



3 Kuwaiti delegation participates in Indian university ranking event



6 Sudan police orders forces not to intervene against protests



22 Pearls of wisdom: Japan's cultured farms still glisten



27 Pele back in Brazil after hospital stay in France



Lawmaker claims 'importing' expats hurts jobless Kuwaitis

MPs call to cut power to Egyptian consulate

MoE warns schools against hiking fees

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary for Private Education Dr Abdulmohsen Al-Huwaila yesterday met parents of students of a private school in Jahra, who are staging a sit-in against increased fees. "We will not allow any increase in fees in private schools and will take all measures that may reach revoking their licenses if schools do not comply with the ministry's decision," he said. He said the "education ministry is

playing its role with regards to school fees, and no school is allowed to impose its opinion". Huwaila said the ministry revisits the fee increase issue every now and then, adding "we do not see that an increase is necessary".

In another educational concern, State Minister for Economic Affairs Maryam Al-Aqeel said that there is no joint cooperation so far between the manpower authority and education ministry to check the degrees of expats

Continued on Page 24

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Safa Al-Hashem said yesterday that "importing" expatriates and employing them in administrative jobs in the government is one of the main causes for the high unemployment rate among Kuwaitis. The lawmaker claimed that an unwise recruitment policy by the government has led to a "horrifying" imbalance in the demographic structure in favor of expats. She said this policy has resulted in depriving Kuwaitis of their legitimate right of getting an adequate job.

Hashem had in the past few years called for imposing taxes on expat remittances, forcing them to pay higher charges for medical services and even asked them to pay for walking on roads and breathing Kuwait's air. The lawmaker asked Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas

Al-Saleh about the number of expats who have been appointed in the council of ministers and in all sectors from the beginning of 2017 until now.

Hashem said the answer should include the name and nationality of those employed, their education level, wages and the name of the sector where they are employed, demanding an explanation why those expatriates were appointed while Kuwaitis were rejected. She also asked for the number of Kuwaitis who applied for those jobs, an explanation of the policy of the council of ministers on replacing expats with nationals and what measures the council has taken to implement this policy to reduce the percentage of expat employees. She asked the minister about the measures it intends to take to reduce the number of expatriate employees having low educational qualifications.

Hashem also asked the education minister about paying a Canadian who was appointed dean of the pharmacy college in 2014 a special allowance of KD 1,500 monthly, which she claimed was never paid to Kuwaitis. She demanded a copy of his appointment decision and the reasons for paying the special allowance. She also claimed the dean's wife was also appointed in the college at the same time without meeting the requirements of the appointment committees in the college.

Meanwhile, MPs Abdulwahab Al-Babtain and Abdullah Al-Kandari yesterday called for cutting the power to the Egyptian consulate in Salam in South Surra because the consulate rented a building designated for private residence, which caused great harm to residents. The consulate moved to this location a few weeks ago amid protests from MPs.

News in brief

Tourist falls, drowns in Nile

KAMPALA: A Saudi tourist drowned after he slipped and fell into the River Nile while apparently attempting to take a selfie, police said yesterday. The tourist was with a group of friends visiting Kalagala Falls in central Uganda, a popular spot whose raging rapids are popular among kayakers, when the accident happened on Saturday. Uganda police spokeswoman Hellen Butoto said his body was recovered some 10 km away yesterday. — AFP

Bishop charged with raping nun

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Police yesterday charged an Indian bishop with repeatedly raping a nun at a rural convent in Kerala, in a case that has cast a new shadow on the Roman Catholic church's global sex abuse crisis. Franco Mulakkal was charged with raping the nun several times between 2014 and 2016. The bishop also faces charges of unlawful detention, unnatural sex and abuse of authority. Mulakkal - who faces a maximum punishment of life imprisonment - has vociferously denied the allegations. — AFP

Attache on trial for toilet camera

WELLINGTON: One of New Zealand's most senior naval officers has gone on trial for placing a secret camera in the unisex toilet of the country's Washington DC embassy. Commodore Alfred Keating has been charged with attempting to make "an intimate visual recording" and is currently on trial in Auckland. The camera was purposely mounted inside a heating duct unit in the bathroom and was only discovered when the panel fell to the floor. The camera's media card had traces of Keating's DNA and his computer contained the camera's driver and related software. — AFP

Couple charged with espionage

BERLIN: An Indian couple accused of spying has been charged with espionage, German prosecutors announced yesterday. They named the suspects as 50-year-old Manmohan S and his wife Kanwal Jit K. 51. "Manmohan S agreed by January 2015 to provide information about Germany's Sikh community and Kashmir movement and their relatives to an employee of the Indian foreign intelligence service Research & Analysis Wing," they said. His wife joined him in monthly meetings with the Indian intelligence officer between July and Dec 2017, and the couple was paid A7,200. — AFP

Jailed activist on hunger strike

LONDON: Award-winning rights activist Ahmed Mansoor, jailed in the UAE for "publishing false information", has launched a hunger strike in protest against prison conditions, Amnesty International said yesterday. Mansoor has been on hunger strike for over three weeks to protest detention conditions and his unfair trial, the London-based group noted. Mansoor, 49, was sentenced to 10 years in prison last year for what prosecutors said was the dissemination of misinformation in posts on Facebook and Twitter. — AFP

Bouteflika ally named Algeria's new president

ALGIERS: Algerian lawmakers appointed a regime stalwart as the country's first new president in two decades yesterday, dismayed protesters seeking sweeping change after the resignation of veteran leader Abdelaziz Bouteflika. The election of upper house speaker Abdelkader Bensalah as interim president follows constitutional rules but goes against the demands of demonstrators, who are pushing for him and other top politicians to stand down. "I want to work towards fulfilling the interests of the people," Bensalah, a trusted ally of Bouteflika,

told parliament on taking up the 90-day interim presidency. "It's a great responsibility that the constitution demands of me," the 77-year-old added.

Opposition parties refused to back the appointment of the seasoned establishment insider and boycotted the session, as thousands of students protested against him in Algiers. "They haven't heard us, we will continue to march!" they shouted, clutching hand-written placards and Algerian flags. For the first time in seven weeks police in the capital fired tear gas to try to disperse the protest by students, who were also hit with water cannon. "Peaceful, peaceful," they chanted, raising their arms in the air as they were surrounded by police.

Continued on Page 24



Abdelkader Bensalah



ALGIERS: Algerian security forces use a water canon to disperse students taking part in an anti-government demonstration yesterday. — AFP

Trump praises Sisi's 'great job'

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump yesterday praised the "great job" he said is being done by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. "I think he is doing a great job," Trump said as he sat down for talks with Sisi in the White House. "We have never had a better relationship between Egypt and United States than we do right now." Egypt is one of the biggest US strategic partners - an Arab country that made peace with top US ally Israel 40 years ago and a major recipient of US aid.

Trump also told reporters that the two had important things to discuss about military issues and trade. The US government and US lawmakers are particularly concerned about Egypt's reported signing of a \$2 billion deal with Russia to buy more than 20 Sukhoi SU-35 fighter jets as well as weapons for the aircraft.

In a letter released on Monday, key senators told Secretary of State Mike Pompeo there was strong support for the security relationship with Egypt but urged him to convey their concerns about democratic governance, political freedom, economic reforms and fundamental human rights in the country. "A strong and sustainable US-Egypt strategic partnership is vital for both countries but it requires Egypt to make a tangible effort to make those reforms," the letter, signed by the Republican chairman and the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as well as 15 other senators.

Later this month, Egyptians are expected to take part in a referendum that could see Sisi extend his rule beyond the end of his second term in 2022. Constitutional amendments would also increase the military's political role and bring the judiciary under Sisi's control. Ahead of Sisi's meeting with Trump, Human Rights Watch urged the US Congress to pressure Sisi, saying the referendum could "institutionalize authoritarianism". — Agencies



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump (right) shakes hands during a meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi in the Oval Office at the White House yesterday. — AFP

Ghosn accuses executives of 'backstabbing'

TOKYO: Carlos Ghosn has accused "backstabbing" Nissan executives of a "conspiracy" that led to his arrest, in a video revealed yesterday by his representatives. The video was recorded shortly before Ghosn was rearrested last week by prosecutors in Tokyo on new allegations. He had been out on bail while facing three charges of financial misconduct. In the brief video, played by his lawyers at a press conference, Ghosn repeated that he was "innocent of all the charges that have been brought against me."

He denounced a "conspiracy" against him and said events had been "twisted in

a way to paint a personage of greed, a personage of dictatorship". "This is about a plot, this is about conspiracy, this is about backstabbing," he said in the video. Ghosn did not however name specific individuals at Nissan, with his lawyer saying that the defense team had opted to cut parts of the recording that pointed the finger at particular figures.

Ghosn was rearrested by prosecutors last week while out on bail in Tokyo after they announced they were investigating new allegations against him. A court has extended his detention until April 14, when prosecutors can apply to hold him for an additional 10 days before they must release him unless they bring charges or file new allegations.

Prosecutors said Ghosn had been detained over transfers of Nissan funds totalling \$15 million between late 2015 and the middle of 2018 to a dealership in Oman. They suspect around \$5 million of



Carlos Ghosn

these funds were siphoned off for Ghosn's use, including for the purchase of a luxury yacht and financing personal investments. Prosecutors accuse Ghosn of having "betrayed" his duty not to cause losses to Nissan "in order to benefit himself."

Ghosn already faces three formal charges: two of deferring his salary and concealing that in official shareholders' documents, and a further charge of seeking to shift investment losses to the firm. Ghosn's case has defied expectations from the start, with his shock November 19 arrest after he landed in Tokyo on a private jet. He spent 108 days in a detention center in northern Tokyo before being dramatically released on bail of around \$9 million on March 6, emerging from incarceration dressed in a workman's uniform and face mask in an apparent bid to avoid the media.

He then lived in a court-appointed apartment in Tokyo without commenting on his situation despite huge international and Japanese media interest in his case that has shocked and surprised from the beginning. However, just as reports began to surface that he could

Continued on Page 24

Crown Prince's receptions



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received at Seif Palace His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohamad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. HHI also received Deputy



KUWAIT: His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohamad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita on the occasion of holding the ninth Kuwait-Morocco Joint Higher Committee meeting.— KUNA



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Nasser Bourita. — KUNA

Kuwait, Morocco discuss issues of mutual interest

KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held discussions, at Seif Palace yesterday, with the visiting Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Nasser Bourita on issues of joint concern. The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the two sides discussed topics of mutual interest, as scheduled in the Moroccan official visit to the country. — KUNA

Yemeni FM praises Amir's role at regional level

KUWAIT: Yemeni Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Yamani yesterday praised the eminent role played by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah regarding regional affairs. The minister was speaking during a visit to Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute, where he met the director, Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Sharekh. A statement issued by the institute quoted Al-Yamani as lauding Kuwait's effective humanitarian efforts for relieving the Yemeni people and expressed satisfaction that governments of Kuwait and the Yemeni have put behind the "bad stance by the former Yemeni regime regarding the crime of invading Kuwait," affirming that the Yemeni people admire the Kuwaiti assistance in various spheres in the country. Solving the Yemeni crisis should be based on outcome of the national dialogue, the GCC initiative and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216, he added. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Yemeni Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Yamani during a visit to Saud Nasser Al-Sabah Diplomatic Institute where he met Abdulaziz Al-Sharekh. — KUNA

Assistant FM heads Kuwait's delegation to MESA meeting

RIYADH: Assistant Foreign Minister for Affairs of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah headed Kuwait's delegation to the Middle East Strategic Alliance meeting in Riyadh on Monday. The meeting, which brought together representatives of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states, in addition to Jordan and the United States, comes within the framework of the efforts exerted to create a strategic Middle East alliance.

The alliance aims to boost security, stability and prosperity on the regional and international levels. The meeting comes after the MESA meeting held in Washington on February 21. The Kuwaiti delegation included



RIYADH: Assistant Foreign Minister for Affairs of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah heads Kuwait's delegation to the Middle East Strategic Alliance meeting — KUNA

Assistant Foreign Minister for Gulf Cooperation Council Affairs Ambassador Nasser Heji Al-Mezyan, several foreign ministry officials representing different sectors including those of the political, legal and anti-

terror affairs, and two representatives of the Ministry of Defense, namely Brigadier Mohammad Abdulaziz Al-Dhufairi and Lieutenant Colonel Sheikh Sabah Mohammad Al-Salem Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Kuwait calls for enforcing humanitarian law in conflicts

ABU DHABI: Secretary General of Kuwait National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, Justice Adel Al-Essa underlined the importance of enforcing international humanitarian law in armed conflicts. He was speaking to KUNA on sidelines of a conference on international humanitarian law, attended by the International Committee of Red Cross, Arab and Western legal experts.

Al-Essa said the conferees would discuss a mechanism to implement the humanitarian law in domestic conflicts and non-international armed conflicts, which were not subjected to international law for protection of civilians. Arab countries should offer legislations that compel commitment to the international humanitarian law because of regional conflicts. Kuwait is represented by Al-Essa and Director of Kuwait Institute for



ABU DHABI: Secretary General of Kuwait National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, Justice Adel Al-Essa. — KUNA

Judicial and Legal Studies Justice Uwayyed Al-Thuwaimer. — KUNA

IPU Standing Committee discusses development

DOHA: The Second Standing Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade discussed a resolution to be issued by the IPU Conference on promoting development, Kuwaiti MP Mohammad Al-Dalal said. In a press release, Al-Dalal noted that the committee, part of the 140th IPU Assembly session currently held in the Qatari capital Doha, discussed promoting development, reducing disparities between rich and poor countries, improving the economy and encouraging women and young people to engage in the economic process.

The talks also focused on the fact that global business and investment does not conflict with the environment, as well as the interest in work and employment, and the non-use of children or women in acts of violence or improper actions or those that lead to the degradation of their human dignity, he added. "We participated in this committee and made a number of observations in this regard in coordination with



Kuwaiti MP Mohammad Al-Dalal

a number of parliaments of the world," said the MP. Al-Dalal cited National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem's speech on the role of the IPU in promoting democracy, addressing the problems of peoples and raising the level of development in general, and address major issues in the world, especially the Palestinian cause. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society's (KRCS) chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer met with members of Tajikistan's Red Crescent Society. — KUNA photos



Members of Tajikistan's Red Crescent Society during their visit.

Tajik Red Crescent applauds Kuwait's altruistic endeavors

KUWAIT: Tajikistan's Red Crescent Society yesterday heaped praise on its Kuwaiti counterpart for the humanitarian aid the venerable charity has given to some of the world's most impoverished nations. Kuwait's philanthropic work is well-chronicled, as evident by His Highness the Amir's UN-bestowed moniker of, "Humanitarian Leader," Bahodur Kurbinyon told KUNA after his encounter with Kuwait Red Crescent Society's (KRCS) chairman Dr

Hilal Al-Sayer. The talks focused on plans for more cooperation between both charities as they seek to bring their goals to fruition, he added, highlighting their collective commitment towards serving humanity. KRCS believes that it is a humanitarian obligation to assist victims of natural disasters and crises, Al-Sayer said, emphasizing that the charity's relief efforts in Kuwait and abroad stem from its devotion to humanitarian causes. — KUNA

Canada a favored destination for Kuwaiti businesses

KUWAIT: Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf says Canada is a favored destination for Kuwaiti investments because there have been bilateral ties at this level since the 70s of the past century. Cooperation between Kuwait and Canada has continued since 50 years ago in the oil, energy, health and education sectors, the minister said, quoted in a statement by the ministry: marking conclusion of the First Kuwaiti-Canadian Economic Forum that kicked off, Monday, in the Canadian city of Toronto. Minister Al-Hajraf called for holding the second session at this level in Kuwait. The forum was organized to exchange views on boosting the Kuwaiti-Canadian commercial and business relations.

In related news, Boursa Kuwait wrapped up yesterday's session with the All Share Market Index shedding 56.22 points to settle at 57,254 points, with a 0.97 percent decline. Trade volume of this benchmark amounted to 235.18 million, done in 8,448 spot deals, valued at KD 39.3 million (USD 129.69 million) Main Market Index rallied by 26.8 points reaching the level of 5,004.8 points, by 0.54 percent, through share volume amounting to 166.5 million, with 4,562 cash transactions, at KD 11.10 million (USD 36.63 million). Premier Market Index bled up to 96.49 points, settling at the level of 61,048, by 1.5 percent, through share volume of 68.5 million, 3,886 dealings, valued at KD 28.2 million (USD 93 million). Meanwhile, the price of Kuwaiti oil went up USD 1.44 to USD 70.68 per barrel (pb) on Monday after being at USD 69.24 pb last Friday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said yesterday. The price of the Brent Blend crude also went up by 76 cents to USD 71.10 pb, the same case with the West Texas Intermediate, which went up by USD 1.32 to USD 64.40 pb. — KUNA

Local

Kuwaiti delegation participates in Indian Universities Ranking event in New Delhi

Issues related to accreditation of Indian engineers' certificates were discussed

NEW DELHI: A delegation from Kuwait Society of Engineers participated in the annual universities ranking event held in New Delhi that was attended by Indian President Ram Nath Kovind. In a statement to KUNA, Kuwait Ambassador to India Jassim Al-Najim said a Kuwaiti delegation comprising Chairman of Kuwaiti Engineers Society Engineer Faisal Dweeh Al-Attal and Ali Abbas Muhsini took part in the annual ranking event of India's National Institutional Ranking Framework and the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement being held in New Delhi.

Indian President Kovind released the India Rankings - 2019 and presented the India Rankings awards to the top eight institutions and also released the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements and presented awards to the top two institutions, the President's Secretariat said in a statement.

Addressing the gathering, Kovind said: "This is only a beginning. It is critical that there be a significant Indian presence in global rankings of leading universities and higher educational institutions in the very near future." He underlined the importance of improving the quality of education at all the levels and "ranking system of such a nature fosters a spirit of healthy compe-

tion between institutions." "In our country, recent expansion in higher education has widened access and improved equity. Even so, quality remains a concern. While there are islands of excellence, both in the public and private sectors, overall standards are uneven," he added.

On his part Engineer Faisal Al-Attal told Ambassador Al-Najim that his organization is keen to deepen cooperation with Indian side adding his interaction with the officials from the External Affairs and the Ministry of Human Resource Development and ranking agencies touched upon a number of issues including topics related to accreditation of Indian engineers' certificates. On his part, the ambassador hailed the positive role played by Kuwaiti Engineers Society and expressed his good wishes for enhanced services.

Engineer Faisal Dweeh Al-Attal presented mementos to the Ambassador and the diplomats for their services in cementing the organization's relations with their Indian counterpart are beneficial for the people of both the friendly nations. A delegation from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs had held talks with the Kuwait Society of Engineers in early March this year during their visit to Kuwait. — KUNA



NEW DELHI: The delegation of Kuwait Society of Engineers and Kuwait Ambassador to India Jassim Al Najim. — KUNA



Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah

Kuwait calls for multidisciplinary approach to combat arms trade

NEW YORK: Kuwait reiterated its commitment to the UN Program of Action on small arms and its International Tracing Instrument. This came in a speech by Kuwait's First Secretary Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to the UN at the "Arria-Formula" meeting on Western Balkans Small Arms. "Small arms and light weapons and their ammunition are the main causes of destabilization, exacerbation of regional tensions and the expansion of terrorist and criminal

networks," Al-Sabah said.

He expressed grave concern over the matter, which posed a threat to regional and international peace, security and stability. The Kuwaiti senior diplomat pointed to a series of measures taken by the international community to address this problem, including Security Council resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015). He stressed that the problem could be eliminated only through a multifaceted approach to address its root causes. — KUNA

Kuwait-Italian Business Council launches, welcomes members



By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Kuwait-Italian Business Council organized an inauguration ceremony to welcome new council members and prospective clients on Monday. The event was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Salwa and was attended by Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Giuseppe Scognamiglio. The embassy's General Director Raffaele Bertoni explained the council's mission and vision to new members.

"Our economic relations with Kuwait are excellent. In 2017, we were the country's largest partner and number one amongst all EU nations. This fell a bit in 2018, but once again we are beginning to see growth in



KUWAIT: Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Giuseppe Scognamiglio during the launch of KIB-Council. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

2019 and consolidating with many Italian companies that are now working in Kuwait," Scognamiglio told reporters. "We take pride in our technology and want to reach out to younger generations in Kuwait. We have organized several Italian expos that have displayed our products and showcased our technology. Though these expos, we have brought forth our culture and have enriched Kuwait with concerts and events. We are doing this to support Kuwait's 2035 vision," he said.

"With this business council, we hope to strengthen our cooperation. It's a private nonprofit organization, and both Kuwaitis and Italians are part of this group. Kuwaitis who wish to invest in Italy and Italians who

want to invest in Kuwait are all here with us. With the help of everyone, we can diversify and improve our relations further," Scognamiglio added.

Bertoni said that their goal is to facilitate the exchange of activities in a manner acceptable to both parties. "We want our presence to be felt not just in the business sector, but also in cultural exchanges. Since we are just starting up, we will first gather members and then proceed to talk about our vision and mission. We will discuss the agenda and timetable of the activities we want organized with the help of Italian Embassy. All sectors of business will be represented including the energy, transportation, finance and infrastructure sectors," he said.

Deputy premier receives Holy Quran for the blind

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah received the honorary President of the Kuwait Blind Society Fahd Abu Shaiba and Chairman Fayez Al-Azmi, along with other board members. The minister was also given a Braille edition of the Holy Quran. He later received the Head of the International Organization for Migration in Kuwait Iman Eraiqat

and US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest.

Fire in Saad Al-Abdullah

A fire broke out in a Saad Al-Abdullah house yesterday. Firemen rushed to the scene and rescued nine people who were trapped inside, including a few children. The blaze was eventually contained and put out. No injuries were reported.



KUWAIT: Interior minister with Braille editions of the Holy Quran.



KUWAIT: Interior minister receives US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman.



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina Claudia Alejandra Zampieri hosted a reception on the occasion of their National Day at Salwa Al Sabah Hall and theatre. Senior officials, diplomats, media persons attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah causeway at night. — KUNA/Mishal Alawadhi

Kuwait partakes in World Summit on Information Society

GENEVA: Kuwait is partaking in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in line with the approach to swap experience with other nations on best avenues for coping with the dramatic communication and information technologies.

