mekong river in Laos and Thailand. 16. The branch of medicine concerned with the ear. 17. Moderate to inferior in quality. 18. A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field. 19. A kind of percid fish. 21. The simplest ketone. 23. Cancel, annul, or reverse an action or its effect. 25. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins. 26. Saudi Arabian minister of petroleum who was a central figure in the creation of OPEC (born in 1930). 29. The cry made by sheep. 30. Whitish fibrous membrane (albuginea) that with the cornea forms the outer covering of the eyeball. 31. A unit of area (4840 square yards) used in English-speaking countries. 34. Acute ulceration of the mucous membranes of the mouth or genitals. 36. An upholstered seat for more than one person. 39. Property that is leased or rented out or let. 40. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo. 44. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite. 45. (used especially of persons) Having lived for a relatively long time or attained a specific age. 48. (informal) 'johnny' was applied as a nickname for Confederate soldiers by the Federal soldiers in the American Civil War. 50. Thin wafer-like bread of Scandinavia. 53. Small long-bodied short-legged German breed of dog having a short sleek coat and long drooping ears. 55. A matorator or one of the supporting team during a bull fight. 56. In bed. 58. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers. 59. (of music or art) New and of general appeal (especially among young people). 60. A light touch or stroke. 62. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedaling). 68. A port city in southwestern Iran. 71. An enzyme that catalyzes the oxidation of many body compounds (e.g., epinephrine and norepinephrine and serotonin). 72. A former monetary unit in Great Britain. 73. Genus of Australasian shrubs and subshrubs having small yellow or purple flowers followed by short triangular pods. 75. A doctor's degree in education. 76. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods. 77. Any of various widely distributed beetles. 78. An informal term for a father.
DOWN: 1. Lessen the intensity of. 2. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp. 3. (from a combination of MODulate and DEModulate) Electronic equipment consisting of a device used to connect computers by a telephone line. 4. The outermost region of the sun's atmosphere. 5. A student enrolled in (or graduated from) Elton College. 6. Any loose flowing garment. 7. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor. 8. A group of island in eastern Indonesia between Celebes and New Guinea. 9. Pertaining to or associated with agony (especially death agonies). 10. A Mid-Atlantic state. 11. A health resort near a spring or at the seaside. 12. Region of western Asia Minor colonized by Ancient Greeks. 13. Music composed for dancing the conga. 14. A village of huts for native Africans in southern Africa. 20. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances. 22. Wasting of the body during a chronic disease. 24. Mature female of mammals of which the male is called 'buck'. 27. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school. 28. A vigorous blow. 32. A large stringed instrument. 33. Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects. 35. A spread made chiefly from vegetable oils and used as a substitute for butter. 37. A sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue separating or binding together muscles and organs etc. 38. American author of inspirational adventure stories for boys. 41. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt. 42. A small ball with a hole through the middle. 43. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural). 46. A colorless liquid aldehyde. 47. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind. 49. Having an illustrious reputation. 51. Moderately warm. 52. Thick heavy expensive material with a raised pattern. 54. A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds. 57. The agent to whom property involved in a bailment is delivered. 61. A gland in which gametes (sex cells) are produced. 63. Very dark black. 64. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad. 65. Being three more than fifty. 66. A quantity of no importance. 67. Scottish chemist noted for his research into the structure of nucleic acids (born in 1907). 69. A case for containing a set of articles. 70. The rate at which red blood cells settle out in a tube of blood under standardized conditions. 74. A state in the eastern United States.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today may find you a bit unsatisfied with your surroundings. It may be someone or the physical place you are in that is just not sitting right with you. You may feel as if someone or something is holding you back or may just feel frustrated by your life in general. This may be a great time for an evening out and about. Change your surroundings. Clear your head but choose your company wisely to avoid any conflict as this is a time you need to have fun. You have to find a comfortable balance between work life, family, and social life. Aries, remember it is good for you to get out and enjoy yourself from time to time.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find your tendency to be indecisive may cause conflict with someone you care about. Consider all the options diplomatically, then make a choice. Recognize that ignoring this situation is not the right choice. Consider consequences, then choose, and act. Someone may find your actions offensive. Pay no attention to anyone who doesn't seem supportive. They will get over it, Taurus. Be the best you that you can be. Keep your actions pure and the reward you seek will come.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Others may be amazed when you turn your creative ideas into reality. Your mind is in overdrive and your creativity is off of the charts. You have a million great ideas running through your head. Today finds you able to turn them into reality. You are gifted and talented in many ways. When your mind takes over you may find it hard to relax. This would be a good evening for escape. Grab a book, light some candles, or curl up on the couch and watch a movie. It will take a while to wind down this evening after this productive day, Gemini. A wonderful ending to a great day is to be expected.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are always quick to gather all the information possible on new friends and new acquaintances. You have been known to be quite the detective. Today finds you fascinated with gaining all the information and insight you can. But, your focus today is on you! You desire to have a better self-understanding. What exactly led you down the path you took. You have put some thought into this before, but today you are determined to figure it out. Finding yourself is a mission you are on. You not only want to know who you really are but what exactly caused you to be this way. Cancer? The answers are held in your heart. Today could be a great day to make amends.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are at peace. You have stability in your life and this is very comforting to you. Comfort and happiness are very familiar in your world. Now is a time music seems to draw you in. An outdoor concert, playing an instrument, or simply turning up your favorite tunes will bring a great sense of peace into your world today. There is a nagging feeling to be free from want that seems to be coming over you today. A shopping trip or taking some time to spoil yourself is in order. You work hard and constantly do for others. Take the time this evening to do something special for you, Leo. You deserve it.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You can stop looking for perfect relationships. Since every person is flawed, a relationship between two of those persons can't be perfect. You just have to decide how much imperfection you can tolerate. Limit your relationships to the people who don't have the flaws you can't live with. Surround yourself with people who are aware of your imperfections and love you anyway. Peace is conceived when love and tolerance are united.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You have a gift for taking the ordinary and making it extraordinary. This does not only apply to objects but also to people. You see the best in those that you encounter. Your positive spirit is contagious and you are able to put a smile on the face of the most negative people. There is no doubt, all eyes turn to watch you enter the room. Others are drawn to your energy. Today finds that energy at an all-time high! Others may wonder how you sprinkle happy everywhere you go. Share the secret of your inner peace with them. It is people like you that make this world a better place to live in, Libra.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may find confrontation is right around the corner. Your values don't seem to be the same as someone you find yourself bumping heads with. You may find a lack of respect for this person and they seem to feel the same way about you. Remember, that is why they make chocolate and vanilla. Not everyone's taste is the same and this applies to people's beliefs as well. Sometimes you may find it is best to agree to disagree and today is just one of those days. You may find yourself at a standstill with this person. Do not bother to fight this battle.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may find yourself extremely creative today. This is a great way to express your emotions and feelings as well as having new experiences. You may feel drawn to take chances, take a new and different approach to problem solving or just change your routine all together. You are more willing at this time to take financial risk. Hopefully this will lead you towards the stock market rather than the casino. Either direction you may choose you are in the mood to do a bit of gambling. Good luck with this, Sagittarius. May the risks you take be profitable.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself getting mixed signals from someone close to you. You feel as if you don't know up from down. The harder you try to please this person, the more you seem to do wrong. You could find yourself in the company of someone whose values are opposite of yours. You do not like what they represent. You have a strong sense of values and morals and are very picky about the company you keep. It is important to remain kind and try to be understanding. This is why they make chocolate and vanilla, not everyone has the same taste.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a time you feel more inward. You may be in the mood to only spend time with those closest to you. A nice evening at home will bring the most peace into your world today. This is a great time to do some soul searching. You have questions about what all happened in your world the led you to the place you are in today. You may be able to appreciate the hardships you have experienced and the lessons they taught you. This is a point you start to appreciate the wisdom you have gained through your life. You have learned to look for the positive in all life brings your way. This alone will make you a better person who others want in their lives.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your relationships have taken priority in your life. You value the love you have for others and the love you feel from them. Your emotional needs are being deeply satisfied. There is a vast difference between independence and loneliness. At this time, you seem to be becoming more of a homebody. You find more at ease staying in surrounded only by your loved ones or close friends. This is where you belong as your feelings are finding you more reflective rather than expressive. You crave new beginnings, perhaps this would be a great time for a new experience or a new hobby.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Clothing

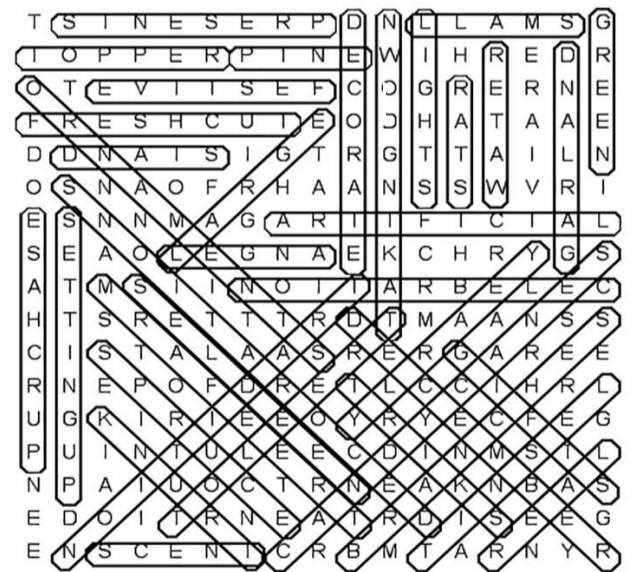
Find and circle all of the clothing items that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional piece of clothing.