The summit, ongoing since its onset on April 8, is an opportunity to get acquainted with solutions for tackling issues related to

cyber security, optimum benefits from internet services for government tasks, education and information as well as for the private sector, said Hassan Al-Mehaimeed, member of the Kuwaiti delegation, in remarks to KUNA.

Al-Mehaimeed has indicated that Kuwait is seeking to study closely other nations' applications of the top-notch telecommunication technology, G5. Meanwhile, Farah Al-Humaidi, member of the Kuwaiti delegation, affirmed that the delegation is studying experience of the other countries in overhauling the communication and information sectors.

The summit, co organized by 30 UN affiliated agencies, is a platform for the participants to examine latest and state of art technological and digital applications. — KUNA



Hassan Al-Mehaimeed

KIB supports local talents at 'Victoria Expo'

KUWAIT: As part of its support of youth initiatives and promotion of small businesses, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored 'Victoria Expo', an exhibition dedicated to showcasing Ramadan products, clothing and accessories created by talented young, female entrepreneurs and designers from across Kuwait and the GCC.

Victoria Expo aims at supporting small business owners by providing them with an excellent opportunity to collaborate, network and exchange ideas to enable their businesses to grow. The exhibition will feature the participation of a large number of local designers and a group of prominent social media personalities and influencers.

On his part, Senior Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at

KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "We are proud supporters of this exhibition, as it supports many talented young female entrepreneurs. KIB believes that women are central to a nation's economic growth, development and prosperity. For this reason, we continue to support and sponsor initiatives such as these that promote women's economic empowerment to expand their business potential."

KIB has always considered youth-based initiatives and entrepreneurial programs to be integral components towards empowering and nurturing up-and-coming generations. Accordingly, the Bank supports these initiatives as they provide youth with employment opportunities in the private sector and nurture the creative ideas of aspiring youth to build a brighter future for the country.



Dr Juliet Dinkha

ABK participates in Australian College of Kuwait's job fair



KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) yesterday announced its successful participation in the Australian College of Kuwait's job fair, which was held on 7th and 8th April 2019 at the College campus. ABK's participation reinforces its commitment

to playing an active role in supporting Kuwait's youth during the early stages of their work life. Commenting on the Bank's involvement, Ali Akbar, Executive Manager - Human Resources at ABK said, "ABK participates in these job fairs to sup-

port fresh graduates and to nurture their skills and abilities by increasing their knowledge on what the banking industry entails and the requirements needed to pursue a career in banking through the 'ABK Academy'."

Kuwaiti official highlights sports dimension of intellectual property

KUWAIT: Efforts to promote sporting excellence prove beneficial for the national economy and local athletics bodies, said a Kuwaiti official on Monday. The chief of the Kuwaiti Society for the Protection of Intellectual Rights Sheikh Salman Dawood Al-Sabah's remarks come

ahead of "World Intellectual Property Day" on April 26.

The day is recognized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to learn about the role that intellectual property rights play in encouraging innovation and creativity in various fields, including sports, the Kuwaiti official said. This year's celebration will focus more on the sports aspect of intellectual property rights, he revealed, saying Kuwait is looking forward to participate given its support for its athletes.

A self-funding UN agency with 191 member states, WIPO is the global forum for intellectual property services, policy, information and cooperation. It aims to lead the development of a balanced and effective international intellectual property system that enables innovation and creativity. — KUNA

Amir congratulates Kuwaiti improviser for Int'l honoring

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has addressed a cable of congratulations to Dr Salah Al-Najem for earning international honoring for his project on smart analysis of social media. Dr Al-Najem had been honored by the UN-affiliated International Communication Association (ICA) at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), held in Geneva on April 8-12. He has earned "the certificate of technological distinctiveness" for a project on computer analysis of social media outlets. Their Highnesses the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, respectively Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, addressed cables of identical content to the Kuwaiti improviser. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A delegation from the Malaysian magazine 'OIC Today' recently visited the Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) where they were received by KJA chairperson, Fatima Hussein and KJA secretary, Adnan Al-Rashed. The visiting delegation included the magazine's editor in chief, Mohammed Razef Ben Mohammed Raja, CEO, Dr Laila Bent Mohammed Raja and editing manager, Waheeda Bent Abdul Raheem.

Local

Kuwaiti, GCC officials meet to tackle full medical services



KUWAIT: Kuwait Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah speaks during the conference.



KUWAIT: First conference of the Gulf Health Council. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: Health officials of Kuwait and other member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) got together yesterday to kick off the First Conference of the Gulf Health Council. Kuwaiti Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah, in his statement during the conference, said that full medical coverage, which the event theme, constitutes one

of the objectives of the global sustainable development 2030 and tackles motherhood welfare, health of the newly born, children, communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Topics to be tackled during the convention, he continues, will be re-examined at the UN General Assembly on full health coverage, due in New York

on sidelines of the assembly's 74th session in September. Speaking on the meeting sidelines, Salman Al-Dekheel, the director general of the GCC health council, said the conferees would address challenges facing sustainable health care, role of the private sector, updating technological means and full health care.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, affirmed that the conference's main topic is full health services. Among the eminent participants in the conference is Abdulatif Al-Zayani, the GCC Secretary General, Saudi Minister of Health Toufic Al-Rabiaa, along with undersecretaries and other senior officials and stakeholders. — KUNA



KUWAIT: HH the Amir's representative, Acting Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attends the Quran contest. — KUNA

Kuwait's bedoons issue needs a just solution

By A Saleh and Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Secretary General of the Progressive Movement Ahmad Al-Dayeen said the issue of Kuwait's bedoons needs a humanitarian and just solution, adding the issue "was not solved by time or by racists, as it requires political will". Dayeen was speaking during a seminar titled "Between the issue of citizenry and Kuwait's bedoons" organized by the movement. He spoke about the principle of citizenry and its development in societies and Kuwait, and stressed the necessity of political will, besides a realistic study of the bedoon issue, "because they are people who are part of the country and society".

Dayeen said it is "not possible for racists to be a tool to resolve a humanitarian issue", and there should be a serious will for a humanitarian solution that ends the suffering and merges Kuwait's bedoons with the citizenry, adding there is no alternative to this regardless of time.

Tumor surgeries workshop

Head of the ENT department at Zain Hospital Dr Mutlaq Al-Saihan announced launching a workshop for head and neck tumor surgeries at the hospital in the period of April 7 to 10, 2019. The hospital will host one of the world's most prominent head and neck surgeons, who will operate on patients

to remove a thyroid tumor extending into the chest and a tongue tumor. Saihan added that the surgeries will be interactively covered by CCTV and broadcast inside the Zain auditorium, where the workshop is being held.

Reopened cancer ward

Director of Sabah medical zone Dr Mubarak Al-Ajmi reopened ward 6 (male) at Badriya Al-Ahmed Cancer Control Center after it was renovated. Speaking on the occasion, Ajmi said the ward includes 32 beds allocated for male patients receiving chemotherapy. KCCC Manager Dr Kholoud Al-Ali said ward 7 (female) at Badriya Al-Ahmed Center will also be reopened soon.



KUWAIT: The National Guard undersecretary, Lt General Hashem Al-Refa'i yesterday attended the inauguration of Ibn Al-Haitham Center's training programs 2019-2020. It was held under the slogan of 'Hala Development' and was supervised by PAAET.

Kuwait Quran contest typifies creativity

KUWAIT: The winners of Kuwait's international award for the recitation of the holy Quran should motivate youngsters to strive for excellence and success, said the minister of Awqaf yesterday, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Fahad Al-Shalaa's remarks came amid a speech he delivered to open the annual contest, sponsored by His Highness the Amir, which has enjoyed "much success" over the years.

Such virtues as altruism and tolerance

are inextricably linked to the Kuwaiti identity, said the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs' undersecretary Fareed Amadi. On the sidelines of the opening ceremony, His Highness the Amir's representative, Acting Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah unveiled an expo over the merits of Islam's holy text. Some 145 contestants from 75 nations are vying for the award, which also features a juvenile category. — KUNA

Wife assaulted by brother-in-law

KUWAIT: A Syrian woman lodged a complaint against her brother-in-law, accusing him of assaulting her. She provided a medical report to back her claims. Upon questioning, the Syrian did not explain why he acted the way he did.

100 Tramadol tablets

A Kuwaiti was sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) for attempting to smuggle out 100 Tramadol tablets from Kuwait airport's Terminal 5. A customs officer noticed the citizen was becoming nervous when he approached him, so his luggage was searched and the illicit tablets were found inside.

Damaged police car

Detectives were asked to look for a motorist who escaped after damaging a traffic police patrol car. Detectives will be checking camera footage in the vicinity of the accident to obtain the car's license plate number.

Police fined

Ministry of the Interior yesterday announced imposing penal disciplinary measures against a traffic policeman who appeared on video shouting abusive words through the patrol loudspeakers. MOI added that the policeman was suspended pending dismissal from the force.

Alcohol bottles

Ministry of Interior's PR and security media department announced that detectives recently managed to identify and arrest the person behind the empty alcohol bottles found in a garbage container in Shamiya. The department explained that they responded to a social media video showing a number of empty alcohol bottles in the garbage container. Detectives investigated the matter and managed to identify the person and arrested him pending further investigations. —Al-Anbaa

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International

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019



Journalists caught in the crossfire of Kashmir conflict

Border 'emergency': Problem Trump can't fix

Page 8

Page 9



KHARTOUM: Sudanese men gather atop a military vehicle with soldiers underneath a pedestrian crossing during a demonstration in front of the military headquarters yesterday. —AFP

Sudan police orders forces not to intervene

Western nations call for political transition plan

KHARTOUM: Sudan's police yesterday ordered its forces to avoid intervening against protesters as three Western nations threw their weight behind demonstrators' demands for a political transition plan in the country. The call by the police, following a policy of non-intervention by the military, came as thousands of protesters massed for the fourth straight day outside army headquarters in Khartoum, urging the top brass to back their call on President Omar Al-Bashir to resign.

The protests, which first began in December, pose the biggest challenge to Bashir in his three decades of iron-fisted rule. Thousands chanting "freedom, freedom" stayed camped outside army headquarters in Khartoum since Saturday, after security forces abandoned two separate bids to disperse them when soldiers fired in the air to protect demonstrators earlier in the day, witnesses said. "We call on God to preserve the security and calm of our country ... and to unite the Sudanese people ... for an agreement which would support the

peaceful transition of power," police spokesman said in a statement. It added that police had "ordered all its forces" not to "intervene against the citizens or peaceful rallies". The United States, the United Kingdom and Norway too called for a transition plan. "The time has come for the Sudanese authorities to respond to these popular demands in a serious and credible way," the embassies of the three countries said in a joint statement. "The Sudanese authorities must now respond and deliver a credible plan for this political transition."

Thousands have been rallying since Saturday outside the sprawling complex that also houses the president's residence in the largest demo since the protests erupted against a three-fold increase in bread prices in December. The demonstrations have since mushroomed in towns and cities across the northeast African country, widening their demands to call for Bashir to step down.

Early yesterday, members of the National Intelligence and Security Service

and riot police fired tear gas at the protesters in an abortive bid to end their sit-in, protest movement organizers said. "There was heavy firing of tear gas after which army soldiers opened the gates of the compound for protesters to enter," a witness told AFP. "A few minutes later a group of soldiers fired gunshots in the air to push back the security forces who were firing tear gas." A second witness said soldiers had intervened against the security agents.

Since the protests erupted in December, the armed forces have remained on the sidelines even as security agents and riot police have cracked down. Yesterday, the crowds could be seen hoisting soldiers into the air on their shoulders, and dancing and chanting with them. The demonstrators have called on the army to protect them from the deadly crackdown, during their four days camped outside its headquarters.

Hours later, security forces made a second attempt to clear the sit-in yesterday, witnesses said. They fired tear gas and shot in the air as they approached the area, wit-

nesses said, adding that soldiers intervened again firing in the air. Footage obtained by AFP in Paris showed security agents also firing in the air to clear the sit-in on Monday, an operation which also had to be abandoned after troops intervened. Troops can be seen firing machine-guns as protesters run in groups, some taking shelter behind army vehicles and chanting "Allahu Akbar (God is Greatest)".

'No chaos'

Defense Minister General Awad Ibnouf vowed the army would prevent any slide into chaos. "Sudan's armed forces understand the reasons for the demonstrations and is not against the demands and aspirations of the citizens, but it will not allow the country to fall into chaos," Ibnouf said on Monday, quoted by the official SUNA news agency. In a separate statement, army chief of staff Kamal Abdelmarouf said the military was "discharging its responsibility in securing and protecting citizens".

Officials say 38 people have died in

protest-related violence since December. After a meeting chaired by Bashir on Sunday, Sudan's security council said the demands of the protesters "have to be heard". Bashir - wanted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague on charges of war crimes and genocide connected with the suppression of a now 16-year-old ethnic minority rebellion in the western region of Darfur - took power in an Islamist-backed coup in 1989. He has responded to the unrest with tough measures that have seen protesters, opposition leaders, activists and journalists arrested.

Interior Minister Bushara Juma said seven protesters died and 15 were wounded on Saturday while 2,496 arrests were made. The umbrella group spearheading the protests has appealed to the army for talks on forming a transitional government. Omar El-Digeir, a senior member of the group, said protest organizers had formed a council to open talks aimed at agreeing a "transitional government that represents the wish of the revolution". —AFP

UN postpones Libya talks as violence rages

TRIPOLI: The United Nations yesterday postponed a Libyan national conference aimed at drawing up an election roadmap because of fighting raging near the capital, in another setback to peace efforts. The move came as the North African country's warring parties faced mounting international pressure to halt violence that has caused thousands to flee and left several dozen people dead. "We cannot ask people to take part in the conference during gunfire and air strikes," UN envoy Ghassan Salamé said. He expressed hope that the meeting, which had been scheduled for next week, would take place "as soon as possible".

UN chief Antonio Guterres called for an "immediate halt" to hostilities, after Tripoli's only functional airport was hit in an air strike on Monday by the forces of strongman Khalifa Haftar. After a night-time lull, fighting resumed on Tuesday morning south of the city, a security source said. The oil-rich country has been rocked by violent power struggles between an array of armed groups since the NATO-backed overthrow of dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

The UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) controls the capital, but its authority is not recognized by a parallel administration in the east of the country, allied with Haftar. The strongman's forces, who launched a surprise offensive on the Libyan capital last week, claimed responsibility for Monday's air raid on Mitiga airport. It caused no casualties,



TRIPOLI: Fighters from a Misrata armed group loyal to the internationally recognized Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) prepare their ammunition before heading to the frontline yesterday. — AFP

but left a metre-deep crater on a runway. Salame said the attack "constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law which prohibits attacks against civilian infrastructure".

Thousands displaced

Flights were suspended on Monday, but the airport was due to be reopened to night-time flights only late yesterday. Since launching his lightning offensive on Tripoli last Thursday, Haftar has defied international calls to halt the advance, including from the UN Security Council and the United States. The unity government's health ministry on Monday put the death toll in the fighting at 35. Haftar's forces have said 14 of their fighters have died. The UN said the clashes have displaced some 3,400 people. French President Emmanuel Macron

spoke with GNA leader Fayez Al-Sarraj to voice his "total opposition to the offensive against the capital and the endangering of civilian lives", the unity government said. The French presidency said in a statement that Macron had also been in contact with Haftar and in his calls expressed his "deep concern about the latest developments", adding it was "imperative" that the fighting ends immediately.

International efforts to end the Libyan conflict have repeatedly failed. Rival leaders agreed last year to hold elections before December 10, 2018 under a French plan, but that vote never materialized. The national conference, which had been scheduled for April 14-16 in the central city of Ghadames, aimed to fix dates for legislative and presidential elections, and work towards a new constitution. —AFP

Seven dead in attacks on Hindu leaders in India

BHUBANESWAR/SRINAGAR: At least seven people including a state legislator for India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were killed in two separate attacks yesterday, officials said, days before India begins a general election. Five people including BJP lawmaker Bheema Mandavi were killed in the eastern state of Chhattisgarh after Maoist militants detonated a bomb as Mandavi and his entourage were driving back from a campaign appearance, district magistrate Topeshwar Verma said.

Another senior police officer said the explosion left the car a twisted ruin, and the bodies of some victims unrecognizable. A second trailing vehicle was ambushed after the blast and came under heavy gunfire from guerrillas hiding in the surrounding jungle, he added. Attacks on Indian forces by jungle-based Maoist units are frequent and often deadly in Chhattisgarh, a poor and restive state. Four soldiers were killed in an ambush there just last week.

But this strike, less than 48 hours before voting begins in India's national poll, delivered a jolt to security as authorities prepare to hold the biggest election in history. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who hails from the same party as the slain state legislator, condemned the strike. "My tributes to the security personnel who were mar-

tyred," he posted on Twitter. "The sacrifices of these martyrs will not go in vain."

In a separate attack, unknown gunmen burst into a hospital in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir and killed Chandrakant Sharma, a regional leader of a Hindu group linked to BJP, along with his bodyguard, a police official said. Authorities imposed an indefinite curfew in the town of Kishtwar, bordering the contested Muslim-majority region of Kashmir claimed by both India and Pakistan, and sent troops to the area.

Sharma, 48, was a leader of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the influential parent organization of Modi's BJP. He was flown to a hospital at the Government Medical College in Jammu but died there, senior police officer Angeez Singh Rana said. "He was the centre of hope and trust for a patriotic society that is against terrorism," said Manmohan Vaidya, general secretary of the RSS.

Last November, Sharma's close associate Anil Parihar, 52, a leader of the BJP, and his brother Ajeet, 55, were also killed in Kishtwar. The issue of Kashmir looms large in India's multi-phase general election after a February suicide attack that killed 40 Indian paramilitary troopers was claimed by a militant group based in Pakistan. —Agencies

International

Erdogan's party wants rerun of Istanbul mayoral election

CHP's Imamoglu calls on AKP to accept result

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's party yesterday urged the Istanbul mayor's election be re-run after electoral authorities rejected a demand for a recount of all ballots cast in the city. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) had appealed after its Istanbul candidate narrowly lost in last week's local election in what would be a major setback after a decade and a half in power. Erdogan's party also lost the capital Ankara but the president on Monday questioned the Istanbul results and hinted at a rerun because he said the vote was marred by ballot box theft.

"We will take the path of extraordinary appeal... We will say that we want the election in Istanbul to be repeated," AKP's deputy chairman Ali Ihsan Yavuz told reporters in Ankara. Officials at the Supreme Electoral Council, known by its Turkish initials YSK, would have to decide whether the ruling party has a case for a rerun of the very tight Istanbul election. After Turkish media reported that the AKP had made the application to the YSK, Yavuz denied the reports as "untrue" on Twitter. "We are considering using the extraordinary appeal method in the days ahead."

The AKP won most votes nationwide in the March 31 vote, but voters appeared to punish the party in the two mayor cities partly because of an economic slowdown that followed Turkey's currency crisis last year. A defeat in Istanbul would be especially sensitive for Erdogan, who grew up in one of its working-class neighborhoods and built his political career after being Istanbul mayor himself in the 1990s.

Both opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) candidate Ekrem Imamoglu and the AKP's Binali Yildirim claimed victory soon after preliminary tallies showed them in a dead heat. Election officials later said Imamoglu was ahead but the gap has narrowed to around 15,000 votes after recounting of void ballots this week. Both won around four million votes in the election for Istanbul, the country's biggest city and economic hub.

AKP representative Recep Ozel said the difference between Imamoglu and Yildirim was now just 14,604 ballots, while the latest figures from the CHP suggested the difference was 14,463. Imamoglu, a little-known mayor of

one of Istanbul's districts who ran a low-key campaign, has already declared himself Istanbul mayor. He urged electoral authorities to make the "right decision" and asked the AKP to accept the result. "Istanbul urgently needs a new leadership," he told a press conference. "You lost, I understand those who made mistakes, who are worried about their seats. But that's enough, don't damage this country and this city ... don't play with Istanbul's destiny."

'Organized crimes'

Devlet Bahceli, leader of the right-wing MHP, the AKP partner, told reporters in Ankara there could be "consideration" of another election in Istanbul. He said the process would take 60 days. "After 60 days, there could be an election on the first Sunday," he said. Erdogan had personally campaigned hard in the city though he was not running in the election, and presented the vote as a matter of national survival. He put forward Yildirim, a former premier and AKP heavyweight, as the party candidate.

Soon after the election, AKP officials did



ISTANBUL: Main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) mayoral candidate Ekrem Imamoglu gives a speech during a press conference yesterday. — AFP

manage to appeal for a recount of void ballots after saying they had discovered massive irregularities in voting in Istanbul and Ankara.

But Yavuz said election council had rejected its call for all votes to be recounted in the Istanbul mayor's race. — AFP

Aussie wife, rights group condemn disappearances

KUALA LUMPUR: An Australian woman joined human rights groups yesterday in condemning the "forced disappearance" of six Egyptians, including her husband, since April after being deported from Malaysia. They also demanded to know their whereabouts and fear the men - accused by Malaysian police of being members of a North African terror outfit - could be tortured. Rights groups have consistently criticised Egypt's ongoing crackdown but the government insists the measures are necessary to maintain stability and counter-terrorism.

Australian Jodi Harris, 23, told reporters that her 28-year-old Egyptian husband Abdallah Mahmoud who was a student in Malaysia was

arrested by police on Feb 2. Malaysian police previously said six Egyptian men and a Tunisian man were detained in early February, alleging they planned to carry out terror attacks in other countries and subsequently deported them to their respective countries on March 5. But to date, no official response has been provided from Egyptian authorities regarding the six deported men.

"I want to know where is my husband. He is a victim of forced disappearance," she told reporters with tears rolling down her face. "He is not a member of Muslim Brotherhood or any terror organisations. But I know he will be tortured and ill-treated." Following the military ouster of president Mohamed Morsi in 2013, authorities have cracked down on dissent, targeting thousands of Islamists as well as secular activists. Egypt specifically outlawed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood deeming it a terror group in late 2013.

Harris said the Malaysian police are responsible for her husband's safety and demanded Egypt confirm they are holding him. "We want to know where is my husband and the others are," she said. This is the first time a family



KUALA LUMPUR: Australian Jodi Harris holds a photo of her missing Egyptian husband Abdallah Mahmoud yesterday. — AFP

member has come forward publicly while others have remained silent due to fear of possible action by authorities, activists said. Meanwhile, Latheefa Koya, rights group Lawyers For Liberty's executive director said the new government of Malaysia has failed to uphold human rights. — AFP

Arabs in Israel object to cameras at polling centers

UMM AL-FAHM, Israel: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's party sent monitors equipped with body cameras to a number of polling stations with Arab constituents on election day in Israel on, and Arab politicians condemned the move as voter intimidation. Asked about the use of cameras in polling stations, Israeli police said there had been "a number of suspected irregularities" in the north, where many Israeli Arabs - who comprise 21 percent of the population - live.

Netanyahu, head of the right-wing Likud party who opinion polls showed was neck-and-neck with a centrist rival, defended the filming, saying that cameras should be posted openly at voting stations

everywhere to ensure "a valid vote". In 2015 Netanyahu angered Israeli Arab leaders when he said that Arabs were flocking "in droves" to cast ballots. Analysts said the remark was an attempt to galvanise his right-wing base, and that it deepened longstanding mistrust among Arabs.

On election days in Israel, representatives of most parties sit at venues to check the pre-vote identification process. Voters are then handed an envelope and go behind a screen to cast their ballot in private. Arab lawmaker Ahmad Tibi said the cameras seen at polling stations on Tuesday were illegal, and were a "direct attempt to sabotage" the freedom to vote.

Jamil Baransi, Deputy Mayor of Reineh, an Arab town in northern Israel, said monitors from right-wing parties had brought cameras to all of 17 local polling centers. "We noticed that each one of these representatives had a camera on them, on their bodies," he said, adding that he believed the cameras were "designed to intimidate voters." — Reuters

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International

Border 'emergency': Problem US President Trump can't fix

Resignation of Homeland Security Secretary underscored the failure

WASHINGTON: The resignation of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen underscored the failure of President Donald Trump to halt uncontrolled immigration, one of the key promises of his presidency. More than two years after he took office, tens of thousands of mostly Central Americans travel across the southern US border each month, requesting asylum so that they cannot immediately be sent back home. Trump wants his officials to take a tougher stance, but is stymied by US laws protecting migrants and a Congress unwilling to change them.

How big is the problem?

In the first six months after Trump took office in January 2017, the US border patrol apprehended about 20,000 undocumented migrants each month, the lowest level in years. Since then the numbers have steadily increased. In the six months to February, apprehensions topped 60,000 a month, and March could have neared 100,000, officials say. The number of migrants arriving in families, and as unaccompanied children, has also soared, straining facilities to house and process them. Several have died while in US custody. Most are from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, and they often cross the US border from Mexico in groups numbering more than 100. Once over the border they turn themselves in to US officials and request asylum, citing poverty and violence back home.

Why can't they be turned back?

US and international laws guarantee that if a person crosses the border into the country and requests asylum, their case must be reviewed by an immigration judge. That means the migrants can stay inside the US

until their case is heard. Currently the backlog for immigration cases is nearing 900,000 with wait-times around two years. Released inside the United States to wait, most migrants are never seen again.

What does Trump want to do?

Trump has sought ways to deter migrants against the strong pull of better jobs and security that the US offers, but he has been frustrated by stiff political and legal barriers, including his own courts. A US federal judge on Monday blocked Trump's policy of returning asylum seekers to Mexico to wait out the processing of their cases, saying the Department of Homeland Security had overstepped its authority. The Republican president has demanded billions of dollars to build a wall along the border, but Congress has refused to fund it. In response he declared a national emergency to divert funds from military projects, but now faces legal challenges to that.

Trump wants Mexico to halt transiting migrants, but action by the Mexican government has been limited. Last week he threatened to shut down border ports to pressure Mexico economically to act. But US business and politicians from both parties told Trump that would damage the US economy as well. According to news reports, Nielsen resigned Sunday after opposing Trump's push to restart a former policy to separate migrant children from their families, which he believes was a strong deterrent to crossing the border. That policy has been ruled illegal in US courts and labelled a human rights violation by US and international rights activities.

Can aid help stem the flow?

The migrants from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador are often fleeing endemic poverty and vio-



BAJA CALIFORNIA: Members of the US secret service and border patrol agents on horseback, patrol near the US-Mexico border fence in preparation for the visit of US President Donald Trump to Calexico, California, as seen from Mexicali, Baja California state, Mexico. — AFP

lence. The United States has been pumping hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to the three countries each year. Most accounts are that the aid helps somewhat; migration from El Salvador in particular plummeted in recent years. Nielsen and the man Trump named to succeed her, Customs and Border Protection head Kevin McAleenan, both have spoken in favor of aid. "I

don't think we should shy away from investing heavily in Central America," McAleenan said last July. But illegal immigration has continued to rise. At the end of March an angry Trump cut off aid to the three countries. "We were paying them tremendous amounts of money. And we're not paying them anymore. Because they haven't done a thing for us." — AFP

News in brief

F-35 fighter disappears

TOKYO: A Japanese F-35 stealth fighter jet with one pilot on board disappeared from radar while on a training mission over the Pacific yesterday night, the defense ministry said. The fighter jet went missing at around 7:30 pm (10:30 GMT) as it was flying some 135 kilometers east of Misawa, northeastern Japan, a ministry spokeswoman said. It was not immediately clear if it had it crashed, the spokeswoman said, adding: "We are still trying to search for the aircraft." The fate of the pilot was not immediately clear. The plane lost contact about 30 minutes after taking off from Misawa Air Base, public broadcaster NHK said. The Self-Defence Forces and coastguard dispatched vessels to carry out rescue operations, NHK added. — AFP

Flash floods kill three

RIO DE JANEIRO: Flash floods caused by torrential rain killed at least three people in Rio de Janeiro, officials said yesterday, as emergency workers raced to rescue people trapped in buses, cars and buildings. Heavy rain overnight inundated parts of the city, turning some streets into raging rivers, toppling trees and sweeping away cars as the state emergency agency declared a crisis. The southern zone of the city, which includes Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon as well as several favelas, was the hardest hit. A man was killed after he was caught in flooding, while two women died when a house in a favela collapsed, Rio de Janeiro mayor Marcelo Crivella told reporters. At least one person is missing, GI reported. — AFP

'Extremist' vegans jailed

LILLE: A court in northern France handed jail terms to two vegan activists on Monday for a string of attacks on butchers, shops and restaurants selling meat, after a trial lawyers said was the first of its kind in the country. The court in the northern city of Lille handed the pair prison terms of 10 and six months over the attacks on businesses in the north of France from November 2018 to February 2019. The couple, a 23-year-old youth worker named Cyrille and a 29-year-old employee at a kindergarten called Mathilde, were convicted of criminal damage after breaking windows and starting fires at butchers, fishmongers, restaurants and shops in the area. They are likely to escape having to serve time behind bars under French law that allows jail sentences of less than two years to be converted into community-based service. — AFP

Head of US Secret Service to quit

WASHINGTON: The head of the US Secret Service, which guards President Donald Trump and visiting heads of state, is stepping down, the White House said Monday in the administration's latest sign of turbulence. "United States Secret Service director Randolph 'Tex' Alles... will be leaving shortly and President Trump has selected James M. Murray, a career member of the USSS, to take over as director beginning in May," Trump spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said in a statement. No reason was given for Alles' sudden departure. However, the former Marine general quickly denied that he had been pushed out. This appeared aimed at shooting down speculation in the US media that Alles may have been axed in connection to a security incident in March at Trump's Florida golf club and weekend retreat. — AFP

Between 3.6 and 7.6% of US boys have had sex before age 13

WASHINGTON: Between 3.6 percent and 7.6 percent of US boys reported having sexual intercourse before the age of 13 in a study published on Monday, but the prevalence varies widely by race, ethnicity and geographic location. The study in the latest issue of JAMA Pediatrics looked at the results of two surveys to determine how common it is for US boys to have sex before the age of 13. A total of 7.6 percent of the nearly 20,000 male high school in one study reported having sexual intercourse before the age of 13. In the second study — of 7,700 males between the ages of 15 and 24 years old — the figure was 3.6 percent.

The proportion varied widely by geography — from five percent in San Francisco to 12 percent in Houston, Texas, to 25 percent in Memphis, Tennessee. It also varied by race and ethnicity with non-Hispanic black and Hispanic male adolescents more likely than their white peers to have had sexual relations before becoming teenagers. In the survey of 20,000 male high school students, 19.0 percent of the non-Hispanic blacks reported having sexual intercourse before the age of 13, 4.4 percent of the non-Hispanic whites, 9.0 percent of Hispanics and 7.8 of those classified as others.

In the survey of 7,000 males between the ages of 15 and 24, the numbers were 10.5 percent for non-Hispanic blacks, 2.2 percent for non-Hispanic whites, 3.4 percent for Hispanics and 1.6 percent for others. The authors of the study noted that while the overall numbers differed in the two surveys they showed similar differentials by race and ethnicity. "Broad cultural scripts about masculinity and sex hold that men should

Nigeria twin town ponders cause of multiple births

IGBO ORA, Nigeria: In a dusty school playground in southwest Nigeria, the rows of children lined up to return to their classrooms are dotted with the faces of identical twins. Sights like this can be seen everywhere in Igbo Ora, where a banner welcomes visitors to the "twins capital of the world". Twins are common in the Yoruba ethnic group that dominates this part of Nigeria. A 1970s study by a British gynaecologist found that around 50 sets of twins were born out of every 1,000 births in the southwest — one of the highest rates of twin births in the world.

In Yoruba culture twins are so common that they are traditionally given specific names. They are called either Taiwo or Kehinde depending on whether they were born first or second. But even for Yoruba people, Igbo Ora is considered to be exceptional. Among the nearly 100 secondary school children assembled at the end of their break there were nine sets of twins. "There are so many

twins because of the okra leaf that we eat," said 15-year-old Kehinde Oyedepo, one of the twins, repeating a view commonly held in the town.

The leaves are used to make a stew that is popular in Igbo Ora. Others have pointed to the popularity of Amala — a local dish made from yams and cassava flour. One theory is that yams prompt the production of gonadotropins, a chemical agent that stimulates the production of eggs. Ekujumi Olarenwaju, an obstetrician gynaecologist based in Lagos, around 100 miles (160 km) away, believes the causes of the phenomenon lie elsewhere because the same kind of yam is eaten elsewhere in the world without the same result.

"Thus far scientifically, no one can say this is the reason," said Olarenwaju. "One of the plausible reasons is the hereditary aspect of it because maybe over the years they inter-marry, they now have that gene being pooled and concentrated in that environment," he said. But the women who sell piles of okra leaves at a town market are quick to disagree. They said local traditions over how the leaves are consumed were crucial. For example, a stew made from the leaves should be eaten immediately and never stored. Oyenike Bamimore, who sells the bread, said she was living proof that the diet was the cause. "Because I eat okra leaves a lot, I gave birth to eight sets of twins," she said. — Reuters



WASHINGTON: A boy drives a Ford off road simulator at the Washington Auto Show at the Walter E Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC. — AFP

start having sex early and have sex often," the study's authors said.

"For young men of color, particularly black males, racist stereotypes of hypermasculinity may also contribute to expectations of early sexual initiation." The study found that boys whose mothers did not have a college degree were more likely to report having had sexual intercourse before the age of 13. Among those aged between 18 and 24 who reported having sex before the age of 13, 8.5 percent characterized it as unwanted, 37 percent said they had mixed feelings about it and 54.6 percent described it as wanted.

Leap in cyber attacks against elections in OECD countries

OTTAWA: Cyber attackers targeted half the member states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that held national elections in 2018, the agency that monitors Canada's telecoms networks said Monday. "The proportion of elections targeted by cyber threat activity has more than tripled" since 2015, said the Canadian Security Establishment (CSE), which warned of a further spike this year. "A small number of nation-states have undertaken most cyber threat activity against democratic processes worldwide," the center said, mostly pointing the finger at Russia.

The OECD is a grouping of 36 of the world's richest nations that describe themselves as committed to democracy and the free market, founded in 1961 to promote trade. The report said voters were now the target of cyber activity rather than political parties, candidates or their staff, accounting for more than half of global activity in 2018. "This shift seems to have started in 2016, which is likely due in part to the perceived success among cyber threat actors of Russia's cyber interference activity against the 2016 United States presidential election," the report said.

"These findings underscore the need for providing comprehensive sex education that is culturally informed and inclusive before an individual's first sexual encounter and ensuring that health care practitioners discuss sex with their male patients starting during middle school years or earlier," the study's authors said. The study did not look at girls' sexual behavior but cited other research as saying that boys were more than twice as likely as girls to experience sexual intercourse before the age of 13. The study was conducted by Laura Lindberg of the Guttmacher Institute in New York and other researchers. — AFP

The goals of the cyber attackers was to "manipulate voters' opinions and behaviors," the report said. Foreign interference also aimed in the longer term to "promote foreign economic, ideological, military interests" and to "reduce confidence in democracy [and] create divisions in international alliances." In Canada, where a general election is due in October, the CSE said it was "very likely" that voters would encounter foreign cyber interference, although not on the scale of Russian meddling in the US.

The cyber interference would not be able to target the election itself, which is largely done using paper ballots at the federal level, it said. But the report added that foreign state-sponsored media had "disparaged Canadian cabinet ministers." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau last week warned of the risk of Russian meddling in the elections. His minister for democratic institutions, Karina Gould, said Monday she had discussed the issue with the largest social media organizations, but said they were doing too little to address the threat. "There is a lot left to be desired in terms of how seriously they're taking these issues," she said, although she did note that Facebook had been more cooperative than others. Facebook said it was banning Faith Goldy, a prominent commentator who has been described as a white nationalist, as well as other far-right activists. The ban also applies to Instagram, which Facebook owns. "Individuals and organizations who spread hate, attack, or call for the exclusion of others on the basis of who they are, have no place on our services," a Facebook spokesperson told HuffPost. — AFP

International

Attacked by both sides: Journalists caught in the crossfire of conflict

Conditions of journalists in Kashmir worst in decades

SRINAGAR: Most nights in recent weeks, journalist Asif Qureshi's phone vibrates with a message from a known number of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), a Pakistan-based militant group that killed 40 Indian paramilitary policemen in a suicide attack in Kashmir in February: "Allah always keeps you in safety and security". "They want to tell us that we are monitoring you," said Qureshi, the Kashmir bureau chief for Delhi-based TV channel ABP News. He is one of the many journalists caught in the crossfire - metaphorically and literally - between the Indian government and militant groups fighting for India-controlled Kashmir's independence.

Both sides are making increasing attempts to control the flow of information, journalists say, after the conflict in Kashmir, a Muslim-majority region claimed by both India and Pakistan, escalated dramatically over the past few months. India blames Pakistan for harboring JeM, a claim Islamabad denies, and both nuclear-armed nations said they carried out air strikes and downed enemy jets after the suicide attack, to the alarm of world powers.

The present situation is the most dangerous and difficult for journalists in decades, according to dozens of journalists in Kashmir Reuters spoke to in recent weeks. In the past two years, journalists in the scenic Himalayan valley have been threatened by militants, blinded by pellet guns fired by security forces, and murdered by unknown assailants. Many reporters say that self-censorship is often the only option to keep working safely in the region. "We have become a punching bag for both sides," Qureshi said.

Local pressure

Srinagar's Press Enclave, where many newspapers and TV channels have offices, has been under armed guard since Shujaat Bukhari, the editor of several newspapers and a high-profile moderate in Kashmir, was shot dead outside his office by unknown gunmen in June 2018. No one has been charged in connection with the crime.

The physical danger they face is a major reason why India is one of the worst places in the world to be a journalist, according to interna-

tional monitor Reporters Without Borders, that currently ranks it 138th out of 180 countries on its press freedom index. Local newspapers, that rely overwhelmingly on government advertisements for revenue, are also facing increasing financial pressure. Last month, the government stopped advertising in two of the largest newspapers, Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Reader, to protests from the Kashmir Editors' Guild.

"We have written to the government of India for a reason, but so far they have not provided it," said Sajjad Ansari, the vice president of the Guild and editor of the Kashmir Observer,



Journalists facing rising hostility from locals, security forces

another leading newspaper. "Editors assume it is because the papers carried stories on human rights and other material critical of the authorities. On March 10, fifteen newspapers, making up 95 percent of all sales in Kashmir, carried blank front pages in protest at the advertising decision.

It has had little effect. On April 2, the government pulled advertising from a third paper, Kashmir Uzma, according to the Guild. Gulzar Ahmed Shabnam, the director of information for Jammu & Kashmir state, declined to comment on the withdrawal of advertising. "I don't think the independent voice can survive here," said Morifat Qadri, the editor of Aafaq, an Urdu-language newspaper, of the situation in Kashmir. "An editor either has to surrender or leave this job."

National tension

Reporters working for national outlets like Qureshi say they are facing renewed hostility

from local people, who are often sympathetic to separatist groups and resent the Indian media's increasingly nationalist stance. India goes to the polls on a rolling basis from April 11 to May 19 in a general election that is being dominated by the tensions with Pakistan, to the benefit of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, pollsters say. "Everybody knows the (national) media is slanted towards the establishment right now," Qureshi said. "Right now you have to watch your back." Qureshi said locals often become aggressive when they saw the ABP News badge on his equipment, recognizing it as a national outlet.

His cameraman, Arshad Hussein Shah, said he has been injured more times than he can count by security forces, often in scuffles involving batons and rifle butts. But injuries can sometimes be more serious. In 2016, freelance photographer Zohaib Butt was covering a clash between protesters and security forces. A policeman came towards him. Butt showed the man his cameras, but he raised a shotgun loaded with metal pellets, and fired in his direction from less than 20 metres away. The photographer sustained severe eye injuries.

"For the first five seconds I was shouting like a dog," Butt said. "It was like looking at a broken mirror." Butt is one of several journalists injured over the last two years by pellet guns used by the security forces. In January, four were hit in a similar incident. "Sometimes the authorities go beyond their powers and I will be investigating these cases," said Shabnam, who became the state's director of information in February.

A spokesman for Kashmir's police force declined to comment on Butt's case, and on injuries to journalists generally. After multiple rounds of surgery, Butt is still partially blind, unable to work as a photojournalist. The man who shot him has never been identified. Hundreds of metal pellets are still lodged under his skin, and he struggles with depression. "Every day I relive those five seconds of my life. Sometimes when I am taking a shower I cover my eyes and think why didn't I do it at the time," he said. "I trusted the cop that he wouldn't shoot." — Reuters

Press conference by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

JAPAN: Today, a Cabinet decision was taken on a Cabinet Order to change the name of the era. The new era name is "Reiwa."

This was taken from wording appearing in the Manyoshu: "In this auspicious month of early spring, the weather is fine and the wind gentle. The plum blossoms open like powder before a mirror while the orchids give off the sweet scent of a sachet." Moreover, this name "Reiwa" includes the meaning of culture coming into being and flourishing when people bring their hearts and minds together in a beautiful manner.

The Manyoshu is Japan's oldest poetry anthology, compiled more than 1,200 years ago. It is also a Japanese work containing poems composed by people from a wide range of strata in society, including not only Emperors, Imperial Family members, and nobility, but also soldiers and farmers, and symbolizes Japan's rich national culture and long-established traditions.

History from time immemorial, highly respectable culture, and natural beauty unique to each of our four seasons. We will pass down these national characteristics of Japan firmly to the next era. Just as the plum blossoms announce the arrival of spring after the harsh cold of winter and bloom splendidly in all their glory, all Japanese will be able to make their own blossoms come into full bloom, together with their hopes for tomorrow. We decided on "Reiwa" with the hope that Japan will be just such a nation. On peaceful days when we can foster culture and appreciate natural beauty, full of heartfelt gratitude, we will together with the Japanese people carve out a new era that is brimming with hope. In deciding on the new era name, we renewed our determination to do this.

On May 1, His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince will accede to the Imperial throne, and this new era name will be used from that day forward. I ask for the understanding and cooperation of the people on this. The government is taking all possible measures to prepare for this historic succession to the Imperial throne from a living Emperor — the first such instance in approximately 200 years — to take place smoothly, and for the Japanese people to celebrate the day with one accord.

Era names have, together with the long-standing tradition of the Imperial Household and a profound wish for the peace and security of the nation and the well-being of the people, woven together the history of our nation that spans almost 1,400 years. Era names are also integrated into the hearts and minds of the Japanese and support the Japanese people's inner sense of unity. It is my sincere wish that this new era name will also be widely accepted by the public and take root deeply within the daily lives of the Japanese people.

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Business

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019

12 Global bond yields drop on growth concerns, prospect of looser policy**13** China state planner adds bitcoin mining, traders to elimination list**14** Share rally cools as Trump turns trade heat on Europe

BANGKOK: Two men prepare to transport sacks of scrap plastic bottles for recycling in Bangkok yesterday. — AFP

IMF cuts global growth estimate to 3.3%

Global economy loses steam, faces a 'delicate moment'

WASHINGTON: The global economy is facing a "delicate moment," beset with risks as the recovery loses steam amid trade tensions, Brexit and other factors, the International Monetary Fund warned yesterday. The IMF's World Economic Outlook once again downgraded global growth to 3.3 percent for 2019, two tenths lower than the global crisis lender forecast in January and four tenths lower than October.

And while world growth is expected to pick up in the second half of this year and hit 3.6 percent in 2020, many things will have to go right for that to happen, including a resolution of President Donald Trump's trade battle with China. The quarterly report "projects a slowdown in growth in 2019 for 70 percent of the world economy," IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath said in a statement. The euro area is likely to slow sharply, particularly in Germany where the GDP forecast was cut by a half point, and Italy which has slowed to a virtual standstill, according to the quarterly report.

And amid the turmoil over its exit from the European Union, the IMF downgraded the outlook for Britain this

year and next. Emerging economic powers China and India continue to show the highest growth rates, 6.3 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively. Beijing has rolled out a series of fiscal stimulus measures to counteract the hit from the US trade war but India's growth was downgraded by two tenths of a point. And while the recent signs that officials in Washington and Beijing are engineering a trade deal have calmed some of the nerves in financial markets, the solution is by no means certain.