A 12x12 grid containing hidden clothing items. The grid is filled with letters, some of which form words related to clothing. The grid is:
S R E T A E W S S W T S
P A N T S E L S R S T N
S T I U S L A E E S A A
T T O S A S S V P K N E
M L R R Y A H O P I K J
B I E O N O I L I R T S
H V T D H F R G L T O T
O I A T R S T U S I P O
E L R A E W R E D N U O
S K C O S N S S E R D B
R S S E O H S T E B O R
P A R K A J A C K E T C
B E L T C A R D I G A N

- BELT, BLOUSE, BOOTS, CARDIGAN, CORDUROYS, DRESS, GLOVES, HAT, JACKET, JEANS, MITTENS, OVERALLS, PANTS, PARKA, ROBE, SANDALS, SCARF, SHIRT, SHOES, SHORTS, SKIRT, SLIPPERS, SOCKS, SUIT, SWEATER, TANK TOP, TIE, UNDERWEAR, VEST

Friday's Solution

Christmas Tree



- ANGEL, ARTIFICIAL BRANCHES, CANDY CANES, CELEBRATION, DECEMBER DECORATIONS, FESTIVE, FRESH CUT, GARLAND, GIFTS, GREEN, LARGE LIGHTS, NEEDLES, ORNAMENTS, PINE, PRESENTS, PURCHASE, REAL, SCENT, SETTING UP, SKIRT, SMALL SPRUCE, STAND, STAR, TAKING DOWN, TINSEL, TOPPER, TRADITION, TREE FARM, TREE LOT, TRUNK, WATER, YEARLY

The hidden message is: THE TRADITION OF HAVING A CHRISTMAS TREE ORIGINATED IN GERMANY

Friday's Solution



Daily SuDoku

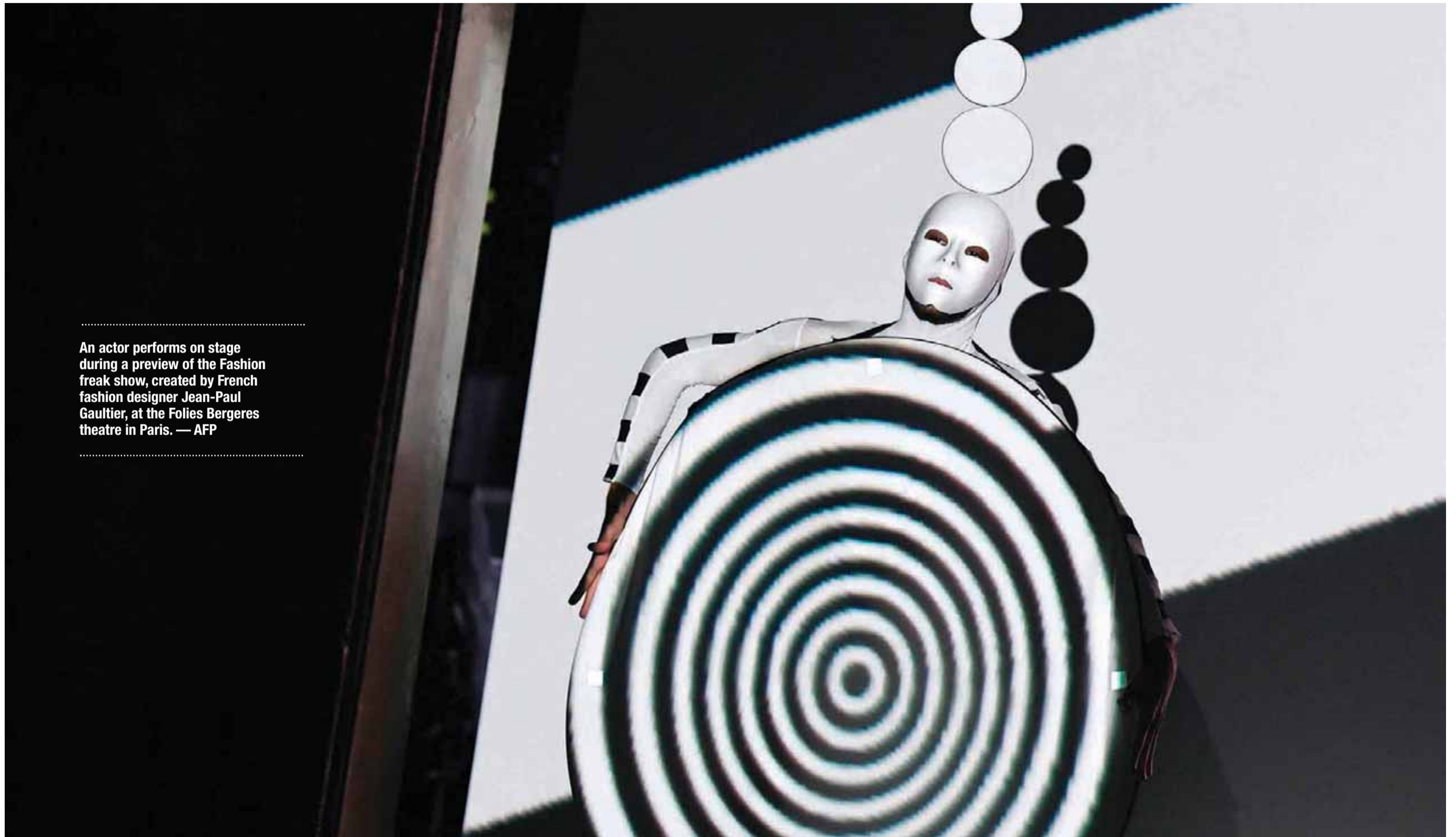
A 9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 1 through 9 in some cells. The grid is:
1 9
2 8 6 9
3 9 2 6
8 9 5 1
4 7
5 1 7 3
2 6 7 8
7 6 5 3
8 6

Friday's Solution

A 9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 1 through 9 in all cells. The grid is:
3 8 1 7 4 9 5 6 2
4 5 6 2 8 3 1 9 7
9 7 2 6 1 5 4 8 3
6 4 8 1 3 7 2 5 9
2 9 3 8 5 4 7 1 6
5 1 7 9 6 2 3 4 8
1 6 4 3 2 8 9 7 5
8 2 9 5 7 1 6 3 4
7 3 5 4 9 6 8 2 1

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2018



An actor performs on stage during a preview of the Fashion freak show, created by French fashion designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, at the Folies Bergeres theatre in Paris. — AFP

WOODEN LIBRARY lures bookworms outside Beijing



People read at Liyuan Library on the outskirts of Beijing. — AFP photos

Deep in the heart of a valley surrounded by rocky hills, a wooden library sits just over a creek on the outskirts of Beijing, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. Every weekend, hundreds of bookworms flock to Liyuan Library in Jiaojiehe village, a book sanctuary surrounded by chestnut, walnut and peach trees whose branches were used to decorate the building. The lush environment is what first drew architect Li Xiaodong to the village—the library has a steel and glass base but its facade is clad with branches and twigs arranged in vertical rows.

Visitors cross a narrow wooden bridge which leads to a bright and airy space, sunlight seeping in through gaps in the uneven wood, a design feature. Bookshelves that double up as walls line the reading area—basically one large room—and readers lounge with tomes on the floor or on elevated platforms. With space for just 40 people at a time, visitors stand in line to enter the library, which only opens on weekends. The library, which opened in April 2012, draws hundreds of visitors every weekend, many of whom are attracted by the design, which makes for great pictures on social media. “We have now banned taking pictures inside, as some people come here just for taking pictures. They even come in costumes, that’s really disturbing,” owner Pan Xi told AFP. “We still want to give those who love reading a conducive environment.” — AFP



People read at Liyuan Library on the outskirts of Beijing.



People visit Liyuan Library on the outskirts of Beijing.

‘I’m a slumdog’, Mike Tyson says on India trip

Former boxing champion Mike Tyson declared himself a “slumdog” Friday as he made his first trip to India. The 52-year-old was in Mumbai, home to the slums that inspired Danny Boyle’s 2008 hit movie *Slumdog Millionaire*. “The most successful fighters have come from slums. All the current top fighters are from the slums,” the controversial heavyweight great told reporters. “I think the poorer you are the better boxer you are,” he added. “I am a slumdog. I grew up in a slum. I had the ambition to get out of the slums and that’s why I am here, Tyson said in quotes carried by the Press Trust of India news agency.



Former US boxer Mike Tyson is greeted with roses during his visit to a local school on the sidelines of India's first global Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) league, in Mumbai yesterday. — AFP

Around 50 percent of Mumbai’s population of 20 million live in slums. Many of them live in Dharavi, often described as Asia’s biggest slum and the backdrop to Boyle’s film. The title of the movie caused controversy in India with critics claiming that the reference to dog was derogatory. Boyle insisted no offence was meant. Tyson, in India to promote a new mixed martial arts league, said he planned to visit Dharavi. Tyson is one of the most formidable and controversial sportsmen to date.

In 1986, at the age of 20, he became the youngest international boxing heavyweight champion in history. He held that title from 1987 to 1990 and achieved 58 victories, including 44 by knockout. But his career was plagued with trouble, including drug addiction and stints in prison for rape. In 1992, at the age of 25, Tyson was sentenced to six years in prison for rape, serving three years behind bars. Tyson also notoriously bit off a chunk of boxer Evander Holyfield’s ear in a 1997 match. The heavyweight champion has in recent years worked to clean up his image, appearing in comedy films like *The Hangover*. Last year he unveiled plans to launch a boxing fitness franchise named after himself. — AFP

El-Gouna Film Festival



US actor Owen Wilson



American actor and director Sylvester Stallone poses with his Career Achievement Award.



Tunisian actor Mohamed Dhreif poses with his Best Actor award.



Syrian director Talal Derki (right) and his spouse Heba Khaled pose with the best Arab documentary award during the closing ceremony of the El Gouna film festival.



Tunisian actress Hind Sabri



Egyptian actress Nelly Karim



Egyptian actress Yusra arrives for the closing ceremony of the second edition of El-Gouna Film Festival, at the Egyptian Red Sea resort of El-Gouna on Friday. — AFP photos



Egyptian actress Mona Zaki



Egyptian actress Laila Elwi

US court opens new legal 'Stairway,' overturns Zeppelin case

British rock group Led Zeppelin found itself winding on down the legal road again after a US appeals court ordered a new trial over claims the rockers copied part of "Stairway to Heaven." The court in San Francisco overturned a 2016 judgment by a jury which found no proof the classic 1971 Zeppelin song breached the copyright of "Taurus," written by Randy Wolfe of a Los Angeles band called Spirit. Wolfe's trustee, Michael Skidmore, filed the case in 2015 on behalf of his late friend who long maintained he deserved credit for "Stairway" but drowned in 1997 having never taken legal action over the song.