'Precarious' recovery

The report cautions that downside risks to the outlook continue to dominate: Trade tensions could flare up again, and there is risk of a "no-deal Brexit withdrawal" or persistent slowing of economic activity. "This is a delicate moment for the global economy," Gopinath said. "This recovery is precarious and predicated on a rebound in emerging market and developing economies," including Argentina and Turkey.

While a rebound is possible if policymakers avoid all the potential pitfalls, she warned that "if, however, any of

the major risks materialize, then the expected recoveries in stressed economies, export-dependent economies, and highly-indebted economies may be derailed." The challenge to policymakers is they have little ammunition with which to counteract a slowdown since interest rates are low and most central banks already have stopped raising or started cutting rates, while debt levels are high, crimping the ability to provide fiscal stimulus.

"Given these risks, it is imperative that costly policy mistakes are avoided," she said, urging cooperation among governments — especially in trade conflicts — to avoid fueling uncertainty that could contribute to a slowdown. The fund said avoiding such "policy missteps ... needs to be the main priority," including "distortionary barriers" to trade.

Slower trade

The broad-based slowdown, most notably in advanced economies, was larger than expected and apparently due to the "souring of market sentiment" partly due to the trade tensions, the IMF said. Trump's aggressive trade

policies, largely, but not exclusively, aimed at China, left US products open to retaliation in the form of steep tariffs. But inflation pressures remained muted despite the new duties, which raised the costs of hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of imports.

Global trade growth has slowed sharply from its peak in late 2017, and expectations for future business activity have weakened, pointing to slowing momentum ahead, the report said. Growth in advanced economies next year presents a mixed picture, the United States and Japan are expected to slow further next year, with US GDP adding 1.9 percent, and Japan's just 0.5 percent, half of this year's rate. But with temporary factors waning, Germany's growth is projected to accelerate to 1.4 percent and Italy to 0.9 percent. Spain is the strong performer in the euro area with 2.1 percent growth in 2019, and 1.9 percent in 2020. In the major emerging markets, China's expansion will slow to 6.1 percent, while India continues to accelerate to 7.5 percent. The IMF downgraded the outlook for Mexico sharply, cutting a half point off the estimate to 1.6 percent this year and 1.9 percent in 2020. — AFP

Remittances to the developing world hit record in 2018

WASHINGTON: Money transfers to poor and developing countries hit a fresh record in 2018 and should become their largest source of external financing this year, the World Bank said yesterday. But many banks and money transfer operators charged too much, cutting into the gains of migration, the bank said in a statement. Migrant workers and others sent home an estimated \$529 billion to low- and middle-income countries last year, up 9.6 percent from the year before, which had also been a record.

Such money transfers should hit \$550 billion this year, making them the largest source of external finance, according to the bank. Money transfers were up 12 percent to \$131 billion for South Asia and almost seven percent for East Asia, reaching \$143 billion. Sub-Saharan Africa saw a 10 percent increase at \$46 billion, according to the bank. The United States econ-

omy grew strongly while outbound flows from Gulf countries and Russia also rose, according to the bank, which said this explained much of the gains.

Excluding China, the remittances amounted to \$462 billion, significantly more than foreign direct investment over the period, which stood at \$344 billion. Among the development goals set by the United Nations in 2015 was reducing the cost of remittances to three percent. However, banks on average were charging 11 percent in the first quarter of 2019 while post offices charged seven percent. "The high costs of money transfers reduce the benefits of migration," Dilip Ratha, the report's lead author, said in a statement.

"Renegotiating exclusive partnerships and letting new players operate through national post offices, banks and telecommunications companies will increase competition and lower remittance prices." Another factor making money transfer costs rise are banks' efforts to avoid money-laundering and terrorism finance. Some banks simply cease working with some money transfer organizations deemed too risky, according to the report. "Banks indicate that risks to their reputation... deter them from having correspondent bank accounts," it said. — AFP

Airbus v Boeing: Only the lawyers win

GENEVA: The tit-for-tat legal battle between Airbus and Boeing at the World Trade Organization could, after 15 years, be fairly described as epic. When Airbus scored a major win in 2016, the company's own chief executive Tom Enders said the protracted WTO tussle "benefits only the armies of lawyers both sides employ for more than a decade".

The world's two aviation giants do not face each other directly at the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body, with Boeing represented by the United States and the European Union acting for Airbus. The hostilities have continued unabated since 2004, when Washington declared that a 1992 US-EU agreement governing subsidies in the aircraft industry was dead. Here is a summary of the cases that have been brought to date, as fears rise that the row could escalate after the US threatened to impose \$11.2 billion in tariffs on European products to counter support allegedly given to Airbus.

US vs Airbus

Washington fired the first shot in 2004, accusing Britain, France, Germany and Spain of providing illegal subsidies and grants to support the production of a range of Airbus products. In

2010, WTO judges delivered a mixed ruling, saying some of the support given to Airbus was prohibited while other parts were permitted under international trade law. The next eight years saw appeals and counter-appeals over both the substance of the rulings and then over whether the EU had adequately amended its behavior to comply with the rulings. The latest compliance ruling is not expected before the end of this year.

EU vs Boeing

In a complaint opened in June 2005, the EU alleged that Boeing had received \$19.1 billion worth of prohibited subsidies from 1989 to 2006 from various branches of the US government. WTO judges said in a 2012 ruling that roughly a third of the subsidies in question were illegal. The US said it would make changes to comply with ruling. Various disputes were then filed over several years, largely over the question of whether US federal and state governments were actually complying with the ruling. Last month, WTO judges found that the US had failed to fully remove all the prohibited subsidies.

Brussels v Washington state

In 2014, the EU initiated a third case challenging tax breaks and other incentives provided by Washington state to support production of Boeing's 777X, which is set to take to the skies in 2020. It has been dubbed the "baby Boeing" case, given its narrow scope. In 2017, WTO judges said Washington state's subsidies were legal in a decision that was not subject to appeal. — AFP

Business

China wants to ban bitcoin mining, traders - say move not a surprise

State planner adds bitcoin mining to elimination list

SHANGHAI: China's state planner wants to eliminate bitcoin mining in the country, according to a draft list of industrial activities the agency is seeking to stop in a sign of growing government pressure on the cryptocurrency sector. China is the world's largest market for computer hardware designed to mine bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, even though such activities previously fell under a regulatory grey area.

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said on Monday it was seeking public opinions on a revised list of industries it wants to encourage, restrict or eliminate. The list was first published in 2011. The draft for a revised list added cryptocurrency mining, including that of bitcoin, to more than 450 activities the NDRC said should be phased out as they did not adhere to relevant laws and regulations, were unsafe, wasted resources or polluted the environment.

It did not stipulate a target date or plan for how to eliminate bitcoin mining, meaning that such activities should be phased out immediately, the document said. The public has until May 7 to comment on the draft. State-owned newspaper Securities Times said yesterday the draft list "distinctly reflects the attitude of the country's industrial policy" towards the cryptocurrency industry.

"The NDRC's move is in line overall with China's desire to control different layers of the rapidly growing crypto industry, and does not yet signal a major shift in policy," said Jehan Chu, managing partner at blockchain investment firm Kenetic. "I believe China simply wants to 'reboot' the crypto industry into one that they have oversight on, the same approach they took with the Internet." Other bitcoin traders said they were not surprised by the government's move. "Bitcoin mining wastes a lot of electricity," said one Chinese bitcoin trader who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the situation.

Crackdown continues

Last week, the price of bitcoin soared nearly 20 percent in its best day since the height of the 2017 bubble, and breaking \$5,000 for the first time since mid-November, though analysts and traders admitted they were puzzled by the surge. Bitcoin, which

accounts for around half of the cryptocurrency market, was down by around 1.4 percent on Tuesday, while other major coins such as Ethereum and Ripple's XRP also fell by similar amounts.

Traders in London said it was unclear how much the Chinese move was weighing on the market. The cryptocurrency sector has been under heavy scrutiny in China since 2017, when regulators started to ban initial coin offerings and shut local cryptocurrency trading exchanges. China also began to limit cryptocurrency mining, forcing many firms - among them some of the world's largest - to find bases elsewhere.

Nearly half of bitcoin mining pools - groups of miners that team up for economies of scale - are located in the Asia-Pacific, a Cambridge University study said in December. "Half of the network is probably located in China," said Alex de Vries, a consultant with PwC in Amsterdam who specialises on blockchain and researches cryptocurrency mining. He added that the number of mining facilities in the world is still limited to several hundred.

Countries with relatively cheap electricity have emerged as major hosts of cryptocurrency mining. Mati Greenspan, an analyst with eToro in Israel, said any ban by China would cut a key supply of cheap electricity for the industry and raise the average cost to mine bitcoin. Chinese companies are also among the biggest manufacturers of bitcoin mining gear, and last year three filed for initial public offerings in Hong Kong, looking to raise billions of dollars. However, the two largest, Bitmain Technologies, the world's largest manufacturer of bitcoin mining gear, and Canaan Inc, have since left their applications lapse.

People familiar with the deals said that Hong Kong regulators had many questions about the companies' business models and prospects. Bitmain declined to comment on the NDRC's proposal to ban bitcoin mining. Canaan did not respond to requests for comment. According to Canaan's IPO prospectus filed last year, sales of blockchain hardware primarily for cryptocurrency mining in China were worth 8.7 billion yuan (\$1.30 billion) in 2017, 45 percent of global sales by value. The prospectus forecasts that sales in China would rise to 35.6 billion yuan by 2020. — Reuters

Turkish Airline's transition to its new home, Istanbul

KUWAIT: With the "Great Move" representing one of the most significant cornerstones of the Turkish Aviation history, Turkish Airlines nearly concluded its gradual move to Istanbul Airport that started following the official opening back on October 29. Starting on April 5 Friday at 03:00, the final moving operation is at 96 percent completion, 12 hours earlier than the projected 45 hours plan. The moving has concluded on April 6 Saturday at 20:00, flag carrier airline started a new era at its new home, Istanbul Airport, which will be the new center of the global aviation sector.

On the "Great Move" process which included saying farewell to Ataturk Airport, home to Turkish Airlines throughout its 86 years of history and moving to its new home base, Istanbul Airport, also known as "Monument of Victory", Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee, M Ilker Ayci said: "Currently the biggest airport project of the world, this enormous facility

will be the home of the resounding local and global growth of Turkish Airlines in future while becoming the most important driving force behind our growth with its state of the art physical capabilities and capacity."

"Successfully concluding its mission of being the home of our brand throughout our 86 years of history, saying farewell to Ataturk Airport was a highly saddening experience for us. However, our brand's unstoppable growth and progress especially during over the last 15 years forced us to make this decision to part ways. As Turkish Airlines became unable to fit its mold with its efficient growth performance, the need for a new home that will support its development and open its way with capacity and other physical capabilities was born.

Starting with the originator behind the idea of this monumental project and its biggest supporter our President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, our Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, IGA consortium, our various business partners, every single one of our family and everyone else who offered their toil and support, we are grateful to those all for bringing us this bundle of opportunities, which will allow us to carry the passenger and flight experience into a whole new platform. In addition to this, I would like to also express my great pleasure and honor of announcing that the future of the global aviation will develop with Turkish Airlines at its center with our new home, and new face of our brand."



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Business

Share rally cools as Trump turns trade heat on Europe

Aramco sources say demand for debut bond tops \$100 billion

LONDON: April's stocks rally risked running out of puff yesterday, as a US threat to slap tariffs on hundreds of European goods and expectations of another chunky chop to the IMF's global growth forecasts tested investors' stamina. Asia had eked out a 8-month high overnight but Europe and Wall Street futures were both left flat after Donald Trump welcomed the World Trade Organization's finding that Europe's subsidies to planemaker Airbus had hurt the United States.

The US "will now put tariffs on \$11 Billion of EU products!" Trump tweeted. "The EU has taken advantage of the US on trade for many years. It will soon stop!" Airbus' shares dropped as much as 2.5 percent. Many of its

key suppliers lost between 0.7 percent and 1.2 percent, though most of Europe's big bourses managed to keep their levels broadly flat.

Aberdeen Standard Investment's head of global multi-asset strategy Andrew Milligan said: "Signals like this just remind people that the strategic rivalry between the US and other countries is serious and is not going to go away." The day's other focus was set to be the International Monetary Fund's half-yearly forecasts, which are likely to reinforce the message that trade spats are contributing to slowing the global economy.

The Fund is expected to make quite a sizeable cut to its growth number and Germany's 10-year bond yield stayed just below zero percent on bets interest rates

are set to stay extremely low globally. In the FX market, sterling nudged higher as UK Prime Minister Theresa May met Germany's Angela Merkel and France's Emmanuel Macron to ask for another Brexit delay. The Australian and Canadian dollars, Norwegian crown and Russian rouble also rose as a surge in oil prices to five-month highs lifted most other commodity-linked currencies. Saudi Arabia's state-owned oil firm also set the commodity market frothing on reports it had received more than \$100 billion (£76.5 billion) of orders for its debut international bond, which was only supposed to raise \$10 billion.

Brent, the global oil benchmark, rose as high as \$71.34 a barrel, the highest since

November, though by 1230 GMT it had eased back to \$71.00. US WTI crude was at \$64.28, having earlier been at \$64.77. Oil prices - up more than 40 percent this year - have jumped on expectations that global supplies will tighten due to fighting in Libya, OPEC-led output cuts and US sanctions against Iran and Venezuela. "Concerns over the potential squeezing of supply in Libya following the escalation of violence there are adding fresh impetus," analysts at JBC Energy wrote.

Plane speaking

The flat start that looked likely for Wall Street came as focus shifted to the start of the first-quarter earnings season later this week, and as European officials warned that if

Trump targeted Airbus, they would hit Boeing. In emerging markets, eyebrows were raised too as Kazakhstan said it was bringing forward presidential elections due to be held next year to June. Former President Nursultan Nazarbayev stepped down last month after three decades in power.

The additional surprise yesterday was that his daughter Dariga Nazarbayeva has no plans to run in the June vote, according to her aide. That leaves interim president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in the driving seat, but may fuel speculation of a power struggle. At the same time, "it will reduce the uncertainty that was otherwise going to sit there for the next 18 months," said Renaissance Capital's head of macro-strategy Charles Robertson. — Reuters

IMO 2020 heralds New chapter for fuel oil

KUWAIT: The Middle East is well positioned to adapt to the start of the biggest shift in the global shipping industry since the late 1800s - which starts in just nine months. The International Maritime Organization's (IMO) ruling to reduce sulfur in shipping fuel oil from today's 3.5% to 0.5% from January 1, 2020 means Middle Eastern stakeholders dealing with high sulfur fuel oil (HSFO) are carving out a new game plan - and quickly.

We forecast an immediate drop of more than 2 million b/d of HSFO demand worldwide, as shippers switch to low sulfur fuel oil (LSFO), increasing the global demand for diesel/gasoil by over 2 million b/d from January next year. In the short term, we estimate the cost of compliance for the entire shipping market to be \$60 billion.

So, where is this surplus HSFO going to go? One avenue is power generation in parts of the world with less stringent sulfur restrictions and more innovation in wider industrial uses of fuel oil. Desalination plants in the Middle East, one of the world's most arid regions and home to a soaring population, are already establishing a bulwark for this market. And HSFO could play a vital role in helping the region address its chronic power shortage, especially as demand rises.

Power capacity in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is significantly expanding to meet increasing demand, with about 10 GW of new units burning HFO being built in Saudi Arabia alone. Plus, HSFO is not being banished from shippers' operations entirely. Shippers that choose to install scrubbers to remove the sulfur dioxide and dirtier particulates from their bunker fuel will still be able to use HSFO. The market will not need many more than 6,000 ships to be fitted for demand for HSFO to increase to above 1.5 million b/d.

This would tighten the global HSFO market, pulling supply back out of power plants and back into marine fuel oil, presenting additional demand opportunities in the Middle East, home to the world's second largest bunkering hub, the UAE's Port of Fujairah. Fuel oil suppliers will need to supply a range of fuels from HSFO, marine gasoil and a range of 0.5% sulfur blends, creating even more complexity to fuel management and supply chains, especially on bunker barges.

So who stands to benefit from IMO 2020? The winners will be modern refiners, whose margins will be elevated in order to incentivize increased production of distillates to meet demand. Clean oil products values will be elevated while dirty products, such as high sulfur fuel oil, will be cheaper to clear the volumes into power generation displacing plants using natural gas or LNG today. The Middle East is well positioned to benefit from the IMO2020 shockwaves having already invested considerable sums developing in complex and more flexible refineries, such as the UAE's 900,000 b/d Ruwais refinery and Kuwait's 615,000 b/d Al Zour refinery (online in 2020).

Both will rank among the world's top ten largest facilities which offers the Middle East refiners a flexibility that is envied by other regions such as Europe, with more traditional operations. The direct impact of higher shipping costs on consumers appears to be limited. Running the numbers for a car carrier shifting 6,500 new Mercedes from Hamburg to Shanghai will consume around 1,050 million tons(mt) of fuel along the way, for example.

With a \$425/mt spread, a consumer would expect to pay an extra \$70 per purchase. And for a large container fleet ship transporting trailers from East to West, the consumer is unlikely to pay more than an additional 4 cents. But there's a catch: consumers refueling their cars will feel the estimated increase of \$5/bl-\$7/bl in the price of Brent crude driven by increased refinery runs in 2020. This could especially be felt in regions undergoing subsidy cuts, including the Gulf countries.

Depending on the severity of the rise in crude prices, balance sheets in industry could be impacted and subsequently, the global economy could slow which would affect container ship profits as utilization falls. In the short term, IMO 2020 will cause severe upheaval for both shippers and refiners, as well as hitting consumers and impacting the global economy. While these factors will be disruptive in 2020, the industry is remarkably resilient and will quickly adapt to the new circumstances.

By Chris Midgley, Head of Analytics, S&P Global Platts, London

Ahli United Bank announces KD 250,000 AL-Hassad Islamic account winner

KUWAIT: On 27th March 2017, Ahli United Bank held its quarterly grand prize draw at The Avenues Mall, as part of the Al-Hassad Islamic Account. It was a special occasion for Ms Sally Mohsen Krayyem who won KD 250,000. Ahli United Bank congratulates Ms Sally Mohsen Krayyem who is now able to achieve her dream of acquiring a house or her favorite car, to travel abroad, establish a new business or any dream she might have along with her aspirations.

Ahli United Bank also thanks its customers for their continued support and trust in the Bank's capabilities, which is reflected in the consistency in providing innovative banking products and services. The aim is for people to leverage and benefit from a wide range of exclusive benefits such as the Al-Hassad Islamic Account. Al-Hassad Islamic Account is the very first draw account in Islamic banking in Kuwait that has reshaped the lives of thousands lucky winners. Al-Hassad has have over 850 prizes, over a 12 month period.

Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 4 quarterly mega prizes of KD 250,000 that will help the lucky winners achieve their dreams and aspirations in addition to the monthly draw to win a prize of KD 100,000. One powerful new aspect of the Al-Hassad Islamic Account is the prize draws on the holy occasion of both Eid ul Fitr and Eid Al Adha, when the winning customers will receive the eid prizes of KD 100,000 each. May



the Eid always bring prosperity and blessings to the Islamic nation. Al-Hassad Islamic Account presents also 21 weekly prizes comprised of a grand prize of KD 10,000 and 20 prizes of KD 1,000 each. In addition to the highly attractive package of the prizes, there will be the annual expected profits on, which makes the Al Hassad account a useful tool for family and other savings, both for the short term and for the longer term - a fact which well appreciated by a large multitude of new and old customers.

To be eligible to participate in the draw, the customer should have a minimum balance of KD 100, whereby the customer has two chances to participate, with a maximum of 30,000 chances per draw, in addition to annual profits for all participants. Every KD 50 invested for at least 15 days entitles the customer to one chance in the each draw. The longer the customer keeps his balance the bigger the changes of participation in the draw. Draws are held every Wednesday at AUB Kuwait or AUB Bahrain depending on the draw plan. For more information on Ahli United Bank's Al-Hassad Islamic Savings Account and the wide range of prizes it presents, along with the requirements to qualify for the draw, customers are invited to visit any of the Bank's branches.

Gulf Bank congratulates winner of third monthly salary account draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced the winner of its third monthly Salary Account draw of the year. Mrs Ghosoun Abdulmohsen Khlaf Al Sabaan was announced as the winner of a cash prize of up to 12 times her salary. The draw took place at the Bank's Saad Al Abdullah branch, in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce.

Following the announcement, Ghosoun was invited to her local branch, the Qurain branch, where she was congratulated by members of the Gulf Bank family. The winner was delighted and expressed her gratitude to Gulf Bank, commenting during her visit, "I am so happy and surprised to have won. I would like to thank Gulf Bank for this prize and recommend everyone to transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank."

The salary account gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank or an interest-free loan of up to KD10,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD500 and will be eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank.

Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a free of charge Visa or MasterCard credit card for a year, as well as a chance to apply for a loan of up to



The winner receives her prize

KD70,000, or a consumer loan of up to KD25,000. With the new 2019 Kuwaiti Salary Offer, new customers, who transfer their salaries to Gulf Bank are automatically enrolled in the monthly draws, giving them the chance of winning cash prizes of up to 12 times their salary, and a yearly draw of Kuwait's largest salary prize of 100 times their salary.



Group picture for Gulf Bank team

Al Babtain Group brings its Tadano customers optimal service

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Company (AABC), the sole authorized dealer of Tadano LTD Co in the State of Kuwait since 1979, provides high standard Genuine parts at very economical prices for its Tadano customers to ensure reliability and the best service. Al Babtain Group through its many years of strong partnership brings all types of Tadano's hydraulic cranes to Kuwait, which continues to dominate the local market in terms of sales with a remarkable market share over the past years.



Niya wins Burgan Bank's Al Thuraya salary account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, announced yesterday Abolfazl Mehbod Niya as the lucky winner of the Al Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw. The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw.

The Al Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti Dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year. Customers wishing to open the Al Thuraya account can do so by simply visiting the nearest Burgan Bank branch and obtain all the necessary details, or simply call the bank's call center. For further information, customers can also visit the bank's website on www.burgan.com.



What's On



ACK holds first Teaching and Learning Excellence Forum

By Faten Omar

Under the patronage of Professor Habib Taher Abul, Secretary General of Private Universities Council (PUC), The Teaching and Learning Center at the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) held its First Teaching and Learning Excellence Forum yesterday at the ACK auditorium. During his speech, Prof Isam Zabalawi, President of the Australian College of Kuwait, said that education in the region today is facing many challenges in order to ensure graduates are ready for the realities of working in the professional world.

“We learn to do, to be, to know, to live with each other, and to transform. Those are the four pillars that are listed in the book ‘Learning: The treasure within (Delors et al,1996)’. The subsequent UNESCO’s education for sustainable development Initiative, ‘Learning: The treasure within’ not only promoted the importance of lifelong learning but also proposed that all organizations share the responsibility for offering many, varied opportunities for learning,” he said. He noted that any program in any university without those pillars is simply not worth it.

Zabalawi added that on a global scale, many companies are not satisfied with university graduates. “International companies start to make their own universities with programs to meet their needs for experienced graduates such

as Apple, Microsoft, McDonalds and many more. That is why I believe that teaching must develop and change to meet graduates’ needs as an employer. If you do not change - you will not bring about change.”

He pointed out that the region needs to change their mission and vision, program and syllabus, teaching and learning environment, materials, facilities, physical spaces, pedagogy, assessment process, the delivery process, and requirements for awarding degrees. “We have to change the role of the students and the role of the faculty member to develop the affective domain about the attitude of the students, psychomotor domain, and the interpersonal domain that focus on people interacting with others.”

For his part, Jonathan Gilbert, Australian Ambassador to Kuwait, said that the Australian embassy has a long history of collaborative partnerships with ACK, where ACK signed a Strategic Partnering Agreement with the Engineers Australia Association that consents ACK to become EA’s Primary Partner in the Middle East and North African countries as well as Cyprus and Turkey.

He added “Australia and Kuwait has a long history in terms of educations with around 800 to 900 students studying in Australia. I’m also keen to do more with the many thousands of Kuwaiti Alumni that come back to Kuwait to make a meaning and productive contribution to the Kuwait’s economy and society.”



Lulu Hypermarket felicitates winners of Festive Drive Promotion

Lulu Hypermarket, the heavyweight among regional retailers, held a prize distribution ceremony on 6th April at their Al Rai outlet, to felicitate winners of the ‘Lulu Festive Drive 2019’ promotion. Top management at Lulu Hypermarket in Kuwait handed over the prizes in the presence of a large crowd of competition participants and shoppers.

The ‘Lulu Festive Drive’ promotion, which was held from 30 January to 15 March at all outlets of the hypermarket, entitled customers to a raffle coupon for every purchase of KD5 worth of goods. An online draw in the presence of ministry officials was held on 19 March to pick the winners of the raffle. The three top prize win-

ners each walked away with the key to a Chevrolet Trailblazer SUV, while 100 lucky shoppers received gift vouchers worth KD 100, and 100 others received gift vouchers worth KD 50, during the raffle draw.

Holding of exciting Raffle Draws throughout the year as part of promotional campaign, has allowed Lulu Hypermarket to constantly engage with their customers, and to reward them for their participation with amazing prizes and gifts. These customer-centric initiatives have endeared the hypermarket to shoppers in the country, who already enjoy the shopping experience at Lulu outlets for the value they deliver by providing high-quality products at very competitive prices.

IWG attends the Kuwait Distinguished Women Awards Ceremony

In support of women in general, and Kuwaiti women in particular, the International Women’s Group attended the Kuwait Distinguished Women Awards Ceremony held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at the Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Center (Opera House) on the 21st of March, 2019.

HE the Minister of State for Economic Affairs, Mrs Maryam Al-Aqeel, addressed the KDWA. The aim of the ceremony was to emphasize the importance of honoring the winners who received those awards that are recognized as high-level international awards highlighting outstanding women in the public, private and civil society sectors. This is the fifth objective from the goals of sustainable development on the empowerment of women. It falls within the framework of national cooperation with Kuwait and its development partners.



The winning women have been selected by the Supreme Council for Planning, Development, and the Academic Sector, represented in the Center for Women’s Studies and Research in the Social Sciences division at the Kuwait University, the private sector and the United Nations program. The group’s attendance was a confirmation of its role in supporting women at all local and international levels. The International Women’s Group consists of female Ambassadors, Ambassador’s wives and VIP women, prominent within the Kuwaiti society, who constantly support each other and other women through monthly meetings and many outstanding events and initiatives.



LOYAC performs its Hairy Monkey play

On concluding the activities of the first international theatre organized by LOYAC’s Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) in collaboration with the NCCAL, the Egyptian Jalboot Art Production company recently performed its ‘Hairy Monkey’ play at Shamiya theatre. The play’s plot is based on a novel for

the American writer, Eugene O’Neal revolving around the concept of belonging. It is also interpreted by some as a conflict between capitalists and laborers. The cast included Hosan ElDine Ibrahim, Hussein Ali Daqeeq, Ali Hassan Mohammed, Mohammed Alaa’, Haittham Al-Eryan, Mohammed Ali Daqeeq, Salem Abdullah Al-Azmi, Hassan Ali Allami, Amir Yosri Abdul Rahman, Omniya Sha’ban, Al-Shayma’ Abo Alam, Islam Saeed, Amr Shaker for decoration, Do’a Al-Atribi for costumes and accessories, lighting by Bader Al-Ma’touq and direction by Saeed Mohammed.



Health & Science

Russian officials agree to free 'whale jail' animals

Companies abuse catch permits for educational purposes

MOSCOW: Russian officials said Monday they will work towards freeing all orca and beluga whales from a notorious facility in the east of the country, after a visit by US-based marine mammal advocates. Nearly 100 whales captured for sale to aquariums have been kept in small pens for months in what the media has nicknamed a "whale jail" in the Russian Far East, as the campaign to release them gathered strength and went global.

Kremlin-backed Far Eastern governor Oleg Kozhemyako on Monday announced that he has "made a decision to free the animals into the wild," after meeting noted environmentalists and campaigners Jean-Michel Cousteau and Charles Vinick who visited the facility last week. "Our goal is to release all of them," said a joint statement by Kozhemyako, Cousteau and Vinick.

Cousteau, the son of celebrated French ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau, is the founder of the US-based Ocean Futures Society, while Charles Vinick heads the Whale Sanctuary Project and has worked on rehabilitation of captive orcas in the past. Cousteau told AFP by phone from Vladivostok that he believed "many of the animals will be released" but that it will take time to identify the right decision for each animal. "If some are sick we will take care of them," he said.

He said dolphinariums should move away from using marine mammals and instead use technology to "connect the public to the ocean through 3D projections" as well as encourage seeing the animals in the wild. The "whale jail" has exposed the lack of legislation in Russia regulating capture of marine mammals, with companies abusing catch permits for "educational purposes" only to proceed to sell the animals to the captivity industry, notably in China where it is booming.

'It's a battle'

Russia is the only country that catches wild orcas for aquariums, with each animal fetching \$6 million or more in what is a very opaque market. The conditions in the facility in Nakhodka, which contains 10 orcas and 87 beluga whales, are "not conducive to their long term health," said Vinick. "The pens are small and crowded, the depth is too shallow," he told AFP. "In general, most of the animals are stable," though they have developed skin conditions, he said.

Four firms captured 90 belugas and 11 orcas last summer. Three belugas and one orca have disappeared since that time. Scientists have taken probes and audio data from the animals and will continue working with the Russian side, Vinick said. As a first step, the facility should be expanded, and animals' attention should be redirected from humans feeding them, he said, so that they spend more time in the water and limit exposure to air and sun.

On Thursday, Russia's environment minister said that releasing the animals in the winter would be too dangerous. "Now we are in summer, and this work can and must be done." But environmentalist Dmitry Lisitsyn, whose group Sakhalin Watch has called for their release for months, said the government has not even filed a legal complaint to seize the animals from the companies keeping them.

"A legal decision is a decisive factor (in freeing the animals), and it doesn't exist," he said, concerned that when summer comes, officials will say their hands are tied. "It's a battle," he told AFP. "It's possible that the forces behind the captive companies are just killing time." —AFP



MOSCOW: A Greenpeace activist paints their logo onto an image of an orca in front of the monument dedicated to Russian scientist Kliment Timiryazev, in Moscow. — AFP

Black holes: Picturing the heart of darkness

PARIS: Astronomers are poised Wednesday to unveil the first direct image of a black hole and the surrounding whirlwind of white-hot gas and plasma inexorably drawn by gravity into its ravenous maw, along with the light they generate. The picture will have been captured by the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), a network of eight radio telescopes scattered across the globe.

Paul McNamara, an astrophysicist at the European Space Agency and project scientist for the LISA mission that will track massive black hole mergers from space, helped AFP put what he called an "outstanding technical achievement" into context.

How do we know black holes exist?
"We think, of course, of a black hole as something very dark. But the mass it sucks in forms a so-called accretion disk that gets so hot it glows and emits light. Over the years, we accumulated other indirect observa-

tional evidence—X-rays coming off objects, for example, in other galaxies.

In September 2015, the LIGO gravitational wave detectors in the US made a measurement of two black holes smashing together.

All the evidence we have from around the universe—X-rays, radio-waves, light—points to these very compact objects, and the gravitational waves confirmed that they really are black holes, even if we have never actually seen one."

What is an 'event horizon'?

"At the centre of a black hole is something we call a 'singularity'—a huge amount of mass shrunk down to an infinitely small, zero-dimensional point in space. If you get a certain distance away from that singularity, the escape velocity drops under the speed of light. That's the event horizon. It is not a physical barrier—you couldn't stand on it. If you're on the inside of it, you can't escape because you would need infinite energy. If you are on the other side, you could escape—in principle."

How big is a black hole?

"The diameter of a black hole depends on its mass

but it is always double what we call the Schwarzschild radius. If the Sun were to shrink to a singularity point, the Schwarzschild radius would be three kilometers, and the diameter would be six. For Earth, the diameter would be 18 millimeters, or about three-quarters of an inch. The event horizon of the black hole at the centre of the Milky Way, Sagittarius A*, measures about 24 million kilometers across. Sagittarius A* — which has four million times the mass of the Sun—is one of two black holes targeted by the EHT. The other, even bigger, is in the galaxy M87."

What will the image look like?

"The Event Horizon Telescope is not looking at the black hole per se, but the material it has captured. It won't be a big disk in high resolution like in the Hollywood movie 'Interstellar'. But we might see a black core with a bright ring—the accretion disk—around it. The light from behind the black hole gets bent like a lens. No matter what the orientation of the disc, you will see it as a ring because of the black hole's strong gravity. Visually, it will look very much like an eclipse, though the mechanism, of course, is completely different."

How is the image generated?

"The technical achievement is outstanding. Rather than having one telescope that is 100 meters across, they have lots of telescopes with an effective diameter of 12,000 kilometers—the diameter of Earth. The data is recorded with very high accuracy, put onto hard disks, and shipped to a central location where the image is reconstructed digitally. This is very, very, very long baseline interferometry—over the entire surface of the Earth."

Any threat to general relativity?

"Einstein's theory of general relativity fits all the observations made so far related to black holes. The gravitational wave signature from the LIGO experiments, for example, was exactly what the theory says would be expected. But the black holes LIGO measured were small, only 60-100 times the mass of the Sun. Maybe black holes millions of times more massive are different. We don't know yet. We should see a ring. If we see something elongated on one axis, then it can no longer be a singularity—that could be a violation of general relativity." — AFP

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Kuwait Times

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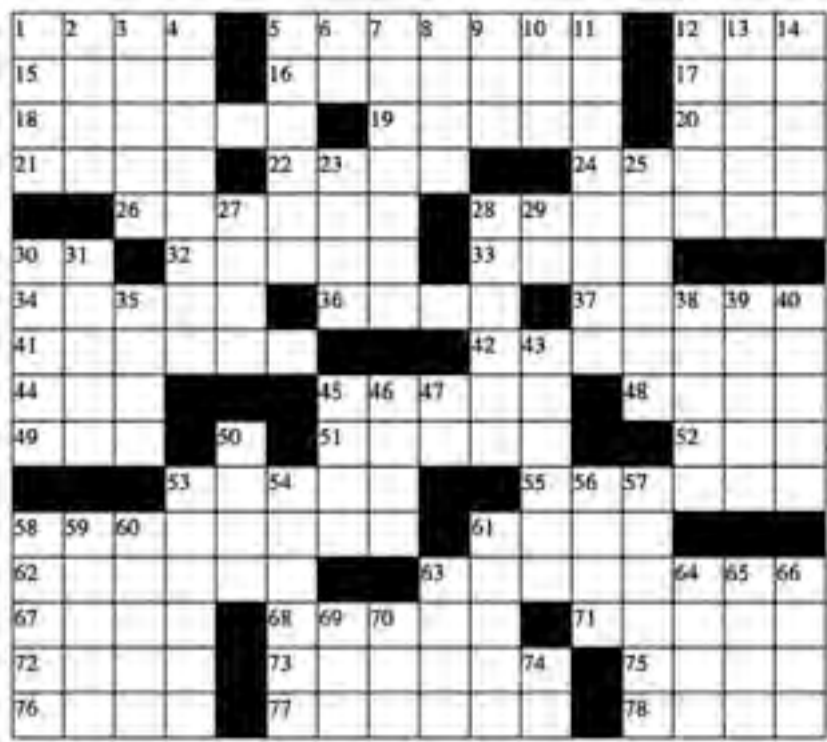
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Stars

CROSSWORD 2179



ACROSS

1. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
5. Extremely evil or cruel.
12. Slender bristlelike appendage found on the bracts of grasses.
15. A flat thin rectangular slab (as of fired clay or rubber or linoleum) used to cover surfaces.
16. Genus of beetles whose grubs feed mainly on roots of plants.
17. A cry or noise made to express displeasure or contempt.
18. Hard white substance covering the crown of a tooth.
19. Dark somewhat brownish black n 1.
20. Any of various trees of the genus *Ulmus*.
21. The 4th planet from the sun.
22. United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
24. Antibacterial consisting of any of several synthetic organic compounds capable of inhibiting the growth of bacteria that require PABA.
26. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
30. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
32. (Old Testament) The minister of the Persian emperor who hated the Jews and was hanged for plotting to massacre them.
33. A genus of Mustelidae.
34. An assertion of a right (as to money or property).
36. A small cake leavened with yeast.
37. (Zoroastrianism) Title for benevolent deities.
41. A motley assortment of things.
42. A large shallow lake in western Hungary.
44. Water frozen in the solid state.
48. Not final or absolute.
49. A doctor's degree in education.
51. God of wealth and love.
52. An alliance made up of states that had been Soviet Socialist Republics in the Soviet Union prior to its dissolution in Dec 1991.
55. Showing a high degree of refinement and the assurance that comes from wide social experience.
58. Goddess of fate.
62. A member of the people inhabiting an area of northern Mongolia and eastern Siberia.
67. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
68. South African plant widely cultivated for its showy pure white spathe and yellow spadix.
71. Being one more than two.
72. A nearly horizontal passage from the surface into a mine.
73. The state of existing and being localized in space.
75. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
76. A network of intersecting blood vessels or intersecting nerves or intersecting lymph vessels.
77. United States nurse who campaigned for birth control and planned parenthood (1883-1966).
78. An annual award for outstanding achievements in television.

DOWN

1. A distinct part that can be specified separately in a group of things that could be enumerated on a list.
2. Tropical Asian starlings.
3. Fear resulting from the awareness of danger.
4. A woman sahib.
5. A deep bow.
6. An associate degree in nursing.
7. A region in central Italy.
8. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
9. Tag the base runner to get him out.
10. Not in good physical or mental health.
11. Of or relating to a caesura.
12. A poplar that is widely cultivated in the United States.
13. United States writer who has written extensively on American culture (born in 1931).
14. A member of a people who have no permanent home but move about according to the seasons.
23. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
25. A resident of Utah.
27. Avatar of Vishnu.
28. A cylindrical drawstring bag used by sailors to hold their clothing and other gear.
29. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
31. Used especially of fruits.
35. Advanced in years.
38. A city in central New York.
39. Any of a class of solid or semisolid viscous substances obtained either as exudates from certain plants or prepared by polymerization of simple molecules.
40. Native to Egypt but cultivated widely for its aromatic seeds and the oil from them used medicinally and as a flavoring in cookery.
43. A river that rises in northern Colombia and flows generally eastward to the Orinoco in central Venezuela.
45. In bed.
46. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
47. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
50. A slick spokesperson who can turn any criticism to the advantage of their employer.
53. (biology) Of unlike parts or organs.
54. 1 species.
56. Deeply moved.
57. German mystic and theosophist who founded modern theosophy.
59. Avoid or try to avoid, as of duties, questions and issues.
60. The act of remitting (especially the referral of a law case to another court).
61. Feeling or showing extreme anger.
63. Large swift fly the female of which sucks blood of various animals.
64. A conveyance that transports passengers or freight in carriers suspended from cables and supported by a series of towers.
65. A cooperative unit.
66. Suggestive of the supernatural.
69. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
70. United States sculptor and architect whose public works include the memorial to veterans of the Vietnam War in Washington (born in 1959).
74. A period of time containing 365 (or 366) days.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a happy time for you. Don't let others influence you otherwise. At work you amaze those you work with by showing how intelligent and energetic you are. Practical decisions put you in the limelight with your boss and others around you. You make higher ups look good. Rumors come back to you about more on the job. You're not thinking only of you but for the good of all. You forgive a hurt done to you by someone you love and you're better for it. Enjoy the evening with those you love either at home or out for dinner.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Good communication skills work for you now on the job. Wish that was the case with your love life. Paying attention to the one you care for should be the only option now. They feel that you don't listen when you choose to be silent and mull it over. Whether it's true or not, this could cause complications in whether you'll stay together without problems or not. Taurus. Try to be attentive and answer questions put to you. Otherwise, you may find yourself with only the cat. If that's what you need, then so be it.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a time of testing your limits to see just what you're made of but it's also exhausting. Fighting for what you want is where you're at in work and love. You're not scared but you do want to accomplish the best you can now. You are open to communication with anyone who allows it but you're not in the mood for dissenters. You may need to get some higher education to become more useful in your job. Perhaps you may want to study Theology as well, especially because of the manner in which you've been handling others lately. There is a motivation to see how life ticks. Enjoy learning.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a good time to organize your affairs both at home and at your work place. You have come to a fork in the road where you need a more conservative approach, thus the organization. You may be called upon at work to take on a managerial position. Make sure it pays for the work. You wonder why they chose you because you feel a sense of being blocked and surely unable to tell others what you want accomplished. You'll prevail in a good way. Emotional arguments could pop up at home. Try to be calm.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a great day to solve problems and to think through those hard decisions you're making. You've got a sense of inner direction or gut, if you will, that is only matched by your problem-solving genius. What most call agonizing you find is the thrill of the chase with your occupation being what you're chasing now. Opportunities will find their way to you and probably through some well-meaning coworker who really does have your best interest at heart. Through the quiet times, you've been watched and graded. You've come out on the better side. Accept the kudos.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Today you're licking your wounds without much energy even to do that. You just want to be alone but that's not to be. You have to get back into the swing of things no matter how much you want to lay down on the job. Friends will prop you up emotionally as much as they can. The problem is that you aren't noticing that leg up right now. You just want to be left alone. That's not going to happen. Believe you can achieve. That's not just Pollyanna bull. Think it with energy and you can create it.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Watch yourself now. You may walk a fine line where others are involved. This seems to have come out of nowhere but here it is. You generally get along famously with others, especially when you want to but today is different. Though you want to be with friends you may find that you naturally go against their grain, saying things that disagree completely with them. Maybe it's better to stay home with the dog or cat tonight. At least they'll still love you later.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You're in the mood for working hard but you also need mental stimulation to encourage you. Learning new things gives you a basis for making our world a better place. New friends wander into your life now but you know there is no such thing as an accidental meeting. They came because they heard you call out mentally. You have a reason for needing them and you got your answer by having the ability to meet someone new when they came. You're in the vein for talking and you're meeting new people so that you can bounce ideas off them. Keep on trucking.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 18)

If you can take a day off from work, then you may want to do just that. You need to relax and be alone to think now. It's not an easy time for you today. Try to be patient and let this day be done as quickly as possible if you have to work. When at home, pet your dog even though you don't feel like it. After loving on your perfect pet, you'll start to feel the love and peacefully cool down. Then you can make sense of the thoughts bombarding your mind. Family still means more to you than anything else though you may not want to socialize with them at the moment. Catch up on some television or read a good book.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This isn't the good time you're looking for at work now. You may find yourself arguing with possibly more than one person. But with one flying off the handle may be the small explosion others hear not the one that counts. Generally, you can keep your cool but this is a stressful time. You're frustrated and have had this happen a couple of times lately. Getting away and being around people you like and who like you is what you need. Perhaps later you can be with your lover. Being with someone who loves you makes all the difference in the world.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You're feeling especially kind and loving towards someone you know. Sensitivity is part of your expression today. You may find yourself speaking and really communicating with a group of workers today. Furthermore, you realize you like this type event more than you've thought prior to this. Generally, you like keeping to yourself or at least on one-to-one ratios. You have a great grasp of spiritual ideas which is making you research educational books on the subject. Learning is paramount in your world now. Make time for friends later today.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your curiosity is piqued by studying sex, death and the other mysteries of life, even the taboos. You may want to be like a poker player and keep this learning close to your vest. That is, unless you want to scare some of those who know you possess supernatural gifts. It's okay to be curious but you have to be thoughtful of your own life while you are. Making your nest egg grow is another enthusiastic pastime you want to encourage. Use your friends for sounding boards as to how you may achieve this. Express some of that study you're doing with your lover later.