The case is "remanded for a new trial," the higher court panel ruled Friday in a 37-page decision supporting Skidmore's appeal. It said that certain instructions to the district court jury had been "erroneous and prejudicial" by arguing that common musical elements are not protected by copyright, and by failing to clarify that the arrangement of elements in the public domain could be considered original. Experts called by the plaintiffs at the lower court trial said there were substantial similarities between key parts of the two songs, but defense witnesses testified the chord pattern used



In this file photo taken on May 14, 1988 singer Robert Plant (left) and guitarist Jimmy Page perform during a Led Zeppelin reunion concert at Madison Square Garden in New York.

in the melancholic guitar intro to "Stairway" was so commonplace that copyright didn't apply. Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page, sued along with the group's singer Robert Plant and another surviving bandmate, John Paul Jones, testified in 2016 that the chord sequence in question had "been around forever." Page and Plant denied plagiarism. The appeals court panel further ruled that the lower chamber "abused its discretion" by not allowing the jury to observe Page listening to recordings of "Taurus." Skidmore had argued that those observations were important in assessing Page's credibility. "Stairway" is estimated to have grossed \$3.4

million during a five-year period at issue in the earlier civil trial. Zeppelin opened for Spirit when the British rockers made their US debut on December 26, 1968, in Denver. Wolfe, nicknamed Randy California, wrote "Taurus" in late 1966. — AFP



In this file photo Led Zeppelin band members Robert Plant (right), John Paul Jones (center) and Jimmy Page arrive at the 2012 Kennedy Center Honorees held in Washington, DC. — AFP photos

FRENCH RAPPER TO FACE TRIAL OVER 'HANG WHITES' VIDEO

A little-known French rapper who caused a furore in France this week with a music video called "Hang White People" has been ordered to face trial on charges of inciting violence, legal sources said Friday. Nick Conrad, whose track and career had gone largely unnoticed until the video came to the public's attention this week, was interviewed by police on Friday and ordered to stand trial on January 9. The charge against him, of inciting deadly violence, carries a maximum five-year prison sentence and a fine of 45,000 euros (39,000 dollars).

The track, called PLB for "Pendez les Blancs" (Hang White People), was posted on YouTube on September 17 and garnered only a few thousands views before it was shared last weekend by a controversial comedian with a large online following. After being highlighted by far-right groups in France, who regularly rail against alleged racism against white people, both the interior minister, government spokesman and politicians of all stripes condemned the video.

Conrad, who had an average 40 monthly listeners on Spotify and 186 subscribers to his YouTube channel before the controversy, has become the subject of widespread media coverage and public attention as a result. "There will be a trial during which I hope to be received like I was today in terms of being listened to," Conrad said after his interview with police. "I think that a text deserves to be studied in depth, not superficially," he added.

In scenes from the PLB video, which has since been blocked by YouTube, the rapper can be seen torturing and then hanging a



white victim with a noose, in between waving a gun around and smoking a cigar. The lyrics evoke the killing of adults and children with the rapper singing: "I walk into creches, I kill white babies, catch them quick and hang their parents." Conrad, who is from Paris and is of Cameroonian origin, explained to Le Parisien newspaper that he wanted to "inverse the roles of the white man and the black man" and that the "shock was intended."

Many scenes make obvious reference to the film American History X about the abuse of blacks by American neo-Nazis. One collateral victim of the furore is a BBC news presenter with the same name as the French rapper who presents a radio show in the sleepy eastern county of Norfolk. The British Nick Conrad, who wrote online that he was the "fatter and more talented one" of the two, has asked to be left alone after receiving death threats over social media. — AFP

Streisand back with new album... and anti-Trump song

Barbra Streisand is a loud and proud Democrat who has made no secret of her disdain for Donald Trump. Now, she's put that rage into a new song. Streisand has announced that her new album "Walls" will come out on November 2, and on Thursday, she released the first track: "Don't Lie to Me," which lays out her hatred of the Republican president. "This collection of songs reflects what's been on my mind lately, and I look forward to sharing that with you," she said on Twitter of the album, the first with mostly new material in more than a decade.

In "Don't Lie to Me," Streisand sings: "How do you win if we all lose? / You change the facts to justify: / How do you sleep when the world keeps turning? / All that we built has come undone / How do you sleep when the world is burning? / Everyone answers to someone," she says in the chorus, repeating the title over and over. "I had to write this song," the Oscar-winning actress, singer and activist told Billboard in an interview. "It's my protest, in a sense, about this unprecedented time in our history."

As for the title of the album, Streisand noted: "I had an idea for the cover, me against this wall. The wall of society, the walls of this presidency, the walls that obstruct justice." But Streisand, who has actively campaigned for the Democratic Party in the run-up to the midterm elections in November, said she was nevertheless hopeful about the future. "We have to grow as a nation, we just have to grow out of this and see the light; that's all I can say," she told Billboard. — AFP



In this file photo Musical artist Barbra Streisand waits to listen to US President Barack Obama speak during the Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting in New York. — AFP

Lifestyle | Fashion

FASHION'S BAD BOY GAULTIER SHOWCASES LIFE AND WORK IN 'FREAK' REVUE

"I was weaned on musicals ... totally transfixed by the plumes and the paste jewels. I told myself that one day I would stage a revue," Jean-Paul Gaultier said of a childhood dream that has now taken shape at the Folies Bergeres, a landmark Parisian theatre. "The Fashion Freak Show", which opens to the public next week, traces the journey of the enfant terrible of French couture from his humble origins in a Paris suburb to international stardom. The 66-year-old began his career as an assistant with Pierre Cardin and a pathbreaking trail followed that introduced man skirts, older men, fuller women and heavily tattooed models to the runway and the iconic cone bra immortalized by pop diva Madonna. "I have always loved freaks, strange people, troublemakers, aesthetics which blend and unexpected encounters like when the boy from the streets consorts with the duchess," Gaultier said.

The spectacle showcases 200 of his creations and begins with "Nana", Gaultier's childhood teddy bear for whom he made a conical bra when he was just five. It shows a young Jean Paul being regularly punished in

school for drawing gowns in the classroom and goes on to his stint at Cardin, his first collection and his inspirations and muses, including Kylie Minogue, Madonna and Pedro Almodovar.

Boasting colors screaming Florida and enlivened by energetic disco beats, the revue also showcases the quirky collections of the bad boy of fashion over the years such as his corset dresses and the Perfecto gown. Gaultier's life is laid bare with scenes from a gay cruising club and a moving moment when his lover and business partner Francis Menuge dies of AIDS. The show brings together about 15 actors and dancers playing personalities who are "almost naked, tottering on high heels, generously proportioned and either wearing underpants or not", Gaultier said. The designer, whose signature attire is a striped Breton jersey, has an important message for the audience at the end. "Fashion is superficial. Have Fun! Be Free!" — AFP



A picture shows the stage prior to the start of the preview of the Fashion freak show, created by French fashion designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, at the Folies Bergeres theatre in Paris. — AFP photos



Actors perform on stage during a preview of the Fashion freak show, created by French fashion designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, at the Folies Bergeres theatre in Paris.

Slimane back in black as king of Paris fashion week



US singer and actress Lady Gaga arrives to attend the Celine Spring-Summer 2019 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris.

Superstar designer Hedi Slimane returned to the Paris catwalk late Friday after a two-year absence with a slash and burn revamp of Celine that declared that black is back. With his two biggest fans, Lady Gaga and Karl Lagerfeld, sitting next to each other in the front row, Slimane drew a pitch-black portrait of his hometown which he called "Paris The Night". He turned the Invalides-where Napoleon rests in his tomb-into a giant shadowy nightclub, sending out 68 of his 72 models in looks hewn from a new deep midnight black he has been working on for the last nine months. The "Sultan of skinny" stayed true to his very personal and sometimes polarizing style, with skinny ties and slimline tightly-tailored black suits and leather jackets for both men and women.

By calling the collection "Celine 01", the much-admired minimalist vibe of his British predecessor Phoebe Philo was confined to history. With the Kavanaugh Supreme Court vote having just ended on Capitol Hill, Slimane picked an "uncomfortable moment" to grind a female

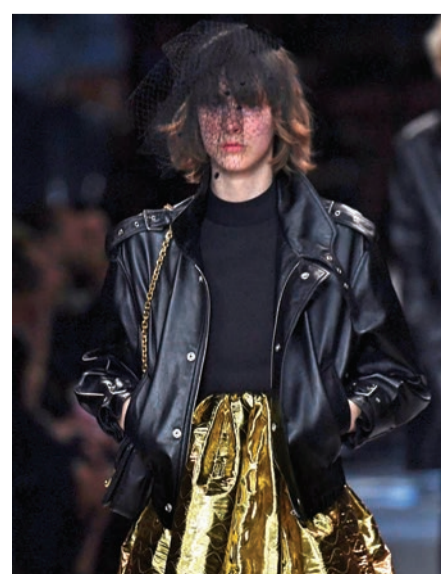
design legacy into the dust. The Guardian complained, especially since "Philo was notable for not equating a woman's power with her sexuality".