Wordsearch Puzzle

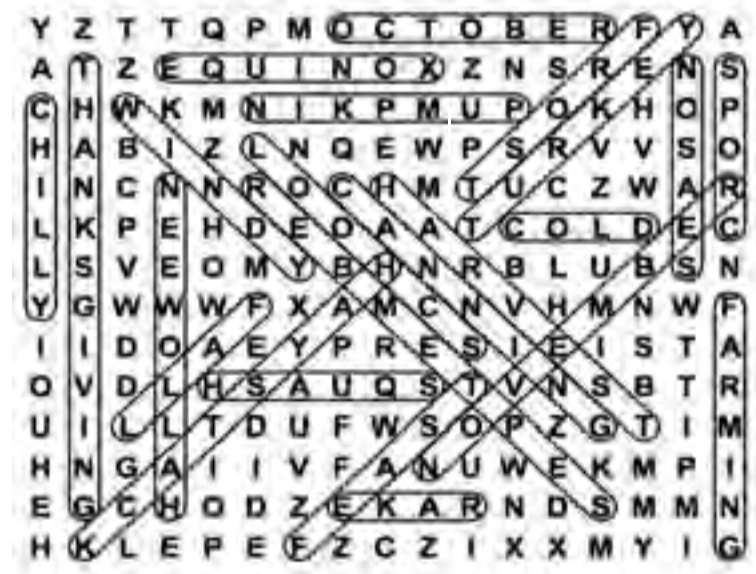
Baseball - Word Search



- | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| BASE | FLYBALL | SHORTSTOP |
| BATBOY | GLOVE | SLIDE |
| BATTER | GROUNDER | STRIKE |
| BUNT | HOME | TRIPLE PLAY |
| COACH | INNING | UMPIRE |
| CURVEBALL | LINE DRIVE | |
| DUGOUT | MOUND | |
| FASTBALL | PITCHER | |

Yesterday's Solution

Autumn - Solution



- | | | |
|---------|-----------|--------------|
| CANNING | FROST | SCHOOL |
| CHILLY | HALLOWEEN | SEASON |
| COLD | HARVEST | SEPTEMBER |
| CROPS | HAYSTACK | SQUASH |
| EQUINOX | NOVEMBER | THANKSGIVING |
| FALL | OCTOBER | TURKEY |
| FARMING | PUMPKIN | WINDY |
| FEAST | RAKE | |

Yesterday's Solution



Daily Sudoku



Yesterday's Solution



Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019



A costumed participant skies on a pool as part of the 'Californication 9.0' humorous competition, marking the end of the winter season outside the town of Lahoyks some 40 km north of Minsk. — AFP

Actress **Felicity Huffman** pleads guilty in college admissions scandal

Actress Felicity Huffman and a dozen other parents agreed on Monday to plead guilty to using bribery to get their children into prestigious universities. Huffman, 56, best known for her role in the "Desperate Housewives" series, agreed to plead guilty to paying \$15,000 to help her eldest daughter get better scores on the SAT college entrance exam, the Massachusetts Department of Justice said in a statement.

Huffman's equally famous husband, actor William H. Macy of "Fargo" fame, was not charged in connection with the college admissions scandal. The Massachusetts Department of Justice said that in addition to Huffman, another dozen parents charged in the case had also agreed to plead guilty. Huffman could face a maximum of up to 20 years in prison for conspiracy to commit mail fraud but is not expected to receive such a stiff sentence.

The Boston Globe said that as part of a plea agreement, Huffman's sentencing guidelines would be between four to 10 months in prison and prosecutors would recommend she serve the "low end" of that scale. The newspaper also pub-

lished a statement from Huffman in which she apologized for her actions. "I am ashamed of the pain I have caused my daughter, my family, my friends, my colleagues and the educational community," she said.

"I want to apologize to them and, especially, I want to apologize to the students who work hard every day to get into college, and to their parents who make tremendous sacrifices to support their children and do so honestly. "My daughter knew absolutely nothing about my actions, and in my misguided and profoundly wrong way, I have betrayed her," Huffman said. "My desire to help my daughter is no excuse to break the law or engage in dishonesty."

Lori Loughlin also charged

Another television actress, Lori Loughlin, known for her role on "Full House," has also been charged in the case but did not enter a plea on Monday. Loughlin and her husband are accused of paying \$500,000 in 2016 and 2017 so that their two daughters could gain entrance into the University of Southern California by posing as

members of the rowing team. The actresses were the most famous of the 50 people indicted in a scam to help children of the American elite gain entry into top US colleges.

Some of the other parents involved were CEOs or partners in major law firms. Some of them paid as much as \$400,000 to get their child into the college of their choice. The ringleader behind the scam, William "Rick" Singer, who authorities say was paid about \$25 million dollars to bribe coaches and university administrators, has pleaded guilty and is cooperating with authorities.

Besides USC, some of the universities targeted in the elaborate cheating scam include Yale, Stanford, UCLA and Georgetown. None of the schools or the students have been charged in the case.

According to prosecutors, the accused parents paid a firm run by Singer to cheat on college entrance exams for their children or to bribe coaches to help non-athletic students get scholarships.—AFP

Young Pakistani wins over family to let her sing

Twenty-year-old Sana Tajik managed to convince her parents to allow her to follow her childhood dreams and become a singer, but she realizes the dangers of being a woman, let alone a woman entertainer, in tribal northwest Pakistan. The Pashtun singer grew up in Lower Dir, once a Taliban stronghold of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where performing arts were widely considered to be un-Islamic. She realized early on that violence against female artists was common.

In 2018, five female singers were killed in the northwest and in March this year, a popular Pashtun stage singer and actress was shot and killed near Peshawar, allegedly by her husband. But two years ago, Tajik's family moved from their ancestral village to the state capital Peshawar where she managed to convince her parents to allow her to sing.

"At first, there were a lot of objections, from family, as well as people in our village. But now, with the passing of time, and after seeing my videos and songs, things have become normal again," Tajik told Reuters at her home. She has released her songs over social media and said she already had a fan following in Pashto-speaking areas of Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan. Her second song, "Halaka Charta Ye", which means "Oh boy, where are you?" was a great hit.

"I was extremely happy because so many people were listening to my songs

and liked them. My passion for music increased further, and I decided to make more and more songs and videos," she said. Despite her success, Tajik says she often feels nervous about security because the Taliban's influence in the region can still be felt. During the 1996-2001 Taliban regime in Afghanistan, music was considered the handiwork of the devil, particularly if the artist was a woman.

Pakistan's port city of Karachi is home to an estimated 7 million Pashtuns, the largest urban Pashtun population in the world, including 50,000 registered Afghan refugees. Even though it's the other end of the country, Sana Tajik's music is known, though not accepted by all. "If this lady sang hymns and devotional songs, that would have been better. It would have sent a good message to the Pashtun people," said resident Iqbal Swati.

"Instead, she is wearing half-sleeved clothes while singing; this is not at all nice. This is not our culture."

Tajik's music teacher, Safdar Ali Qalandri, said he often warns her of the dangers ahead. "One, she is a female. And secondly, this is Peshawar, where, as you know, extreme 'purdah' (covering of women) is observed. Taking up singing while living in this society is extremely tough." —Reuters



In this file photo actress Felicity Huffman exits the courthouse after facing charges for allegedly conspiring to commit mail fraud and other charges in the college admissions scandal at the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse in Boston.



Actress Lori Loughlin exits the courthouse after facing charges for allegedly conspiring to commit mail fraud and other charges in the college admissions scandal at the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse in Boston. — AFP photos

AS TIME CATCHES UP WITH ROCK'S GREATS, CAN THE GENRE SURVIVE?

Mick Jagger "on the mend" following a heart valve procedure, Ozzy Osbourne postponing his tour over a fall, The Who's Pete Dinklage nearly deaf: time is no longer on the side of rock's legends. And with every farewell tour, biopic, throwback compilation release and mid-20th century icon succumbing to age, chills from rock's grim reaper can feel increasingly nippy, leaving some in the industry questioning the genre's future.

Bands flying rock's banner still exist, of course, with 2000s era groups like The Black Keys and The Killers announcing new music after years of silence. But not one rock group occupied a spot in the top 10 of 2018's most-streamed acts, according to Nielsen Music, with nine hip hop and R&B performers along with pop megastar Ariana Grande leading the pack.

The influential festival scene has begun relegating rock to lesser stages in favor of headlining pop, rap and electro acts: 2018 was the first year Coachella's line-up dropped rock groups from the main attractions, with the leading festival following suit for 2019's edition set to kick off this weekend. August's 50th anniversary Woodstock blowout will welcome back staples of the era like Santana, John Fogerty and Canned Heat—but even that event chose headliners including rap royalty Jay-Z, electro-pop performer Halsey and pop star Miley Cyrus to draw a younger crowd.

And in perhaps another sign of the genre's declining share, the top Grammy awards gala hasn't televised its rock awards in years. In a

2018 piece entitled "Rock is Dead, Thank God," Dan Ozzi, a music critic for Vice, wrote that "the genre has been eclipsed in all measures of popularity and profitability by pop, hip-hop, and EDM." "And by those standards, yes, rock is dead."

Hip hop the dominant voice

The 1990s are seen by some in the industry as rock's last glory days, with Nirvana, The Smashing Pumpkins, The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Pearl Jam and Soundgarden reigning over the scene. But according to Danny Goldberg, Nirvana's former manager, by the mid-1990s hip hop had begun occupying the innovative space

"Yes, rock is dead"

formerly claimed by rock, galvanizing young people and reflecting contemporary times.

Hip hop "became the dominant voice of youth culture," Goldberg told AFP, saying that, as rock once did, the genre became "a transformative art form." Today's rock band of the moment Greta Van Fleet—a Michigan group that nabbed a Best New Artist nomination at this year's Grammys—has been widely panned by

critics as Led Zeppelin copycats.

One scathing review from US music bible Pitchfork said the group's retro sound offers but "a bowl of nostalgia"—which it dubbed "the cheapest high in music." Jacqueline Warwick, a music scholar at Canada's Dalhousie University, said that while rock used to be seen as the genre for "serious" artists, styles like hip hop and even pop are beginning to claim their due. "Pop has really become the vanguard of a lot of really interesting and important creative expression," she told AFP. "And rock has kind of solidified into a bit of a dinosaur."

Rock's immortal spirit

But for Deanna Adams, author of several books on the genre, "rock isn't just rock"—but a sense of innovation that will live on even as its founding innovators die off. "With so many artists leaving us, or falling ill, it's indeed painful," Adams, 65, told AFP. "We feel the fear of losing a part of us when they are ill—or, when they pass, we mourn the loss of their music; the concerts we'll no longer experience." "Plus, it of course makes us more aware of our own mortality."

But she said that even as some question rock's relevance, there's no denying the breadth of its influence. "There'd be no heavy metal, punk, or hip hop without rock and roll," Adams said. "Rock and roll will never die, because it's a large, hearty branch on a very old, robust tree." Indeed, even a number of hip hop artists say it's the "spirit" of rock that will live forever.



In this file photo British musician Mick Jagger of The Rolling Stones performs during a concert at The Velodrome Stadium in Marseille, as part of their 'No Filter' tour. — AFP

In 2016, when hip hop trailblazers N.W.A accepted their place in the Rock and Roll of Fame—an institution that in recent years has increasingly expanded its definition of rock to include the likes of R&B and rap-member Ice Cube said the genre "is not even a style of music." "Rock and roll is a spirit," the rapper said. "Rock and roll is not conforming to the people who came before you, but creating your own path in music and in life." "That is rock and roll, and that is us." —AFP

Madonna to perform at Eurovision Song Contest in Israel

Pop superstar Madonna will make a guest appearance at the Eurovision Song Contest in Israel next month, her representatives said on Monday. Concert promoters Live Nation Israel and the singer's U.S. representatives confirmed reports in Israeli media that Madonna will perform two songs in Tel Aviv during the three-day Eurovision competition in May, which features musicians from more than 40 nations. Israel was chosen to host the contest after local singer

Netta Barzilai won last year in Portugal with "Toy", propelling her to international stardom. The winning country customarily hosts the following year.

The Israeli venue has already prompted calls for a boycott by pro-Palestinian activists who are campaigning for companies, performers and governments to disengage from Israel. In January some 50 British celebrities, including singers Roger Waters and Peter Dinklage, wrote a letter calling on the BBC to press for the 2019 Eurovision contest to be relocated. Madonna took her world tours to Israel in 2009 and 2012 and has been a follower of the mystical form of Judaism called Kabbalah. She has been working on an untitled new album for the last several months.



In this file photo Elton John performs during his 'Farewell Yellow Brick Road' final tour at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, California. — Reuters

Elton John, Sting, Chick Corea top big-name Montreux bill

Elton John is the big draw at this summer's Montreux Jazz Festival, part of an eclectic line-up packed with big names that also features Sting, Janet Jackson, Chick Corea and Radiohead frontman Thom Yorke. The former The Police singer will open the 53rd edition of one of Europe's most celebrated summer music festivals on June 28, while veteran producer Quincy Jones will host the closing concert — an orchestral soundtrack of his 80s hits — on July 13.

In between, Sir Elton, Anita Baker and Joan Baez will appear as part of their respective farewell tours. The English singer-songwriter was initially booked for two nights, but those appearances have been merged into single show for 15,000 fans on June 29 at Saussaz stadium, a new venue for Montreux. It will be the first ever open-air performance at the festival, better known for the intimacy and superb sound quality of its concert hall settings.

Janet Jackson, who was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame last month, will perform days after the 10th anniversary of her brother Michael's death from an overdose of an anesthetic he used as a sleep agent. For jazz purists, multiple Grammy winner Corea brings a flamenco flavour with his Spanish Heart Band, while New Orleans trumpeters Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah and Terence Blanchard will open for drummer Billy Cobham, celebrating his 75th birthday.

"When you see the strong personalities booked at (the main) Stravinski Auditorium, maybe that is the guiding principle of this year ... — all artists who marked a moment in music," festival director Mathieu Jaton told Reuters. "There is an equilibrium between legends, returning acts, (and) the young stars."

Taylor Swift donates to fight Tennessee anti-LGBT+ laws

Pop superstar Taylor Swift has donated \$113,000 to an LGBT+ group to support its fight against laws in the US state of Tennessee that would roll back gay and transgender rights, according to the Tennessee Equality Project (TEP). Swift, who began her career in Nashville, Tennessee, made the contribution to the TEP, which is campaigning to stop bills that would let adoption agencies block LGBT+ people and defy a 2015 federal ruling allowing same-sex marriage.

The so-called 'Slate of Hate' before state legislature also includes measures to defend state school officials that make trans people use toilets and changing rooms corresponding to their "biological sex". "I'm so inspired by the work you do, specifically in organizing the recent



petition of Tennessee faith leaders standing up against the 'Slate of Hate,' Swift, 29, wrote in a note dated April 8 to TEP's director.

Same-sex marriage was legalized throughout the United States in 2015 after a Supreme Court ruling. However, some states have tried to row back on LGBT+ rights. A North Carolina law requiring trans people to use bathrooms match-

Cutting-edge procedure mends Mick Jagger's 'heart of stone'

When the Rolling Stone's Mick Jagger underwent heart valve replacement surgery in New York recently, according to media reports the doctor in France who invented the technique took a modest bow. "I am not especially a fan of the Rolling Stones but I am pleased with the outcome," Professor Alain Cribier said. "What is moving is to think about all the patients who have benefited from the procedure." "I'm feeling much better now and on the mend," Jagger, 75, wrote on Twitter.

Weighing his words carefully, the soft-spoken cardiologist who pioneered the technique in 2002 doesn't have the allure of a rock star. But in his field, many colleagues see him that way. Known as transcatheter aortic valve replacement, or TAVR, his method has gradually replaced open heart surgery for repairing the valve that allows the delivery of blood through the aorta.

The most common and serious-of valve diseases, age-related aortic stenosis occurs when the valve narrows and hardens with calcium deposits. Valve replacement has historically been done by opening the chest surgically, stopping the heart, and placing the patient on a heart and lung blood machine—all, of course, under general anaesthesia.

More than 200,000 such procedures are performed every year worldwide, according to NewHeartValve, in Britain. Cribier's technique, done under local anaesthesia, is minimally invasive by comparison and has far shorter recovery times. A surgeon or cardiologist accesses the femoral artery with an incision near the groin to insert a catheter fitted with a replacement valve inside a collapsed stent, and a balloon for inflating it.

The new heart valve, once expanded, pushes the old one out of the way and takes over the job of regulating blood

flow. "It has revolutionized patient care in this area," Montpellier-based cardiologist Stephane Cade said. Brought tears to my eyes Since first performing the surgery in 2002, Cribier had trained dozens of doctors around the world. At first, TAVR was reserved for patients too weak or old to undergo open-heart surgery. But over the last decade, its use has been expanded to those for whom the traditional approach poses an "intermediate risk". Since 2009, 400,000 patients in 65 countries have undergone the procedure, Cribier said. Those numbers could now expand rapidly. A study based on clinical trials published in The New England Journal of Medicine last month concluded that TAVR is safer and yields better results for "low-risk patients" as well.

"I must say reading the the study brought tears to my eyes," said Cribier. The idea first came to him in the 1980s. "At the time, we let patients over 75 simply die—we didn't operate," he recalled. After a first attempt to develop a new technique failed, finding one that worked became "an obsession," he said. When he finally succeeded, the approach was greeted with scepticism. "Heart surgeons were completely opposed. 'Who is this nutcase that's trying to undercut our work?'," they asked.

Today, TAVR is performed mostly by cardiologists, not surgeons. But that too could soon change. "Surgeons are now confronted with the evidence," Cribier said. "They will start adopting it now." One unknown is the lifespan of the new valves, which are made from bovine tissue. "It has only been in use for a relatively short period—we just don't know yet," commented Herve Douard, a cardiologist in Bordeaux.—AFP

ing their birth sex was repealed in 2017 after a year, following businesses and sports leagues boycotting the state. Tennessee is ranked as one of the country's most religious states by the Pew Research Center with 73 percent of adults "highly religious" and 52 percent of the population evangelical protestants.

The TEP said in a Facebook post late on Monday that Swift had been a long-time ally to the LGBT+ community. The post included a photo of Swift's note. "@TaylorSwift13, this lit up my heart," tweeted talk-show host Ellen DeGeneres, whose show was cancelled a year after she came out as gay in an episode in 1997.

Swift broke her silence on her political views before the US 2018 midterm elections in an Instagram post saying she supported Democrat candidates due to the incumbent Senator Marsha Blackburn's anti-LGBT+ and women's rights voting record. "I believe in the fight for LGBT+ rights, and that any form of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender is WRONG," she said in that post. Swift was unavailable for comment.—Reuters

CONSUMER PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

RECALL INFORMATION

Model Name: LS500H & LS500
Model Year: 2018
No. of Vehicles: 588 units

RECALL REASON There is a possibility that run-flat tires may be damaged during the assembly process, which might cause a crack on the sidewall reinforcement layer from inside of the tire

REMEDY AI Sayer will contact the involved vehicle customers and inform them to bring to our service centers as the necessary parts are available. You are also kindly requested to contact 1830030. All the repairs will be free of charge for both Parts and Labor

CONTACT Please contact **MOHAMED NASER ALSAYER & SONS EST. CO. W.L.L.** please call to book an appointment Tel: 1830030

This Recall is run pursuant to articles (42, 43, 44, 45, 46 and 47) of no. 27/2017 issuing the executive bylaws of law no. 39/2014 on Consumer Protection

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A farmer of the Sakaguchi Akoya pearl farm displays oysters with pearls on a table in Shima. — AFP photos



A farmer of the Sakaguchi Akoya pearl farm cleans oysters.



An employee of Mikimoto jewelry displays a necklace, earrings and a ring made of cultured Akoya pearls in Tokyo.

PEARLS OF WISDOM: JAPAN'S CULTURED FARMS STILL GLISTEN

In Japan's picturesque Ago Bay, a couple sits in a little hut picking out oysters from a net, cleaning them carefully one-by-one before replacing them gently back in the water. Their hope: in several months, these oysters will produce a glistening white pearl from a cultured farming technique invented in Japan that is in decline as experts die out in the ageing country. Cultured pearl farming was first commercialized in Ago Bay and spread throughout the world. There are still dozens of farms plying the trade there, which look from the sky like a series of rafts floating between the steep coast and a string of tiny islets.

In 1893, an Ago Bay local called Kokichi Mikimoto became worried the oyster pearls avidly sought in his waters were becoming extinct. So he began introducing artificial foreign bodies into the oysters in a bid to replicate the natural process in which they secrete thousands of layers of nacre when a grain of sand or shell finds its way inside the pearl pocket. After several setbacks—including a bacterial virus that decimated his crop—Mikimoto finally hit the jackpot: one day in July 1893 a semi-spherical pearl appeared, clinging to the oyster.

A decade or so later, he had refined his method to produce a perfectly round specimen and immediately patented his technique—the cultured pearl. Success was not immediate—several viewed the cultured pearl as a vulgar replica of the “natural” variety—but eventually Mikimoto built a global empire and Japan became the reference for the small pearls known as “Akoya.” Around the same time, two other Japanese, Tatsuhei Mise and Tokichi Nishikawa, applied for a patent.

Top five percent

The Sakaguchi family has been crafting these valuable pearls between three and 10 millimeters in diameter for three generations. Kasuhiro, 73, and Misayo, 68, are now supported by daughter Ruriko. “Our job is to look after the oysters as well as we can for three to four years,”

explained the energetic 43-year-old Ruriko, sporting an apron and headscarf. “From harvesting the young oysters, introducing the graft, right up to extracting the pearl,” she added, as she dragged oysters from the net for inspection.

The whole delicate operation rests of the insertion of a nucleus—a small round polished ball made out of shellfish — and the “graft”, a piece of donor mantle tissue from another oyster. Over a period of several months, the oyster reacts to the foreign bodies by secreting thousands of layers of nacre which form the pearl. The pearls are harvested in December, when the water is around 15 degrees, said Ruriko. “Below this, the pearl will lack strength. Above that, it will lack shine,” she explained.

It is a thankless task. Of the 100,000 oysters harvested annually, half die immediately after the operation. The vast majority produce either mediocre pearls or nothing at all. Only around five percent of the oysters harvested will result in pearls of sufficient quality to adorn the windows of chic jewelers far away in Tokyo.