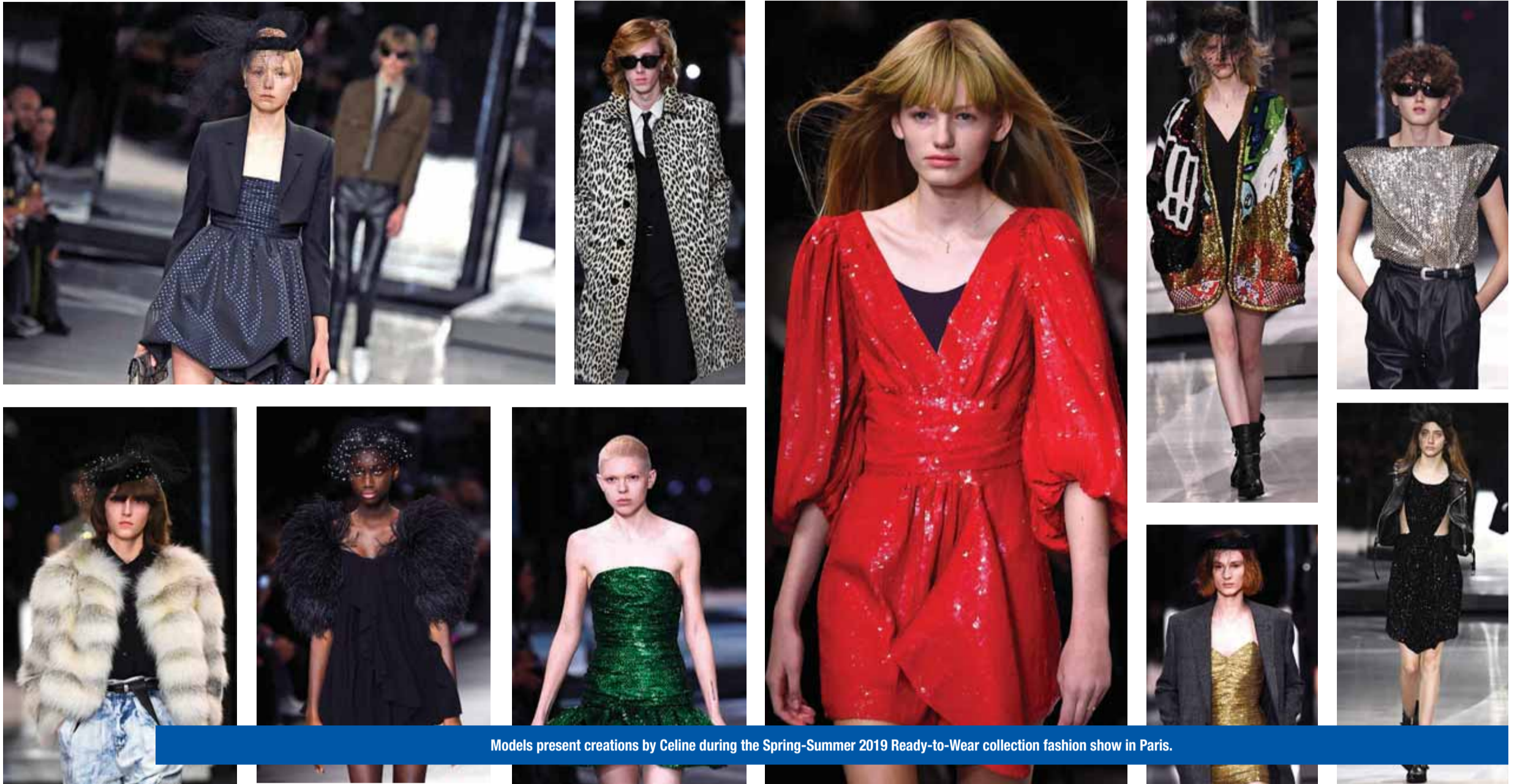
Philo fans' anger

While Philo's fans also cried foul on social media, Wall Street Journal's critic Christina Binkley said Slimane had the Midas touch. "When Slimane launched his thing at Saint Laurent, people hated it," she said. "He just launched his thing at Celine-no less stark a brand reset-and there will be broad applause aside from a few careful critics. "The difference-they know the revenues are about to gush." Yet there were subtle new twists to Slimane's eternal motifs. The man who is credited with inventing both the skinny and oversized looks that have dominated fashion over the last decade, lengthened his men's suits and refined the mini-dresses he showed previously at Saint Laurent. Flashes of white and silver cut through the dark with black and white striped shirts and coats, studs and sparingly-deployed sequins.



French fashion designer for Celine Hedi Slimane acknowledges the audience at the end of the Celine Spring-Summer 2019 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris. — AFP





Models present creations by Celine during the Spring-Summer 2019 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris.



Models present creations by Junya Watanabe during the Spring-Summer 2019 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show in Paris.

'Hardcore Hedi'

Here and there a blazing two-tone leopard print raincoat or a gold or red lame dress lifted the uber cool gloom. Critics hailed it as Slimane at his most uncompromising and hardcore. To hammer the message home, the bulk of his models wore the black shades through which he sees the world. "For those expecting the new Celine to look like Saint Laurent, you were not wrong," tweeted Tyler McCall, of the Fashionista website, referring to the label that Slimane walked away from two years ago. Influential blogger Julie Zerbo added, "Hedi does Hedi (at Dior) does Hedi (at Saint Laurent) does Hedi (at Celine)...."

"Looks like black is the new black after all," was the verdict of style magazine Dazed. Earlier the painfully-private Slimane, 50, who confessed that has been plagued by tinnitus over the last year, said he would remain true to himself. "I stand firm for my principles. Why should I give up on what defines me? Becoming someone else on the pretext that what I did in the past has been digested or imitated" was nonsense, he told the French daily Le Figaro. He also hinted he was plotting a revolution at Celine, which luxury goods giant LVMH had given him carte blanche to remake in his image.

Journey into the night

That made him the most powerful designer in fashion after Lagerfeld at Chanel, who once famously shed 41 kilos (90 pounds) to squeeze into Slimane's skinny jeans. Slimane is adding a men's line at Celine and has already dropped the

accent from the brand's logo. "You don't shake things up by avoiding making waves," he said. "When there is no debate it's blind conformity." The show was much less androgynous than many had expected with Slimane going for a far more feminine look for his women, many sporting black net fascinators.

"I love Paris by night. I grew up between the smoke of Le Palace and the white tiles of Les Bains-Douches (nightclubs)," the reclusive designer said before the show in a rare interview. "It's a pity that the city is eager to close down interesting places like those now and turn its back on Parisian nights. The lights still remain, though. The magic of the neons in the cafes, the sparkling Parisian youth," said the designer, who has lived in Los Angeles since 2008. Yet Slimane respected the neighbors with his journey to the end of the night by keeping the noise down. With military drummers beating out a gentle march throughout the show, there was no danger he would wake Napoleon under his dome. — AFP



KUWAIT: Books hang from branches of palm trees in Irada Square opposite the National Assembly building in protest against the government's new censorship regulations on publications, which has resulted in banning many books from entering the country — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Up to 50 million Facebook accounts breached in attack

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook revealed on Friday that up to 50 million accounts were breached by hackers, dealing a blow to the social network's effort to convince users to trust it with their data. The social network is investigating the extent of harm done when hackers exploited a trio of software flaws to steal "access tokens," the equivalent of digital keys that enable people to automatically log back into the social network. Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said engineers discovered the breach on Tuesday, and patched it

on Thursday night. "We don't know if any accounts were actually misused," Zuckerberg said. "This is a serious issue."

As a precaution, Facebook is temporarily taking down the "view as" feature - described as a privacy tool to let users see how their profiles look to other people. "It's clear that attackers exploited a vulnerability in Facebook's code," said vice president of product management Guy Rosen. "We've fixed the vulnerability and informed law enforcement." Facebook reset the 50 million breached accounts, meaning users will need to sign back in using passwords.

Democratic US Senator Mark Warner cited the breach as further proof of the privacy danger of companies such as Facebook and Equifax not adequately protecting the massive amounts of information they gather about people. "This is another sobering indicator that Congress needs to step up and take action to protect the privacy and security of social media users," Warner said in a statement. "As I've said before - the era of the Wild West in social media is over."

The breach is the latest privacy embarrassment for Facebook, which earlier this year acknowledged that tens of millions of users had personal data hijacked by Cambridge Analytica, a political firm working for Donald

Trump in 2016. "We face constant attacks from people who want to take over accounts or steal information around the world," Zuckerberg said on his Facebook page. "While I'm glad we found this, fixed the vulnerability, and secured the accounts that may be at risk, the reality is we need to continue developing new tools to prevent this from happening in the first place."

Facebook said it took a precautionary step of resetting "access tokens" for another 40 million accounts where the "view as" was used. This will require those users to log back in to Facebook. "People's privacy and security is incredibly important, and we're sorry this happened," Rosen said.

Sophisticated hack

No passwords were taken in the breach, only "tokens", according to Rosen. Information hackers appeared interested in included names, genders, and hometowns, but it was not clear for what purposes, the executives said in a telephone briefing. The stolen tokens gave hackers complete control of accounts. Facebook is trying to determine whether hackers tampered with posts or messages. Hackers could have also gotten into third-party applications linked to Facebook accounts, but it was too early to determine whether that happened, according to the social network.

Attackers would have been able to meddle with Instagram accounts lined to Facebook, but could not have tampered with the social network's WhatsApp messaging service, according to executives. Facebook said that it noticed an unusual spike in activity on September 16 and determined nine days later that it was malicious. Hackers took advantage of a "complex interaction" between three software bugs, which required a degree of sophistication, according to Rosen. The vulnerability was created by a change to a video uploading feature in July of 2017. "We may never know who is behind this," Rosen said. "This is not an easy investigation."