Family heirloom

The Sakaguchis are lucky to have Ruriko take up the family trade, which is suffering-like many other traditional Japanese crafts—from an ageing population and a flight from the country to booming cities. The number of specialized pearl farmers has dropped from 3,760 in the 1960s to just 680 in 2013, according to the most recent data from the Fisheries Agency. But despite this, Japan still dominates the global market, accounting for around 30 percent in terms of value—helped by concentrating on the best quality pearls.

Japan has produced around 20 tons of farmed pearls annually over the past 10 years, bringing in around 16.6 billion yen, and is aiming to reach 20 billion yen by 2027. But even that would be a far cry from the heady days of the late 1980s when Japan produced around 70 tons with a value of 88 billion yen. So what sets Japanese cultured



Farmers of the Sakaguchi Akoya pearl farm harvest oysters.

pearls apart from competitors in Tahiti, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines or Australia?

Aside from centuries of know-how, Japan is helped by its climate, said Yuichi Nakamura, vice-chairman of the Mie Pearl promotion council. “The key is the winter season in Japan. It gives the pearls a better shine and sets them apart from the rest of world,” Nakamura told AFP. Rivals from China at one point looked set to threaten Japan's dominance but “they focused in quantity... whereas we concentrated on quality to stay in the race.”

That quality is on glittering display at the luxurious, multistory flagship store of Mikimoto, in the plush Tokyo district of Ginza. Here a mannequin wears a priceless

pearl necklace but pearls can range from a few hundred to a million dollars. “For the Japanese, pearls are a family heirloom. We give them as necklaces to women about to marry or as earrings or rings,” said Mikimoto boss Hiroshi Yoshida.

They then wear them at grand occasions for the rest of their lives. But perhaps an indication of a shift in the global economy: more than half of Mikimoto's customers are Chinese. After them come Americans, other Asians such as Singaporeans, and then Europeans.—AFP

Shocking book gives voice to victims of sex trafficking

Lisa Harding jokes that she is going to choose a “nice cheery subject” for her next book before admitting that it is actually about children coping with alcoholic parents. But if it gets anything like the acclaim of her debut novel, “Harvesting”, a heart-wrenching yet utterly gripping account of two sex trafficked teenage girls, her publishers will be more than happy. “Harvesting” has been hailed as “shockingly good” by the Irish writer Roddy Doyle—the author of “The Van” and “The Commitments”—a “brilliantly written... thought-provoking, anger-provoking, guilt-provoking” kick to the collective conscience.



In this photo Irish writer and actress Lisa Harding poses for a picture during an interview. — AFP

The Irish First Lady Sabina Coyne Higgins was so moved by it that she put pen to paper to urge people to read it. “This wonderful book records a hidden world of horror and pain that is hard to believe exists, but which sadly is a stark reality for so many,” Harding, an actress best known for her part in the Irish television soap “Fair City”, tells the story of two young girls who are “tricked, cajoled and forced” into prostitution, using alternating first-person narratives.

She used real testimonies from trafficked 13- to 15-year-olds to “get into their heads”, working with NGOs in Ireland and Moldova to build up a realistic picture of the girls and give “them back the voice they had been robbed of”. Sammy is an off-the-rails middle-class Irish teenager while Nico is a studious Moldovan child who is sold into marriage by her father at 12 before being trafficked through Europe to Ireland.

Industrial scale

“People might find it difficult to believe that this kind of cruelty is going on on such an industrial scale, but it is happening and we are doing precious little about it,” Harding told AFP in Paris as the book was published in French. The girls end up being held

in a house on a Dublin “ghost estate” left unfinished when the Irish property boom collapsed. It's an apt metaphor of the dark side of capitalism that Harding said was “very deliberate”.

Sex trafficking is an enormous and growing global business making more than \$100 billion a year on the pain of its victims, she said. “When the authorities pull in a car full of girls usually they are too afraid to speak, afraid for themselves and for their families back home,” she said. “If it was a car full of drugs or arms it would be different—the traffickers would go down. “So it's a low-risk high-profit business, and the legislation as it stands across Europe is not looking after the most vulnerable,” the author insisted.

While countries like France and Ireland have adopted the Nordic model of prosecuting the clients rather than prostitutes, Harding insisted there was a “lack of will to implement the law or to really take on trafficking.” For Harding, whose eyes were opened to the trade when she was asked to take part in an anti-trafficking campaign, change will only come when the women's suffering stops being swept under the carpet. “Prostitutes in fiction are usually an object, a murder victim or ‘Pretty Woman’ figure. These girls have no voice. Nobody wants to know because it is too hard.”

Utterly silenced

Even the #MeToo movement has failed them, she argued. “I don't think it is giving a voice to trafficked women. This is the utter silencing of people.” In the book, the two girls create a bubble in which “they hold onto a precious core of themselves” to survive the daily dehumanizing horror they have to go through. It is a coping strategy used by many trauma victims the writer found in the course of her research. “There is lightness, humor and love in the book that people may not think possible,” Harding said. “I veer away from anything sensational or graphic, you stay with them and their unlikely friendship.”

Indeed, several publishers rejected the novel “because they thought the subject was impossible to market, that it would be too difficult to get people to pick up.” But since it started winning awards it has been picked up for the big screen by the director of the hit British television comedy series, “Derry Girls”. Harding believes that getting into men's heads is the only way to tackle trafficking. “It has to start early, you have to talk to young guys at school who are growing up with porn and getting inured to the idea of transactional sex,” she said.

An experiment carried out by the Irish NGO Ruhama last year, using a fake prostitute advert, found very few clients were concerned when they found out that the woman was trafficked. “No one tried to help her,” Harding said. “The best one guy managed was saying, ‘You'd better get yourself home.’”—AFP

Thai cave boy divers explore new tunnel in Vietnam

Three divers who helped rescue a Thai football team last year have made a fresh discovery in Vietnam where they explored a tunnel that could expand the footprint of the world's largest cave. The team was invited to descend into a waterlogged pit in the Son Doong cave in central Vietnam that has never been explored and is believed to connect to nearby chambers. They were forced back at 77 meters because they did not have enough oxygen to push further, but they think the tunnels could be 120 meters deep.

If the tunnel connects to another cave, it would make Son Doong “easily the largest cave in the world and it would never be overtaken,” British cave expert Howard Limbert, who helped organize the dive, said Tuesday at a press conference announcing the find. The three divers—Rick Stanton, Jason Mallinson and Chris Jewell—were part of the daring rescue to

save 12 Thai footballers and their coach who were trapped in a cave for eighteen days last year.

Stanton—who found the boys on a ledge—said the painstaking task of safely leading the group out of the tunnel alive helped to prepare for the mission in Vietnam. “Our planning and preparation is without parallel,” he said. The team plans to return to Vietnam next year to try to link the tunnel to another cave near Son Doong, which is so big that it has its own ecosystem and weather patterns. The cave in central Quang Binh province was first found by a local forager in 1991, but was not re-discovered for another 19 years because its entrance was hidden by thick surrounding jungle.

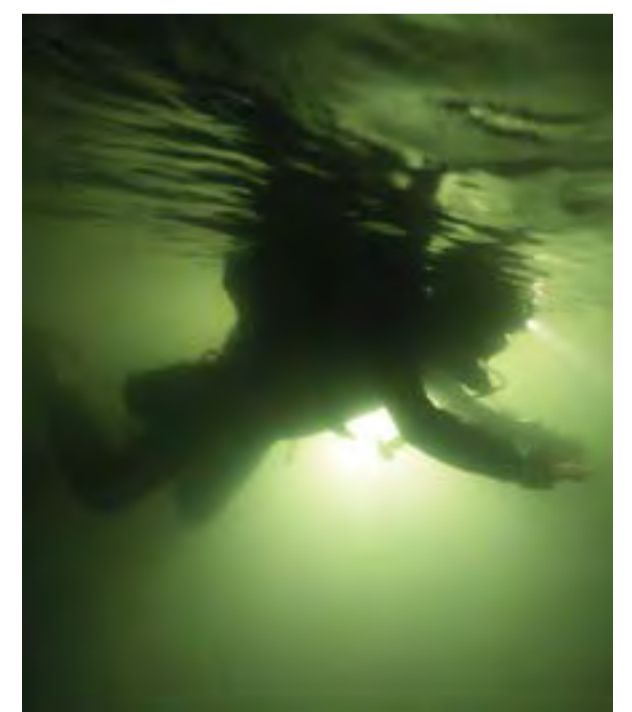
Only 30 percent of Vietnam's Phong Nha national park—where Son Doong and a network of adjacent caves are located—has so far been explored. Son Doong is the world's largest cave by volume, big

enough to house a New York city block—including 40-storey skyscrapers—according to Oxalis, which runs tours into the caves. Proposed plans to build a cable car in the area have sparked anger among the Vietnamese public who fear it will harm the area's wildlife and pristine views.

An official said yesterday there were no plans to move ahead with the project despite offers from several companies. “That is only in theory, in truth, to build a cable car there is no such project yet,” the vice chairman of Quang Binh province Tran Thien Dung said Tuesday. Vietnam's tourism industry is booming among domestic and foreign travellers alike, but the communist country has come under fire for failing to preserve landscapes as it rapidly expands the sector.—AFP



This handout photo released by Oxalis Adventure Tours shows divers preparing their equipment during an expedition in Vietnam's Son Doong cave.



This handout photo released by Oxalis Adventure Tours shows a diver swimming underwater during an expedition in Vietnam's Son Doong cave. — AFP photos

Iran president charges US 'leader of world terrorism'

TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani yesterday accused the United States of being the real "leader of world terrorism", hitting back after Washington blacklisted Iran's Revolutionary Guards as a terrorist organization. Tehran was quick to retaliate on Monday by declaring US troops "terrorists" following Washington's move, which was welcomed by Iran's regional archrivals Israel and Saudi Arabia. It was the first time that Washington has branded part of a foreign government a terrorist group, meaning that anyone who deals with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps could face prison in the United States.

"Who are you to label revolutionary institutions as terrorists?" an angry Rouhani demanded in a speech broadcast live by state television. Rouhani hailed the Guards for fighting terrorism since their creation in 1979, and accused US forces of having always been involved with terrorist groups or acts of terrorism. "You want to use terrorist groups as tools against the nations of the region... you are the leader of world terrorism. Who is propagating and encouraging terrorism in today's world? Who wanted to use ISIS (the Islamic State group) as a tool?" Rouhani asked, saying that the US is "hiding" the leaders of the organization.

The Revolutionary Guards are the ideological arm of the country's military and deeply embedded in Iranian political and economic life. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei praised the Guards on their National Day, saying they were at the "forefront" of defending the country and its interests, according to his official website. He lashed out at US officials, saying: "Their vice and deceit will return boomerang on them, leading the enemies of the Islamic Republic such as (US President Donald) Trump and those around him at the US

ruling apparatus to go down the drain."

To support his accusations, Rouhani cited the downing of Iran Air Flight 655 in July 1988 by missiles fired from the US naval ship the USS Vincennes. "You have done everything imaginable. Which force was it that shot down our civil airliner in the waters of the Persian Gulf?" he said, adding that it was aimed at intimidating Iran. "You wanted to tell the Iranian nation that we do not have any red lines, you wanted to say that we also kill children, you wanted to say that we also kill women," Rouhani said, concluding that the US was transmitting "a message of terrorism in the whole world".

The US move comes on top of Trump's decision last year to pull the United States out of an international deal with Iran that was meant to lift crippling economic sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear program. Washington had been encouraged to blacklist the Guards by Trump's allies Saudi Arabia and Israel, which both cheered the declaration. "The US decision (follows) the kingdom's repeated demands to the international community to address the issue of Iranian-backed terrorism," the official Saudi Press Agency quoted a foreign ministry source as saying yesterday. The source welcomed the US move as a "practical and serious step" in curbing what the kingdom describes as Iranian meddling in the region.

In a statement carried by the Iranian official news agency IRNA, the Supreme National Security Council declared the United States a "state sponsor of terrorism" and its forces in the region "terror groups". Quickly adapting to the decision, the semi-official Fars News Agency, close to ultra-conservatives, described the US casualties in the latest suicide bombing on a military convoy in Afghanistan as "terrorists." In a report on the attack, Fars said yesterday: "American army terrorists



AHVAZ, Iran: An aerial view taken yesterday shows the Karun River which has burst its banks in the capital of Iran's southwestern province of Khuzestan, which has been badly affected by flooding over the past few weeks. — AFP

killed in Afghanistan." NATO announced on Monday that a suicide car bomb on a convoy in Iran's eastern neighbor

had killed three US troops and a military contractor and wounded three more. — AFP

Entrepreneur aims to send 3D-printed rockets to space

COLORADO SPRINGS: To see Tim Ellis hunched over his laptop, alone in a room at a major space industry conference in Colorado, you can hardly imagine that he might be the next Elon Musk. But Relativity Space, the company he co-founded in Dec 2015 with the vision of launching 3D-printed rockets, has grown from 14 to 80 employees in one year and will recruit another 40 this year. At age 28, Ellis has lured several industry veterans, including from SpaceX, the US market leader for launches that was founded by billionaire entrepreneur Musk.

Relativity Space has raised \$45 million so far. Canadian satellite operator Telesat has entrusted it with the launch of part of its future 5G satellite constellation and the US military has given it a launch pad at Cape Canaveral. And Ellis, who six years ago was still studying for his masters in aerospace engineering at the University of Southern California, now sits on the White House's National Space Council along with former astronauts and the heads of the largest American aerospace groups.

"I'm the youngest person by more than 20 years, and we're the only venture capital backed start-up," Ellis told AFP during the 35th annual Space Symposium in Colorado Springs, a major annual event for the space industry that will welcome 15,000 participants from 40 countries. Dozens of start-ups have announced plans in

recent years to build small and medium rockets to launch small satellites. Many will probably fail before having made their first rocket, but that's the game, Ellis explained.

"The notion in Silicon Valley is you're going to take tons of big bets, where lots of them will totally lose money. But the ones that succeed will pay for all of the losers - and in a huge outcome, if it's the next Google or the next SpaceX," he said. Relativity Space, which like SpaceX is based in Los Angeles, has so far printed nine rocket engines and three second stages for its rocket model, called Terran 1, whose first test flight is scheduled for the end of 2020.

Small satellites

With its large 3D-printing machines, the startup claims that its rockets will require 100 times fewer parts than traditional rockets. "We'll only be experts in like two or three (technological) processes," he said, compared to traditional manufacturing with complex supply chains. "It's far easier." Only the electronics are not 3D-printed. "It's much cheaper, because of the labor reduction in the automation with 3D-printing," said Ellis, who will charge \$10 million for a launch, at least at first.

"Also, it's more flexible," he said: eventually, Relativity Space will adapt the size of the fairings of the rockets to the requirements of individual customers, depending on the size of their satellite. Speed is the other advantage: "Our target is to get from raw material to flight in 60 days," Ellis said. If Relativity Space succeeds in this feat - which it has not yet demonstrated - it would revolutionize the launch industry. Today, a satellite operator can wait for years before having a place in the large rockets of Arianespace or SpaceX.

The Terran 1 will be 10 times smaller the SpaceX Falcon 9, able to place a 1,250 kg payload into very low



LOS ANGELES: This handout photo obtained yesterday shows the Aeon 1 engine, 3D-printed by Relativity Space, which will power its future rocket Terran 1. — AFP

orbit (185 km above the Earth's surface). This could be suitable for a constellation of small satellites for telecommunications or imaging the Earth, but also for one of the largest customers in space: the US military.

This is another reason for the young executive's arrival in Colorado Springs: meeting senior Pentagon officials. "I rarely wear a suit, but I will for the military," Ellis said. — AFP

Clues emerge in 'missing' ocean plastics conundrum

VIENNA: It's a puzzle that has perplexed scientists for years: humanity dumps millions of tonnes of plastics into the world's oceans annually, yet only a tiny fraction remains visible on the surface. Now an international team of researchers believe they may be closer to determining where Earth's "missing plastics" end up, using an unprecedented global effort to track and draw down one of the most polluting materials ever invented.

As images of plastic-clogged beaches and swirling gyres of detritus bobbing on the high seas are prompting governments and cities to curb their throwaway culture, a growing body of evidence suggests a deeper problem of plastic permeating all ocean depths. Of the between 4-12 million tonnes that enter the oceans each year, just 250 thousand tonnes are thought to stay at the

surface. Overall, more than 99 percent of plastics dumped at sea over several decades are currently unaccounted for.

As plastics degrade through erosion, UV light and microbial decay, their density changes, putting them at the mercy of ocean currents - and, once they get pulled lower in the water, much harder for experts to track. "It's quite difficult to decide where it all is because there are so many processes at work," Althea Mountford, from Newcastle University's School of Natural and Environmental Sciences, told AFP. "Even plastic at the surface can sink down and go back up again - it's moving between different possible sinks in different areas of the ocean at any time."

In a potential breakthrough, Mountford used a computer model of ocean currents for plastics of three different densities to project where most of the world's fragments collect once they start to sink. The model showed significant build ups at depths varying thousands of meters in the Mediterranean Sea, Indian Ocean and the waters surrounding Southeast Asia. Much of the plastic ends up on the seabed - as researchers outlined earlier this year in a separate study that found

microplastic fibres in the guts of tiny shrimp that live at the bottom of the Mariana Trench - the deepest place on Earth. While Mountford stressed that her research was preliminary, the results could help focus investigation on the ocean areas identified and enable better studies of the damage plastics cause to marine life.

Mountford's work draws on that of Eric van Sebille, associate professor in Oceanography and Climate Change at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. He said that most plastic pollution research had traditionally focused on the fragments that stay on the surface - and with good reason. "We know the most about the garbage patches so it makes sense to focus on them and if you look at the impact the surface plastic probably does have the most because most organisms live there," he told AFP. "But if you want to understand the complete problem then we need to get a deeper view."

Van Sebille's current research is based on the fact that plastic pollution is now so prolific that monitoring the waste fragments themselves can provide valuable insight into how oceans circulate. His hunch - which should be borne out as modelling gets more sophisticated - is that the vast majority of plastics dumped in the

oceans wash back ashore. This would account for the huge disparity in the volume entering the oceans and the smaller amounts that can be seen today. "Plastic gets out of a river, it stays within the coastal zone for a while and it has the opportunity to wash back to shore and quite a lot of it might do that," he said.

Van Sebille added that while the problem of plastic pollution today may seem insurmountable, focusing clean up efforts in coastal areas could save much more widespread plastic contamination in the long-run. "More and more we think that plastic spends a lot of time in that coastal zone so you don't need to do that much clean up to get rid of 10 million tonnes," he said.

In a series of studies on plastic waste unveiled Tuesday at the European Geosciences Union in Vienna, one paper showed plastic contamination on the Forni Glacier, a vast body of frozen water high up the Italian Alps. A team of Italian experts found between 28-74 items per kilogram of sediment analyzed - meaning that the entire glacier is home to 131-162 million plastic items. "From marine trenches to glaciers we have now found microplastics," said Roberto Sergio Azzoni, from the University of Milan, who led the research. — AFP

Bouteflika ally named Algeria's...

Continued from Page 1

The students were echoing calls made Friday - in the first weekly mass protest since Bouteflika announced his departure after losing the military's support - when Algerians demanded regime insiders be excluded from the political transition. "Bensalah, Bouteflika, it's the same thing!" said 20-year-old Roumaissa, an Algerian flag draped around her shoulders during yesterday's student protest.

Ahead of Bensalah's appointment, an editorial in pro-government daily El Moudjahid suggested he should step aside from the presidential post. He is "not tolerated by the citizen movement, which demands his immediate departure," or by the opposition and various political groups in both houses of parliament, the newspaper said. Three men in particular have drawn demonstrators' ire: Bensalah, the

head of the constitutional council Tayeb Belaiz and prime minister Noureddine Bedoui.

The protest movement is calling for a new transitional framework that is committed to deep reforms and organizing free elections. Human Rights Watch said Bouteflika's departure is "at most a first step in ending autocratic rule". "During any transitional phase, authorities should fully respect the rights of Algerians to speak, assemble and associate with one another," the watchdog said in a statement.

Algerians of all ages have rallied since late February against Bouteflika, who resigned a week ago after efforts to appease demonstrators proved fruitless. Facing endemic unemployment, young Algerians are hoping the protest movement can ultimately improve their prospects. "It must change. Today, young people in Algeria are without a future," said Yassine, a 21-year-old studying technology.

Although Bouteflika's resignation was celebrated by demonstrators, they have remained firm in pushing for a wider overhaul of the political system. Rabea, a physics teacher, said the country's youth are "the wealth of Algeria". "It's them who will make the future of the country, they must be listened to," she said. —AFP

MoE warns schools against...

Continued from Page 1

in the private sector. She said such certificates must be authenticated by the foreign ministry before being submitted to the authority. She said the authority is still

Ghosn accuses executives of...

Continued from Page 1

be rearrested, Ghosn emerged on Twitter to announce plans to hold a news conference on April 11. His re-arrest came just days after news that Renault,

asking for authenticating engineers' degrees in cooperation with the Kuwait Society of Engineers.

Meanwhile, informed sources said the residency affairs department is refusing to renew residency permits of expat workers whose companies have licenses valid for less than six months. The sources said a large number of company representatives went to the commerce and industry ministry and asked it to renew the licenses, saying they are willing to forgo the remaining validity periods so they can renew their workers' residencies.

which Ghosn also once headed, had handed French prosecutors documents showing suspicious transfers worth millions of euros authorized by the auto tycoon.

Shortly after his arrest, his wife Carole - who had been living in Tokyo with Ghosn while he was on bail - left Japan. She told a French newspaper she had been forced to flee Tokyo with support from the French ambassador and was able to use her US passport after having to surrender her Lebanese one to prosecutors. — AFP

Sports

Basic beginnings to global exposure: F1 reaches 1000 races

Hamilton closing in on Schumacher's all-time mark after winning fifth world title

SHANGHAI: From the first race at a converted World War II airbase in rural England to this weekend's 1,000th grand prix at the \$240 million international circuit in Shanghai, Formula One has come a long way since it all began in 1950.