The 50 million figure was the total number of accounts Facebook determined were breached by the attack since July of last year, but the social network did not disclose the earliest incursion. Facebook is working with data privacy regulators as well as law enforcement, according to Rosen. Facebook this year is doubling to 20,000 the number of workers devoted to safety and security. When asked why people should still trust Facebook with their personal information, Zuckerberg outlined new ways the social network is ramping up defenses. "As I've said a number of times, security is an arms race," Zuckerberg said. — AFP

News in brief

Hooch kills 22 in Iran

TEHRAN: At least 22 people have died in Iran in three separate incidents of poisoning by adulterated bootleg alcohol, the semi-official ISNA news agency reported yesterday. The largest number of deaths was reported in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, where 16 people died according to ISNA. Bandar Abbas police chief, Esmail Mashayekh, told ISNA that a married couple had been arrested on suspicion of producing the liquor while the suspected distributor was also detained. ISNA reported three deaths in a separate incident in the northern province of Alborz. In North Khorasan province in the northeast, 25 people were treated for poisoning in the past 10 days of whom three died, police chief Alireza Mazaheri told the official IRNA news agency. Khorasan police raided an underground distillery suspected of producing the adulterated liquor and made 31 arrests on Friday night, IRNA reported. — AFP

F-35 stealth fighter crashes

WASHINGTON: A US F-35 stealth fighter plane was completely destroyed in a crash during training on Friday, officials said. The pilot safely ejected. The crash is the first of its kind for the troubled F-35 program, marking an unfortunate moment for the most expensive plane in history. The Marine Corps said in a statement that a Marine Corps F-35 had crashed around 11:45 am (1615 GMT) outside Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort in South Carolina. "It's a total loss," one official said. Images on social media show a plume of black smoke rising above what users said was a crash site. The crashed plane was an F-35 "B" variant, used by the Marine Corps and capable of taking off from a short runway and landing vertically. The Air Force and Navy have their own models. Unit costs vary, but the price tag of F-35s is around \$100 million each. — AFP

Hundreds killed as quake-tsunami...

Continued from Page 1

Indonesian president Joko Widodo said the military was being called in to the disaster-struck region to help search-and-rescue teams get to victims and find bodies.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolences to Widodo. In the cable, HH Sheikh Sabah expressed sincere grief towards the victims of the earthquake and tsunami. The Amir wished for the quick recovery of those injured in the disasters and expressed support towards Palu's people to overcome such tragedies. 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 sent similar cables.

"When the (tsunami) threat arose yesterday, people were still doing their activities on the beach and did not immediately run and they became victims," Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, the spokesman for Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency BNPB said in a briefing in Jakarta. "The tsunami didn't come by itself, it dragged cars, logs, houses, it hit everything on land," Nugroho said, adding

that the tsunami had travelled across the open sea at speeds of 800 kph before striking the shoreline. Some people climbed trees to escape the tsunami and survived, he said.

"This was a terrifying double disaster," said Jan Gelfand, a Jakarta-based official at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. "The Indonesian Red Cross is racing to help survivors but we don't know what they'll find there." The massive tremors were felt hundreds of kilometres away and there has been little word about casualties in Donggala, a region north of Palu where at least one person was reported dead in Friday's quakes. "We have heard nothing from Donggala and this is extremely worrying," Gelfand said. "There are more than 300,000 people living there. This is already a tragedy, but it could get much worse."

The quake hit just off central Sulawesi at a depth of 10 km just before 1100 GMT - early evening in Indonesia - the US Geological Survey said. Such shallow quakes tend to be more destructive. Pictures supplied by the disaster agency showed a badly damaged shopping mall in Palu where at least one floor had collapsed onto the storey below, while other photographs showed major damage to buildings and large cracks across pavements. Homes and a local hotel were flattened while a landmark city bridge was destroyed.

Video from the scene showed the double-arched, yellow bridge had collapsed with its two metal arches twist-

ed as cars bobbed in the water below. An AFP reporter on the scene saw widespread damage some 50 m inland. A key access road had been badly damaged and was partially blocked by landslides, the disaster agency said.

The main airport in Palu, capital of South Sulawesi province, was shut after the tsunami struck and was expected to stay closed for at least 24 hours, complicating any disaster relief efforts. Friday's tremor was also felt in the far south of the island in its largest city Makassar and on neighboring Kalimantan, Indonesia's portion of Borneo island. The initial quake struck as evening prayers were about to begin in the world's biggest Muslim majority country on the holiest day of the week, when mosques are especially busy.

Indonesia is one of the most disaster-prone nations on earth. It lies on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", where tectonic plates collide and many of the world's volcanic eruptions and earthquakes occur. Earlier this year, a series of powerful quakes hit Lombok, killing more than 550 people on the holiday island and neighboring Sumbawa. Indonesia has been hit by a string of other deadly quakes including a devastating 9.1 magnitude tremor that struck off the coast of Sumatra in Dec 2004. That Boxing Day quake triggered a tsunami that killed 220,000 throughout the region, including 168,000 in Indonesia. In 2010, about 430 were killed when a huge quake sparked a tsunami off the coast of Sumatra, while more than 600 died in a quake-tsunami disaster on Java island. — Agencies

'No progress' in ending Gulf feud...

Continued from Page 1

The US was planning to host a summit in October to discuss the MESA plan, but that has been pushed back several months. A senior administration official has said Washington was still planning to hold the summit at a later date.

Saudi Arabia - along with its Gulf allies, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain - cut diplomatic and trade ties with Qatar in June 2017, accusing it of supporting terrorism and being too close to Iran. Qatar denies the charges, accusing its neighbors of seeking regime change. The rift has proved a strategic headache for Washington as Qatar provides the main headquarters in the region for the US Central Command, while Bahrain is home to the US Fifth Fleet and Saudi Arabia has long been one of its key allies in the region. Kuwait has led mediation efforts in the crisis, which so far have made little tangible progress. — Agencies

Erdogan opens mega mosque...

Continued from Page 1

crowds cheerfully breaking into regular chants of the president's name or shouting "Who is the greatest? Turkey". "Erdogan is very popular because he has done a lot for his people," said Yusuf Simsek, 42, a computer technician with Turkish roots.

At one of the rallies on the bank of the Rhine, demonstrators waved banners reading: "Erdogan not welcome". Cansu, a 30-year-old student of Turkish origin, came from Switzerland to join the protest. "I want to be the voice of people who can't take to the streets in Turkey. Because they have been arrested, killed or otherwise suppressed," she told AFP. "Erdogan thinks anything that differs from his opinion is terrorism."

Both Cologne mayor Henriette Reker and the state's premier Armin Laschet declined to attend the mosque ceremony. The snubs echoed the lukewarm welcome

the Turkish leader received at a state dinner on Friday evening hosted by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, which several opposition politicians boycotted. Merkel also skipped the banquet.

Ties between the two NATO countries soured after Berlin criticized Ankara's crackdown on opponents following a failed 2016 coup, which saw tens of thousands arrested. Tensions eased somewhat after several high-profile German-Turkish nationals were released this year, but five remain behind bars. Merkel, whose country is home to more than three million ethnic Turks, stressed the need for continued dialogue to overcome disagreements. But she also highlighted Germany's interest in a "stable" Turkey, which she relies on to help stem the flow of migrants to Europe.

Erdogan, seeking international allies as he spars with US President Donald Trump and the Turkish economy is in turmoil, likewise struck a conciliatory tone. In his speech at the mosque inauguration, he said his visit to Germany had been "successful" and strengthened German-Turkish ties at "a critical period". But he again lashed Germany for not taking stronger action against "terrorists" like supporters of the Kurdistan Workers'

Party (PKK) or followers of Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom he blames for the coup attempt. He also said he wished Germans had shown more support for Turkish-origin footballer Mesut Ozil, who recently quit the Germany team over perceived racism and discrimination.

Cologne is located in North Rhine-Westphalia state which is home to significant numbers of ethnic Turks, many of whom moved to Germany as so-called "guest workers" from the 1960s. The giant Cologne Central Mosque opened its doors in 2017 after eight years of construction and budget overruns, but had yet to be formally inaugurated. The size of the building, designed to resemble a flower bud opening, and its two towering minarets has left some locals disgruntled, triggering occasional protests.

The Turkish-Islamic Union of the Institute for Religion (Ditib) that commissioned the glass and cement structure is itself not without controversy. The group runs hundreds of mosques across Germany with imams paid by the Turkish state. Known for its close ties to Ankara, it has increasingly come under scrutiny with some of its members suspected of spying on Turkish dissidents living in Germany. — AFP

Sports

Emotional Casey revels in first Ryder Cup win for 12 years

‘Desperately wanted to be back on this team’

SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES: An emotional Paul Casey fought to hold back tears after claiming his first Ryder Cup win since 2006 yesterday, saying he had “desperately” wanted to return to the matchplay showdown. After being persuaded to retake a European Tour card by captain Thomas Bjorn in order to be eligible for this year’s Ryder Cup in France, he sealed an impressive 3 and 2 victory over Dustin Johnson and Rickie Fowler alongside Tyrrell Hatton.

“Ask him (Hatton) a question. Let me get my... honestly, let me get my breath,” stammered Casey after securing Europe’s seventh of eight straight wins at Le Golf National.

The 41-year-old was left out of the side by Colin Montgomerie in 2010 despite being the world number seven, slipping down the rankings after struggling with injuries and poor form.

But he has rediscovered his best over the last four years, and has been in fine fettle this week, having almost inspired a comeback against Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas on Friday before reeling off five birdies in the first six holes yesterday.

“Desperately wanted to be back on this team

because I know how good it is,” said Casey after regaining his composure.

“I mean, all these guys are amazing, and you know, once you’re a Ryder Cupper, you’re always a Ryder Cupper. I can’t tell you how proud I am.

“But it wasn’t just sort of to get here and be part of the team, it was to try and win a Ryder Cup back.”

Casey became one of only six men in Ryder Cup history to make a hole-in-one at the Ryder Cup at the K Club in 2006 and has now won six points from 11 matches. “Obviously playing alongside Paul, he’s a Ryder Cup legend,” added Hatton. “What a player he is. It was the Casey Express train the front nine. I was just trying to help out when I could.”

Casey admitted he had struggled to contain his emotions after the win, but the former world number three said it isn’t a rare occurrence for him.

“There was a tear. I was emotional earlier. I’ve always been a bit that way. I cry in movies, as well,” he said. “Hey, not embarrassed. I care about it. It means an awful lot to me. I’m proud to be on this team and proud to be standing next to those other 11 teammates and proud to win a point.” — AFP



SAINT-QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES: Europe’s English golfer Paul Casey plays a tee shot during his fourball match on the second day of the 42nd Ryder Cup at Le Golf National Course at Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, south-west of Paris, yesterday. — AFP

Japan’s Ishikawa wins Spartathlon

SPARTI: Japanese runner Yoshihiko Ishikawa battled through cold and rain to win the 245.3km (152-mile) Spartathlon race yesterday, one of the world’s toughest ultra-marathons. The 30-year-old, one of a record 60 Japanese runners who took part, clocked 22 hours, 54 minutes and 40 seconds for victory, for which he received an olive wreath and a cup of water from the Evrotas River. Ishikawa is no stranger to ultra-running, having finished fourth last year after clinching the men’s title at the World 24-Hour Championships in Belfast, where he ran 267.566km (166 miles). Finishing second in the 36th edition of the Spartathlon for the second year in a row was 44-year-old Radek Brunner of the Czech Republic in 23:36:43 while 41-year-old Joao Oliveira of Portugal was third in 24:33:35.

The first woman to cross the finish line and 17th overall was Hungary’s Zsuzsanna Maraz, 38, in 27:04:28. The race traces the classical route of Pheidippides, an Athenian messenger sent to Sparta in 490 BC to seek help against the Persians in the Battle of Marathon. According to Greek historian Herodotus, Pheidippides arrived in Sparta “on the next day of his departure”. The Spartathlon is one of the world’s most difficult races run over rough tracks, crossing vineyards and olive groves, steep hillsides and, most challenging of all, the 1,200m ascent and descent of Mount Parthenion in the dead of night. This year’s athletes also faced cold temperatures, rain and high winds.

The idea for the creation of the Spartathlon belongs to John Foden, a British RAF Wing Commander who first ran the course in 1982 in 36 hours. The first Spartathlon was organised in 1983 with the participation of just 45 runners from 12 countries. The race started at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens on Friday morning with 381 runners from 51 countries with ages ranging from 20 to 70 years, and ended in the southern Greek town of Sparta with many of the participants failing to reach the finish line. — AFP

KSSC honors its shooters

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Shooting Sport Club (KSSC) honored its shooters who participated in the International Youth Championship and the Clay Targets Grand Prix that was held in Kazakhstan from September 17-27, in a ceremony attended by President of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Sport Federations, and Secretary General Obaid Al-Osaimi as well as Director of Information and Publication at the Public Authority for Sport Khalid Al-Subaie.

The shooters won four medals, as shooter Ahmad Nasser Al-Awwad claimed second place and the silver medal in the junior’s skeet, while the team of Ahmad Al-Awwad, Saud Al-Hamly, and Salman Al-Rashidi took third place and the bronze medal in the juniors team skeet event. Meanwhile, shooter Mansour Al-Rashidi won the bronze medal in the Grand Prix event, and Saud Al-Hamly won the silver medal in the juniors Grand Prix.

Secretary General of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations said this achievement is not something new and came through well thought off plans that were adopted by the board of directors, as well as the efforts of the technical and administrative departments, and the training by the shooter, particularly the junior shooters and their achievements, who are the future of Kuwait shooting.

Al-Osaimi dedicated this new achievement to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber



Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Kuwaitis.

Al-Osaimi lauded the support of the Honorary President of Kuwait Shooting Sport Club Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Nasser Al-Jabri and PAS and its Director General Dr Humoud Fulaiteh. He said the continued support of Kuwait shooting had a great effect in making the achievements

and having the Kuwait flag flying high in world arenas at all levels. Meanwhile, HH the Crown Prince Shooting tournament will start at the end of the week in the shotgun, 10 meter pistol and rifle as well as Olympic archery and will be concluded on Saturday. Kuwait Shooting Sport Club Treasurer Essa Butaiban said the organizing committee completed all preparations for the tournament and Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex is ready to host this important event that declares the start of

the shooting season. He said the tournament will see very strong competition as the number of shooters who will participate is over 300 of all levels. He said registration will close on Tuesday.



Essa Butaiban



INNSBRUCK: Netherland’s Anna Van Der Breggen poses with the gold medal during the winner ceremony of the Women’s Elite road race of the 2018 UCI Road World Championships in Innsbruck, Austria yesterday. — AFP

Van der Breggen storms to world road race title

INNSBRUCK: Hot favourite Anna van der Breggen pulverised the opposition for a deserved gold medal in the women’s world championships road race yesterday as she soloed through huge crowds in central Innsbruck to wild applause.

The 28-year-old Dutch rider, who won silver in the time-trial on Tuesday, made her break from around 40km out and finished almost four minutes ahead of

Australia’s Amanda Spratt as Italy’s Tatiana Guderzo took bronze some 5min 26sec behind Van der Breggen.

The Olympic and European champion from 2016 broke down in tears briefly on crossing the line.

“Until the finish line I never believed it,” she said. “World championships are so hard to win.”

“I had too many doubts after many near misses and only let myself go right at the finish line,” said Van der Breggen. The winner made her move after the Australian team had chased down an earlier attack to get Spratt into the lead group and timed her attack at the bottom of a climb on the first of three circuits of the city-centre.

Van der Breggen sustained her tempo to drop everyone except Spratt, who relented within the final kilometre to leave the Dutchwoman to go it alone for almost two full, 23km-long laps of Innsbruck. — AFP

Bottas upstages Hamilton to take Russian GP pole

SOCHI: Valtteri Bottas upstaged his championship-leading Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton with a dazzling lap in yesterday’s qualifying session to seize pole position for the Russian Grand Prix. The Finn, who has struggled to keep pace with the defending four-time champion for much of the season, relished the confines of one of his favourite tracks as he clocked a record lap in one minute and 31.387 seconds. His late fastest lap lifted him ahead of Hamilton, who aborted his final lap after running wide at Turn Seven, and put a grin back on his face as the Mercedes pair delivered another front row lockout. It was his second pole this year and the sixth of his career. “Alright guys, good job that,” said Bottas, as he controlled his feelings after the session.

“I’m really happy, but it’s only the first step this weekend. It’s a massively long run to Turn One from the start.” Bottas claimed his maiden Formula One victory in Russia last year and showed a clear affinity with the track as Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari, who trails Hamilton by 40 points in the title race, took third. “I messed up in the last sector,” said a downcast Vettel. “It was at Turn 15 and I think there were one and half or two tenths lost, but not enough. “It was important to get as close as possible and it should have been closer, but not enough to be a threat.” Vettel said he had reminded Bottas of the start of last year’s race when Bottas, from third, passed both Ferraris to take the lead and win. “I just spoke to him so maybe we can turn that around this time,” added Vettel.

RAIKONEN FOURTH
Vettel’s Sauber-bound Ferrari team-mate Kimi

Raikkonen wound up fourth ahead of Kevin Magnussen of Haas, job-hunting Frenchman Esteban Ocon of Force India and Ferrari-bound Charles Leclerc of Sauber. Sergio Perez, in the second Force India, was eighth ahead of Romain Grosjean in the second Haas and Marcus Ericsson in the second Sauber. The two Red Bulls did not qualify for the top-10 shootout, knowing they face engine penalties that will mean they start today’s race from the back of the grid along with both Toro Rosso cars and Fernando Alonso’s McLaren.

On a bright blue-skied day by the Black Sea, Bottas began by setting the early pace ahead of the Ferraris until Hamilton emerged to establish his supremacy again, trimming his lap record, set in the morning’s final practice session, to 1:32.410.

To the dismay of home fans in the crowd at the Sochi Autodrom, Russia’s only representative, Serge Sirotkin, spun heavily and brushed the barriers in the closing minutes in his Williams at Turn Nine.

This wrecked his hopes and left him exiting along with Brendon Hartley of Toro Rosso, retirement-bound two-time champion Fernando Alonso and his McLaren team-mate Stoffel Vandoorne, who sandwiched Sirotkin in 18th, and last man Lance Stroll in the second Williams.

It meant that, not for the first time, two of the sport’s biggest and most famous teams, multi-champions Williams and McLaren, had lost both cars in the opening session. Bottas and Hamilton continued to top the times early in Q2, both taking the more durable ‘ultra-soft’ tyres, as did the two Ferraris, as part of a plan for Sunday’s race strategy. After their opening runs, the ‘scarlet scuderia’ trailed by nearly half a second each.

Hamilton switched to ‘hyper-softs’ and was significantly quicker before he aborted the lap, under instructions, to avoid being required to start on those tyres. The session, as a result, was relatively insipid as the two Red Bull drivers, Pierre Gasly of Toro Rosso who faces a penalty, Marcus Ericsson of Sauber and Nico Hulkenberg of Renault were eliminated without much of a fight. — AFP

Sports

Valverde rests Messi against Bilbao but Barcelona drop more points

Barca head to Wembley to face Tottenham in Champions League

BARCELONA: Ernesto Valverde's gamble of resting Lionel Messi backfired yesterday as Barcelona made it three games without a victory after being held to a 1-1 draw at home to Athletic Bilbao. Messi came on in the 55th minute at the Camp Nou and it was the Argentinian's shot that was turned in by another substitute, Munir El Haddadi, with six minutes left to play.

By then, however, Oscar De Marcos had given Bilbao a deserved first-half lead and despite a late rally, Messi and Barca could not find a winner. After drawing at home to Girona and being beaten by Leganes, Barca will head to Wembley to face Tottenham in the Champions League on Wednesday on the back of three games without a win.

The last time Bilbao took a point at the Camp Nou, Valverde was sitting in the away team's dug-out, in 2004, during his first spell as Bilbao coach. Now in charge at Barca, Valverde will have questions to answer for this result, having made the bold decision to rest Messi, presumably with Spurs in mind, along with Sergio Busquets.

Barca surrender top spot in La Liga if Real Madrid beat Atletico in the city derby later on Saturday. Bilbao move up to 14th. Lack of rotation was chief among the criticisms levelled at Valverde after they crashed out of the Champions League quarter-finals last season, with Luis Suarez admitting he regrets playing 90 minutes against Leganes, three days before the collapse against Roma.