Silverstone held the first race 69 years ago and the British Grand Prix has remained, with the Italian GP, the only ever-present races on the calendar. In 70 seasons, Formula One has visited 32 countries across five continents and a street circuit in Vietnam will be the newest addition next year.

Formula One's organisation was bought for \$8 billion in 2017 by US media giant Liberty Media and is now listed on Wall Street—a long way from the early days when tyre and oil companies supplied their products for free in return for having their logos on drivers' overalls.

EVERGREEN FERRARI

Italian Giuseppe Farina was victorious in May 1950 and went on to clinch the world championship four months later in his home country. A season now lasts more than twice as long. Michael Schumacher holds the record of seven drivers' world championships and there is a poignancy that his last race win came in Shanghai, in 2006.

Schumacher has not been seen in public since suffering life-threatening brain injuries in a skiing accident in 2013. At the peak of his career, the German summed up the essence of the sport. "Every year we find something new, we go quicker, that's Formula One," he said.

One of Schumacher's former Ferrari team-mates, the Brazilian Rubens Barrichello, holds the record for

most race starts but failed to win a world title in his 18-year career.

Defending champion Lewis Hamilton is closing in on Schumacher's all-time mark after winning his fifth world title last year at the age of 34 to edge ahead of great rival Sebastian Vettel, who won four championships with Red Bull before moving to Ferrari.

It was Argentine great Juan Manuel Fangio who dominated the opening decade with five world championships in seven seasons from 1951.

He was succeeded in the 1960s by multiple world champions Jack Brabham, Jim Clark, Graham Hill and Jackie Stewart. The 1970s featured the rivalry between James Hunt and Niki Lauda and the 1980s saw the emergence of the great Alain Prost and legendary Brazilian Ayrton Senna before Schumacher began his dominance in the mid-1990s.

More than 20 drivers of the 772 who have started a Grand Prix have died behind the wheel, including Senna and Austrian Roland Ratzenberger on one dark weekend in 1994 at the San Marino Grand Prix.

Their deaths led to wide-ranging changes to improve safety which meant there were no further fatalities until Jules Bianchi died in 2015 from head injuries sustained at the 2014 Japanese Grand Prix—a tragedy which led to the development of the distinctive "halo" cockpit head protection system.

Ferrari are the only manufacturer to have competed in every campaign and the Italian outfit have won a record 16 titles since the constructors' championship was first introduced in 1958 as the International Cup for Formula One Manufacturers.



SILVERSTONE: File photo shows Brazilian Formula One driver Ayrton Senna (c) chats with McLaren's team after clocking the second best time during the second practice session of the Silverstone F1 Grand Prix on July 13, 1990. — AFP

The first winners were British team Vanwall and Europeans have dominated with a trio of British manufacturers Williams (9 titles), McLaren (8) and Lotus (7) claiming 24 constructors' crowns between them.

Next on the all-time list come Germany's Mercedes with five while Austria's Red Bull enjoyed four golden years with Vettel leading them to a clean sweep from 2010 to 2013. — AFP

Coleman to double at US trials, worlds and Tokyo Olympics

LONDON: World 100m silver medallist Christian Coleman will go for a sprint double at July's US championships, setting the stage for a run at gold in both at Doha's world championships and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, his manager told Reuters.

"He is definitely doubling," Emanuel Hudson said in a telephone interview. "Christian Coleman always has considered himself a 100-200 metres athlete," Hudson added in revealing the world 60m record holder's plans to go for his first double on the global stage. "The norm is he would be running the 100 and 200. So ideally he is going to run both at the Olympic Games." A long 2017 collegiate season before Coleman turned professional led the sprinter to contest only the 100m at London's world championships, even though he made the US team in both sprints.

Then last season hamstring problems curtailed his 200m plans. The decision to double this time, along with world and Olympic implications, assures the US nationals/world trials, scheduled for Des Moines, Iowa, of a major showdown in both events. World champion

Justin Gatlin and indoor bronze medallist Ronnie Baker will likely be Coleman's opponents in the 100m and Diamond League winner Noah Lyles in the 200m.

Lyles has not totally closed the door on doubling, though. "As of right now, the plan is the 200," Lyles' coach Lance Brauman told Reuters. "But all options will stay on the table just in case." Coleman, the 2017 US collegiate double sprint champion, is planning to compete in both events on the Diamond League circuit before chasing the US double, his manager said. The 23-year-old will open his Diamond League season with a 100m headliner against Chinese world indoor silver medallist Su Bingtian in Shanghai on May 18 and is confirmed for a 100m at the Prefontaine Classic near San Francisco on June 30.

Although Coleman missed several races with hamstring problems before roaring back with the year's fastest 100 (a personal best 9.79 seconds) in 2018, "I don't think that (the double) will be a problem," his manager said.

A final check at the Florida Relays, where Coleman ran the 4x200m and 4x400m relays, showed he was ready. "He's healthy. We are not putting him in a whole bunch of meets and his last likely race, in Lausanne, will be 20 days before the US championships," Hudson said.

Coleman's 200m best of 19.85 seconds in 2017 is two-tenths of a second slower than Lyles' top time, but Hudson is expecting big things this season. "Since then (2017) he has broken the world record in the 60 metres and run a personal best in the 100," the manager said. — Reuters

CBK sponsors 'I CAN' marathon



KUWAIT: Within its social responsibility activities, The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently sponsored the 'I CAN' marathon organized by Special Education Schools Scout Girls.

In this regard, CBK's deputy director for corporate communication, Amani Al-Wer'a stressed that CBK is always keen on communicating with various social sects, namely people with special needs.

Fleetwood in it to win it in third Masters appearance

AUGUSTA: England's Tommy Fleetwood, heading into his third Masters appearance, isn't at Augusta National to make up the numbers at the first major golf championship of the season.

"I'm always going to play to win," Fleetwood said Monday as he prepared for Thursday's start of play. "I'm never going to look back on my career and say, 'Oh, I finished third at The Players, that was a good week' or 'Oh, I finished top five at the Masters.'"

"That's not something to be that proud of." Fleetwood missed the cut in his first trip to Augusta in 2017 and finished tied for 17th last year when he played the first two rounds alongside Tiger Woods as the US superstar made his Masters return after a two-year absence.

The 28-year-old from Southport knows his total of six Masters rounds can't compare with the kind of experience four-time champion Woods or former winner Fred Couples, but he feels comfortable on the course and with the hoopla that surrounds the first major of the season.

"It's not just another week on tour, but you try and do everything the same," he said. "The golf course itself needs a bit more preparation than usual, anyway. There's so many different things to consider. There's so many options here and there, and particularly hitting into greens, chipping around the greens and putting—I don't think you can ever learn enough."

Fleetwood showed he can find his way around Augusta with a third-round 66 last year, although he followed that with a final-round 74. Two months later he closed the US Open with a record-equalling 63 at a brutal Shinnecock Hills, and he was in contention at the Open championship before a final-round 73 dropped him into a share of 12th.

He was a star of Europe's Ryder Cup triumph last September, where he and Francesco Molinari teamed to make history as the first European pairing to rack up four wins in four matches. Although he has yet to win this season Fleetwood is encouraged by a tie for third at the Arnold Palmer Invitational—three shots behind champion Molinari—and a tie for fifth at the Players Championship, where he played in the final group on Sunday but finished three behind winner Rory McIlroy.

"The Arnold Palmer in particular I built a lot of confidence that week and then the following week was as confident as I have felt on a golf course," Fleetwood said. "It's strange when you have the two best finishes of the year and you're disappointed in both of them because I really felt like I had good chances in both and I didn't win either." "But overall, everything's in really good shape." — AFP

World's 10 top-ranked golfers seeking first Masters green jacket

AUGUSTA: There's a major hole on the career accomplishments list for the world's 10 top-ranked golfers this week at Augusta National—none of them owns a Masters champion's green jacket.

It's the first time since the global rankings began in 1986 that the entire top 10 arrived at the year's first major tournament and none of them had ever won the Masters, including new world number one Justin Rose of England. "If you look at the skill sets of the guys at the top of the world rankings, Augusta really should suit most of us," Rose said. "So I would say that this year there's probably a very good probability that one of those guys will get it done."

Third-ranked Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland, a four-time major winner, needs a Masters win to become only the sixth golfer to complete a career Grand Slam.

There's a trio of top-10 Americans with major wins lacking one at Augusta National, including second-ranked Dustin Johnson, three-time major winner Brooks Koepka (fourth) and 2017 PGA Championship winner Justin Thomas (fifth). "I think it's just a coincidence that nobody in the top 10 has won the Masters," Thomas said. "It definitely speaks to the new wave of players." Three more US players seek their first major title: Bryson DeChambeau (sixth), Rickie Fowler (ninth) and Xander Schauffele (10th).

Mix in reigning seventh-ranked reigning British Open champion Francesco Molinari of Italy and sixth-ranked Spaniard Jon Rahm, who shared fourth last year in only his second Masters start, and there's an element of extra hunger under the Georgia pines this week.

"The most important thing I learned last year is that Augusta National, expect for the par-5s, plays over par," Rahm said. "So if you make par, don't get frustrated. That's just the way it is around this course." Rahm, 24, could not claw back from an opening 75 last year despite firing the lowest Masters third-round score of 65, but won the Spanish Open the following week.

"I hope my putting is a lot better than it was last year," Rahm said. "I feel strong in every part of my game. I just want to make a few more putts than I did last year."

The only golfer among the world's top 16 who has won the Masters is 14-time major winner Tiger Woods. And the 12th-ranked American, now 43, won his most recent of four Masters crowns in 2005. — AFP

Five players to watch at the Masters

AUGUSTA: Five Players to Watch at the 83rd Masters golf tournament, which begins tomorrow at par-72 Augusta National:

RORY MCILROY

The 29-year-old from Northern Ireland hopes to complete a career Grand Slam by winning his first Masters title. His first major win came at the 2011 US Open—just two months after a final-round collapse cost him a victory at Augusta National. World number three McIlroy went on to win the 2012 and 2014 PGA Championships and the 2014 British Open. He will have a starring role when the British Open is played in July at Northern Ireland's Royal Portrush and would love to be there wearing a green jacket, the symbol of a Masters champion. He won the Players Championship last month and has opened the year with seven top-10 finishes in a row.

TIGER WOODS

The 43-year-old American has won 14 major titles, four of them at the Masters but none since the 2008 US Open. He's back in good health after spinal fusion surgery that ended years of injury woes. Former world number one Woods, now ranked 12th, was second at the 2018 PGA Championship, his best major showing since a runner-up effort to South Korean Yang Yong-eun at the 2009 PGA. He won his 80th career PGA Tour title, two shy of matching Sam Snead's all-time record, at the 2018 Tour Championship and reached the last eight at the WGC Match-Play Championship last month.

JUSTIN ROSE

The 38-year-old Englishman has been a run-

ner-up in two of the past four Masters, losing a playoff to Spain's Sergio Garcia in 2017 and firing the lowest second-place score in Masters history along with Phil Mickelson in 2015 behind winner Jordan Spieth. Rose took his most recent title in January at Torrey Pines. The 2013 US Open champion also shared second at last year's British Open. Returned to world number one on Monday, overtaking Dustin Johnson. Has been in the top 15 in seven of the past eight years at the Masters.

PHIL MICKELSON

The US left-hander, a five-time major champion who turns 49 in June, would become the oldest major golf winner if he captures a fourth green jacket after 2004, 2006 and 2010. Julius Boros owns the eldest major winner mark after winning won the 1968 PGA Championship at age 48. And Jack Nicklaus is the oldest Masters champion, winning at 46 in 1986 for the last of his all-time record 18 major titles. Mickelson, ranked 22nd, also won the 2005 PGA Championship and 2013 British Open and is a six-time runner-up at the US Open. He'll try to complete the career Grand Slam in June at Pebble Beach, where he won the PGA Pebble Beach Pro-Am for the fifth time in February. Mickelson was second at the Masters as recently as 2015.

BROOKS KOEPLKA

The 28-year-old American has not played the Masters since becoming a major champion but the man who won two of the past three majors looks set for a top-10 showing at Augusta National this week. Koepka did win the 2017 and 2018 US Open titles and held off Tiger Woods in an electric atmosphere to win his third major crown at the 2018 PGA Championship. But he missed last year's Masters with a left wrist injury that kept him out from early January to late April. Fourth-ranked Koepka has improved in each visit to the Masters, going from 33rd in his 2015 debut to 21st in 2016 and 11th in 2017. His most recent win came last October in South Korea. — AFP

Sports

Australia can be surprise package at WCup: Gregan

Australia has ability to score points as they have world class players

SAPPORO: Australia's most capped player George Gregan has backed the Wallabies to surprise a few people at this year's Rugby World Cup if they can overcome the inconsistencies that have plagued them for the last three years.

The Wallabies endured their worst test campaign in 60 years in 2018, winning four out of 13 matches and slumping to sixth in the world rankings. However, former scrumhalf Gregan, who scored 99 points in 139 internationals, believes Michael Cheika's men can peak come tournament time in September, just as they did in 2015 when they reached the final.

"They do have time in a World Cup year, which is a unique year. It is about getting it right when you get over here," said Gregan in an interview with Reuters in Sapporo. "I just see the margins now, particularly amongst the top eight teams, getting smaller and smaller."

"They can flip that switch, they have that in them." However, Gregan, who is in Japan in his role as ambassador for World Cup sponsor Land Rover, warned that Cheika's men will have to show improvement in the reduced Rugby Championship that begins in July to then be serious contenders at the right time.

"It's about getting it right on the day and if you are a little bit off, you are out. That is the Rugby World Cup," the 45-year-old said.

WELSH EXAMPLE

He also pointed to the consistency shown by Australia's World Cup Pool D opponents Wales in their recent winning run, which included winning the Six Nations Grand Slam last month. "You have a team like Wales, who have won 14 in a row... all the fundamentals of their game are sound and together but the Wallabies team haven't had that for a while," said Gregan. "I think they (Australia) have just been inconsistent, really inconsistent. They have shown glimpses of what they can do... 'The ability to score points is in that group because they have some world class players: Will Genia, Israel Folau, Samu Kerevi is developing into a really good international centre."

"You can see parts of their game improving, but they haven't put it all together at the same time for an extended period and that is what consistent, good teams do." Gregan, who won the 1999 World Cup with Australia, has seen his country reach the final on four occasions and said they might even enjoy being seen as underdogs later this year. "We like going to international competitions and especially if the Wallabies are a little bit under the radar then they can go about their work and do a good block of training... then they will think why not?," he said. "Sure, we have been inconsistent for three years but it is a seven week tournament and it is a special animal, the Rugby World Cup." The World Cup begins in Tokyo on Sept. 20 when hosts Japan face Russia. — Reuters



HONG KONG: Retired Australian rugby union player George Gregan (R) in front of fans on the second day at the Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament on April 6, 2019. — AFP

Cane returns from broken neck, gets All Blacks boost

WELLINGTON: Sam Cane has been cleared to return to contact training after breaking a bone in his neck and received another boost when he was invited to a one-day All Blacks camp, suggesting the flanker is still in coach Steve Hansen's Rugby World Cup thoughts.

Cane had to have an operation in South Africa after sustaining the injury playing against the Springboks in Pretoria last October and the 27-year-old has not played since. However, his Waikato Chiefs coach Colin Cooper told reporters in Hamilton that he had been cleared for contact, just in time for the All Blacks' first 'foundation day' next Monday in Wellington.

The one-day camp, where the players undergo fitness testing and hold planning meetings, is one of three the All Blacks coaches have scheduled during the Super Rugby season as they fine tune plans for the World Cup in Japan later this year.

One for players based in the North Island will be held in Auckland on May 20, with another for South Island-based players in Christchurch on June 3. New Zealand Rugby Head of High Performance Mike Anthony said in a media release that the "... foundation days will provide an opportunity for All Blacks management and our leading players to start building towards what is a huge year ahead". — Reuters

Warner continues to score heavily in IPL, but slip costs match

HYDERABAD: David Warner continued to blaze his way through the Indian Premier League with the bat but his misfield helped Kings XI Punjab to a dramatic victory over his Sunrisers Hyderabad on Monday.

The aggressive opener scored 70 not out from 62 balls for the Sunrisers, confirming his strong form ahead of his expected return to the Australia team for the 50-overs World Cup in England and Wales.

It was his third half century in six matches and extended his hold at the top of the IPL run-scoring table with 349 runs at an average of 87.25.

He has scored a century in addition to the three half centuries, indicating there is little rust in his game despite the one-year international ban for his part in the Newlands ball-tampering scandal.

The suspension ended on March 29 and the 32-year-old is all but certain to be included in Australia's squad for the May 31-July 14 World Cup when it is announced this week. While Warner batted the entire 20 overs of Hyderabad's innings, tight bowling and muggy conditions in Mohali meant he was required to work hard as he guided his side 150 for four.

India opener KL Rahul's 71 not out then led the Kings XI to a six-wicket victory with a ball to spare. Hyderabad did well to force the game into a final over by taking three quick wickets for eight runs in just 12 balls, leaving Punjab needing 11 runs from the last six.

Rahul and England all-rounder Sam Curran scored



MOHALI: Sunrisers Hyderabad batsman David Warner (L) looks on after playing a shot as Kings XI Punjab wicket keeper K. L. Rahul (R) fields during the 2019 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match between Kings XI Punjab and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium in Mohali. — AFP

nine from Mohammad Nabi's first four deliveries before Rahul hit the ball to Warner at long on. Warner fumbled it then slipped over on the dewy surface as he went to retrieve it, allowing Rahul and Curran to scamper through for the victory.

Punjab are third in the IPL standings with four wins from six matches, trailing Kolkata and Chennai, who have both played only five games, on net run rate. Hyderabad are fourth with three wins and three losses. — Reuters

Buttler ends 'Mankad' row with Ashwin

NEW DELHI: England's Jos Buttler has declared an end to his showdown with Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin after being dismissed by a "Mankad" runout in the Indian Premier League.

The Rajasthan Royals star had a heated exchange with the captain of Kings XI Punjab after being run out at the non-striker's end while backing up in an incident that sparked an international debate on the "spirit of cricket". Buttler told the Times of India he had looked at replays and was sure he should not have been given out. "But it's all done now and I have moved on." The dismissal, named after former India player Vinoo Mankad, is legal but is seen by many as unsporting unless the batsman has been warned first.

Buttler said he did speak with Ashwin after the March 25 runout which even brought disapproval from the MCC, the arbiter of the game's rules. "I just asked him if he really wishes to play the game that way. Whether he thought it was the right thing to do," Buttler said. "And he obviously thought it was, in his opinion." Ashwin, who has been unrepentant of his act, seemed to have waited for Buttler to leave his crease before clipping off the bails. Buttler, who was a victim of a Mankad dismissal by Sri Lanka's Sachithra Senanayake in 2014, said he "will make sure it doesn't happen again".

With minds already turning to the World Cup which starts May 30 soon after the IPL ends, Buttler said the title was an open race. "We are one of the favourites. Traditionally, in World Cup, India and Australia are up there as well," the hard-hitting batsman-wicketkeeper said. "We are playing some really good cricket. But World Cup tournaments, knockout tournaments are always high pressure situations," he said of the tournament. Buttler has been in good form for Rajasthan, scoring 176 runs in five T20 matches including two half-centuries.

Buttler's English teammates in Jonny Bairstow, for Sunrisers Hyderabad, and young all-rounder Sam Curran, for Punjab, have also shone in the IPL. "Since the time more England players have started playing in the IPL, selectors have been taking note of performances in the league," said Buttler. — AFP

English rugby star Wade to pursue NFL dream with Bills

NEW YORK: Former England and Wasps wing Christian Wade has signed for the Buffalo Bills as he pursues his dream of forging a career in the NFL, the team announced on Monday. Wade shocked English rugby last year after announcing his plans to switch sports and find a place with a gridiron team.

The 27-year-old joined the NFL's International Player Pathway Program, which aims to find and nurture athletic talent from around the world and groom them for the NFL. The Bills announced yesterday that Wade had been assigned to the team's squad as a running back for the 2019 season.

The Bills, and three other teams from the AFC East, would get a roster exemption to account for Wade's inclusion, allowing them to have 91 players on the roster instead of 90. Valentine Holmes, a former professional Australian rugby player, will join the New York Jets; Jakob Johnson, a former German Football League player will join the Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots and Durval Neto a former American football player in Brazil will join the Miami Dolphins.

Wade reacted with news of his signing by the Bills on Instagram. "I'm a lost for word right now," Wade wrote. "Give god thanks." Several England and Wasps rugby internationals congratulated Wade beneath the post.

"Proud of you brahhh," England and Saracens lock Maro Itoje wrote while for-

mer England fly-half Danny Cipriani added: "Never in doubt my brother." Wade was regarded as one of the most devastating finishers in English rugby during his club career but found opportunities to represent England at international level limited.

Although he earned a call-up as a replacement on the 2013 British and Irish Lions tour of Australia, he was largely ignored by various coaches, the final straw coming when he was overlooked for a 50-man training squad for the 2015 World Cup by then-coach Stuart Lancaster.

Wade is aiming to follow the example of other English rugby players who have joined NFL teams through the pathway program, notably former England Sevens player Alex Gray, who is now on the books of the Atlanta Falcons, and Christian Scotland-Williamson, the former Worcester Warriors player who joined the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2018.

The 23-year-old Holmes is listed as a running back/wide receiver/kick returner for the Jets. Holmes, of Townsville, represented Australia at the 2017 Rugby World Cup, scoring 11 tries in the quarter-finals and semi-finals.

Holmes, who will take a pay cut from his NRL days to join the Jets, participated in a "pro day" in Florida last week in front of league scouts and ran a 4.5 secs 40-yard dash. Four players took part in the NFL Pathway Program in 2018 - Moritz Boehringer (Cincinnati Bengals), Christopher Ezeala (Baltimore Ravens), Tigie Sankoh (Cleveland Browns) and Scotland-Williamson (Steelers).

Neither of the four saw action last season as the Pathway players become members of the club's practice roster and are not eligible to play in games. It gives them a chance to learn a new sport without the fear of being cut. The AFC East teams were all chosen to receive the players in a random draw. — AFP

Consistency key for dangerous WI at World Cup: Lara

MUMBAI: West Indies are replete with match-winners but consistency will be key