Valverde has certainly acted. Of the preferred 11 that started a 4-0 win over PSV Eindhoven two weeks ago,

eight have started at least one of the three games since on the bench. The trouble is that seven of those have been required to come on as substitutes, which suggests Barca's squad is not deep enough to accommodate the shuffling Valverde has in mind.

Bilbao took the lead in the 41st minute and could have scored earlier. Inaki Williams' attempted lob had Marc-Andre ter Stegen beaten but drifted wide. Ter Stegen had to push Raul Garcia's effort over and was then rounded by Williams but the angle proved too tight.

Barca were not without opening themselves, as Suarez was twice denied by Unai Simon but Bilbao looked the more likely to score. Ousmane Dembele conceded possession and Markel Susaeta's cross was perfectly weighted to evade the scrambling Sergi Roberto at the back post, where De Marcos slid the ball home.

Valverde waited until 10 minutes after half-time before introducing Messi and Busquets. Sergi and Arturo Vidal made way, the latter with a glare and shake of the head. Messi got to work. His bending free-kick looked destined for the corner, only for De Marcos to head off the line and another shot hit the post.

Munir replaced Dembele and this last substitution paid off. Messi shot twice, the first scrambled away by Simon but the second fizzed across the face of goal for Munir to divert in.

Barca wanted a winner and they had six minutes to find one. There was to be no late drama, however, as Bilbao claimed a well-deserved point. — AFP



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Spanish forward Munir El Haddadi (L) vies with Athletic Bilbao's Spanish midfielder Peru Nolaskoain during the Spanish league football match between FC Barcelona and Athletic Club Bilbao at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

Kane double lifts Spurs spirits

HUDDERSFIELD: Harry Kane rediscovered his scoring touch just in time to face Barcelona with two goals for Tottenham in a routine 2-0 Premier League victory at bottom club Huddersfield. The England centre-forward has struggled for goals since returning from the World Cup, scoring just once, from a penalty, in his previous six appearances for club and country.

However, he headed in Kieran Trippier's cross in the 25th minute to set Mauricio Pochettino's side on their way, and then added a penalty nine minutes later, when Florent Hadergionaj was punished for tugging Danny Rose's shirt.

The victory, Tottenham's third in eight days if the midweek defeat of Watford on penalties in the League Cup is included, suggests they are getting back to form as they prepare to host Barcelona in the Champions League at Wembley on Wednesday.

It will have done much to lift club spirits too, given the hamstring injury suffered during the week by midfielder Dele Alli, who is expected to be out for around four weeks, although Spurs have yet to put a timescale on his return. Christian Eriksen was absent too, with the abdominal injury he sustained during last Saturday's 2-1 win at Brighton, although he is hopeful of facing Barcelona. In any case, Kane's form, allied to an impressive attacking performance from Lucas Moura, ensured that the absentees were not missed too much. Huddersfield were warned of the danger in the opening 10 minutes, when Christopher Schindler misjudged the bounce of a Davinson Sanchez clearance, allowing Kane to race clear, but goalkeeper Jonas Losl held his nerve and blocked with his feet.

The home side, who could have been behind even earlier than that had Rose not headed just wide from a



HUDDERSFIELD: Huddersfield Town's Belgian striker Laurent Depoitre (CR) goes up for a header as Huddersfield Town's Danish goalkeeper Jonas Losl (R) comes to punch away during the English Premier League football match between Huddersfield Town and Tottenham Hotspur at the John Smith's stadium in Huddersfield, northern England yesterday. — AFP

Trippier cross, did not heed the lesson and were soon behind. Terence Kongolo managed to hold up Lucas's run, injuring himself in the process, but the Brazilian got to his feet and fed Trippier to cross for Kane to head in.

Kongolo was carried off on a stretcher, and his replacement, Hadergionaj, was soon experiencing his own misfortune, as he was punished for a shirt tug on Rose inside the area. Kane sent Losl the wrong way with the resulting penalty.

Huddersfield are struggling for goals, having scored just once at home in the league since February 11, but were out of luck at key times. Chris Loewe's sweet, swerving 25-yard shot, which came between Kane's two first-half goals, was pushed aside by the alert Paulo

Gazzaniga in the Tottenham goal.

Right on half-time, Laurent Depoitre met Erik Durm's cross on the run with a volley that bounced out off the underside of the bar. The second half rather petered out, with Lucas spurning two opportunities to score the goal his performance merited, first being denied by Losl after wriggling into space, and then firing wide having won possession in midfield and charged for goal.

Huddersfield continued to labour without reward, with Gazzaniga gathering a low shot from Alex Pritchard and then watching Loewe bend a free-kick just wide, before making a fine late save at his near post to turn aside substitute Isaac Mbenz's shot. — AFP

Arsenal ride their luck to make it seven in a row

LONDON: Arsenal extended their winning streak to seven matches as Craig Cathcart's late own goal and Mesut Ozil's clinical strike clinched a hard-fought 2-0 win over Watford yesterday. Unai Emery's side were under the cosh in the second half at the Emirates Stadium, but they kept Watford at bay and broke out to steal the points.

Cathcart put through his own net with just nine minutes left and Ozil wrapped up the points two minutes later. Arsenal have now won five successive league games for the first time in over a year, with additional victories in the Europa League and League Cup making it a purple patch for new boss Emery. Not for the first time this season, Arsenal, who climb to fifth, could be considered slightly lucky after delivering another inconsistent display. But Emery will take heart from the way they are grinding out results while he continues to rebuild the damage from the final days of the Arsene Wenger era.

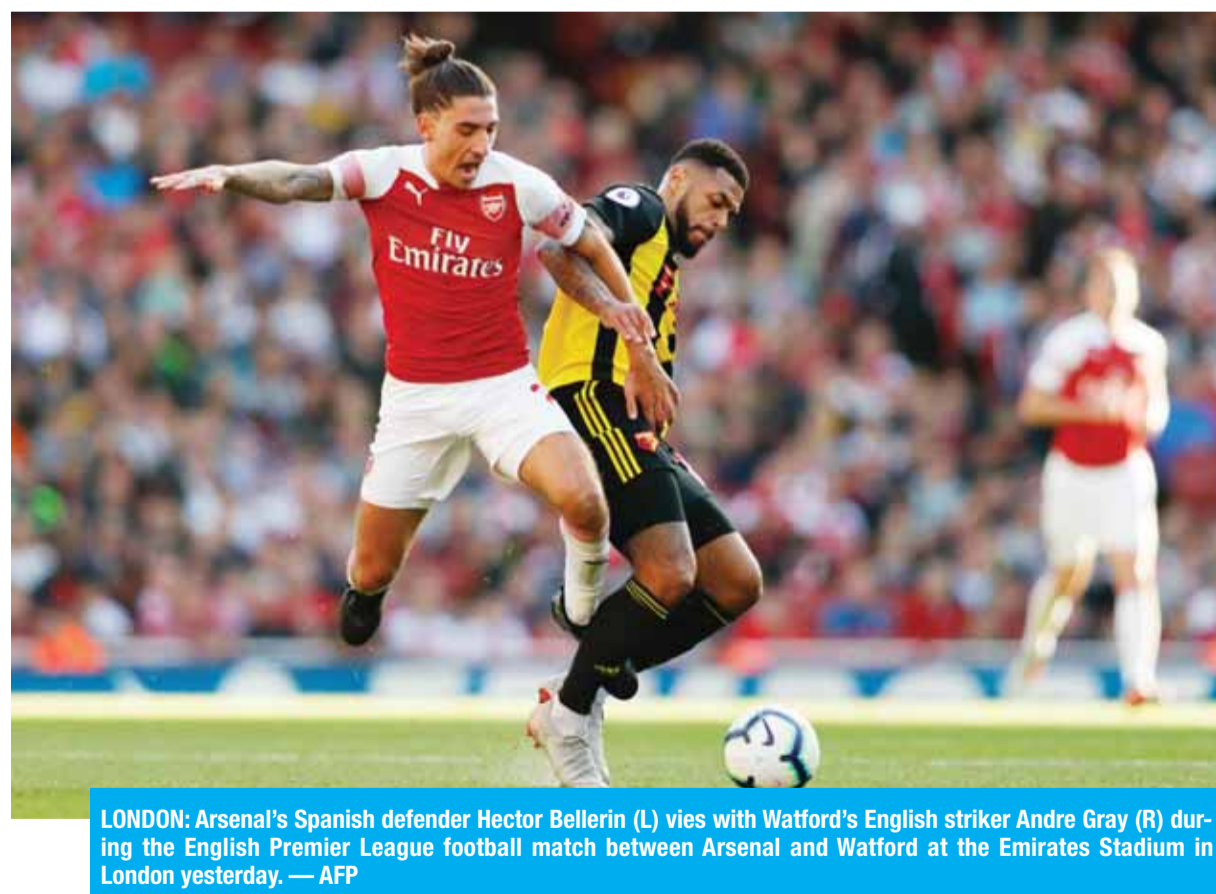
The only problem for Emery was an injury that forced off goalkeeper Petr Cech in the first half. Watford went into a match against Arsenal higher in the table than their opponents for the first time since 1984.

But Javi Gracia's side wasted an early chance to show that position was no fluke when Will Hughes volleyed wide from the edge of the area. Emery was up against a former team-mate in Gracia, the pair played together at Real Sociedad, and it was the Arsenal boss who would have the upper hand eventually.

Lacazette should have opened the scoring when he seized on Cathcart's cumbersome attempt to turn and raced clear on goal. But, with only Watford keeper Ben Foster to beat, Lacazette's chip drifted tamely wide.

Cech bravely took a battering from Abdoulaye Doucoure, throwing himself into a crowd to catch Jose Holebas's cross. Granit Xhaka tested Watford's Foster with a stinging long-range drive that the keeper parried to safety. But, after grabbing his hamstring following a goal-kick, Arsenal captain Cech was forced to limp off in first half stoppage-time.

Bernd Leno, a pre-season signing from Bayer



LONDON: Arsenal's Spanish defender Hector Bellerin (L) vies with Watford's English striker Andre Gray (R) during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Watford at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

Leverkusen, came on to replace Cech for his first appearance in the Premier League. The German did not take long to distinguish himself as he dived to keep out Troy Deeney's flick with a superb finger-tip save.

Emery insisted this week that Aaron Ramsey wouldn't be distracted by reports that his negotiations with Arsenal have broken down. The 27-year-old is out of contract at the end of the season and is believed to be resigned to leaving Arsenal, with Manchester United and Chelsea interested in signing him.

Emery's prediction appeared wide of the mark as Ramsey was anonymous before being substituted in the second half, a departure marked by a frustrated shake of the head from the Wales midfielder.

With Arsenal struggling to build a head of steam, Watford began to take control. Leno had to race off his line to deny Andre Gray, while Roberto Pereyra was narrowly off-target after dribbling through the Arsenal defence. Emery's creaky rearguard was exposed again when Isaac Success sprinted clear and clipped his shot past Leno, only to see it hit the far post. But Arsenal survived the onslaught to snatch the lead in the 81st minute.

Alex Iwobi's cross to the near post was contested by Lacazette and Cathcart, and it was the Watford defender who got the last touch to divert the ball into his own net. Watford had to throw men forward and Arsenal picked them off again in the 83rd minute, with Ozil applying the finishing touch to Lacazette's cross. — AFP

| Match's on TV (Local Timings) | |
|---|-------|
| ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE | |
| Cardiff City v Burnley beIN SPORTS HD 2 | 18:00 |
| SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA | |
| Huesca v Girona beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 13:00 |
| Villarreal v Real Valladolid beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 17:15 |
| Levante v Deportivo Alaves beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 19:30 |
| Real Betis v Leganes beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 21:45 |
| ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE | |
| Bologna v Udinese Calcio beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 13:30 |
| Florentina v Atalanta beIN SPORTS | 16:00 |
| Chievo Verona v Torino beIN SPORTS HD 2 | 16:00 |
| Frosinone Calcio v Genoa CFC beIN SPORTS HD 8 | 16:00 |
| Parma Calcio 1913 v Empoli beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 19:00 |
| Sassuolo Calcio v AC Milan beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 21:30 |
| GERMAN BUNDESLIGA | |
| Eintracht Frankfurt v Hannover 96 beIN SPORTS HD 5 | 16:30 |
| Augsburg v Freiburg beIN SPORTS HD 5 | 19:00 |
| FRENCH LEAGUE | |
| Stade Rennais v Toulouse beIN SPORTS HD 6 | 16:00 |
| Montpellier v Nimes Olympique beIN SPORTS HD 6 | 18:00 |
| LOSC Lille v Olympique Marseille beIN SPORTS HD 6 | 22:00 |

Fazio goes from villain to hero as Roma win derby

ROME: Roma defender Federico Fazio went from villain to hero as his side continued their recent dominance over neighbours Lazio with a 3-1 win in a pulsating Derby della Capitale yesterday. Fazio made an awful mistake to gift Lazio an equaliser midway through the second half but, after Aleksandar Kolarov put Roma back in front with a free kick against his old club, made amends by heading their third goal.

It was Roma's seventh win in their last nine meetings with Lazio in all competitions and pulled them up to fifth place in Serie A with 11 points, one place and one point behind their opponents. Lazio, winners of their last five matches in all competitions, dominated the early exchanges but Roma struck the first blow in the 45th minute.

A long ball was launched into the area, Lazio defender Luiz Felipe and goalkeeper Thomas Strakosha collided and the ball ran loose to Lorenzo Pellegrini who cleverly back-heeled it into the goal.

Pellegrini, who became the tenth different Roma player to score in Serie A this season, had been on the pitch for only nine minutes after replacing the injured Javier Pastore. It was all going smoothly for Roma until Fazio was dispossessed as he tried to dribble around Ciro Immobile and the Lazio forward ran on to fire the ball wide of Patrick Olsen for his first goal in a Rome derby.

But Roma were back in front within four minutes. Lazio substitute Milan Badelj tripped Pellegrini from behind on the edge of the area and Kolarov fired the free kick through a huge hole in the Lazio wall. Argentina defender Fazio completed the win, and atoned for his earlier mistake, by meeting a free kick with a towering header to score four minutes from time. — Reuters

25 Van der Breggen storms to world road race title



26 Sabalenka crushes Kontaveit to clinch Wuhan Open



27 Valverde rests Messi against Bilbao but Barcelona drop more points



City move top, Man Utd flop again

Everton end four-game winless run to beat Fulham



MANCHESTER: Brighton's Ivorian midfielder Yves Bissouma (C) vies with Manchester City's Argentinian striker Sergio Aguero (L) and Manchester City's English midfielder Raheem Sterling during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Brighton and Hove Albion at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. — AFP

LONDON: Manchester City took advantage of Liverpool's late kick-off at Chelsea yesterday to move top of the Premier League as Manchester United slumped to a third defeat in seven league games, 3-1 at West Ham.

United now trail their city rivals by nine points in 10th and could trail Liverpool by 11 should Jurgen Klopp's men continue their 100 percent record at Stamford Bridge. City showed the gulf in class between both sides of Manchester as Brighton, who beat United earlier this season, were comfortably seen off at the Etihad 2-0 thanks to goals either side of half-time from Raheem Sterling and Sergio Aguero.

United's worst league start in 29 years means they are also five points adrift of Tottenham and Arsenal in the race for a place in the top four as they were 2-0 victors over Huddersfield and Watford respectively.

MISERABLE WEEK

Defeat at the London Stadium compounded a miserable week for United manager Jose Mourinho having also been dumped out of the League Cup by Derby on penalties and held at home by Wolves last weekend.

Mourinho's switch to a three-man defence backfired as Felipe Anderson and Victor Lindelof's own goal gave West Ham 2-0 half-time lead. "After the result on Tuesday the team obviously needs positive things, positive feelings and to start losing after five minutes is not that positive start that you need," said Mourinho.

Paul Pogba was also under the spotlight after being stripped of the vice-captaincy by Mourinho in midweek and a frosty training ground exchange between the pair on Wednesday. However, the French World Cup winner failed to make an impact before he was substituted 20 minutes from time.

Marcus Rashford came off the bench to briefly give United hope by pulling a goal back, but just three minutes later Marko Arnautovic exposed more poor United defending to seal West Ham's first home league win of the season.

CITY SLICKERS

City face a big trip to Hoffenheim in the Champions League in midweek having lost at home to Lyon to open their campaign, but they have suffered no such domestic struggles in defence of their title. Leroy Sane's pace again made a big impact as the German's low cross was tapped home by Sterling at the back post for his fourth goal of the season.

City could have had many more goals to show for their dominance, but had to wait until 25 minutes from time when Aguero slotted home after a neat one-two

with Sterling. "Every time we lost the ball, we recovered and attacked with players at the edge of their penalty box. That is a dream for us," said a delighted Pep Guardiola. Tottenham moved into fourth as Harry Kane scored twice in nine first-half minutes to easily see off struggling Huddersfield.

Everton ended a four-game winless run to beat Fulham 3-0 as Gylfi Sigurdsson made amends for missing an earlier penalty to score twice either side of Cenk Tosun's first goal of the season. Wolves' impressive return to the top flight continued thanks to late goals from Ivan Cavaleiro and Jonny Castro to earn a 2-0 win over Southampton.

Newcastle remain winless and in the bottom three after a 2-0 defeat at home to Leicester with two of England's World Cup squad Jamie Vardy and Harry Maguire on target. — AFP

Sturridge salvages point at Chelsea to keep Liverpool unbeaten in league

LONDON: Substitute Daniel Sturridge's sensational strike a minute from time preserved Liverpool's unbeaten start to the Premier League season as Jurgen Klopp's men salvaged a 1-1 draw at Chelsea yesterday.

For the second time in four days Eden Hazard seemed set to haunt Liverpool as after deciding a League Cup tie between the pair on Wednesday, the Belgian fired Chelsea in front on 25 minutes.

Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino had efforts cleared off the line and Xherdan Shaqiri sliced wide a great chance as Liverpool were headed for defeat. But

Sturridge's late intervention means they move level on points with Manchester City at the top of the table ahead of a huge clash between the two at Anfield next weekend.

Chelsea are just two points back in third and showed their own title credentials by continuing an unbeaten start under Maurizio Sarri with an impressive defensive display complemented by Hazard's class at the other end of the field.

Both sides were back to full strength after Sarri and Klopp made eight changes for the League Cup between the pair. Salah was back for Liverpool after being crowned the third best player in the world for the past year by FIFA on Monday.

But the dead eye for goal shown by the Egyptian last season to earn that accolade ahead of the likes of Lionel Messi and Hazard was missing as Liverpool paid for a wasteful start.

Twice Salah wriggled into clear shooting positions on his favoured left foot on the edge of the box inside the first 10 minutes, but his first tame effort was easily saved by Kepa

Arrizabalaga before he blazed his second high and wide.

Just as in midweek when Hazard came off the bench to win the game with a stunning individual run and finish, Liverpool were undone by a moment of magic from Chelsea's number 10. Hazard was picked out by a fine through ball from Mateo Kovacic and forced onto his weaker left foot he still managed to drill the ball low past Alisson Becker for his seventh goal of the season.

Chelsea have dominated possession since Sarri took charge, but the hosts seemed happy to sit on their lead and not expose themselves to Liverpool's rapid counter-attack after going in front.

Salah should have levelled against his old club just after the half hour mark when he outmuscled Marcos Alonso and rounded Kepa, but his goalbound effort was cleared off the line by Antonio Rudiger.

The world's two most expensive goalkeepers were on show and both Kepa and Alisson showed why they cost a combined £140 million with big saves on the hour mark. — AFP



LONDON: Chelsea's French midfielder N'Golo Kante is tackled by Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (C) during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Liverpool at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP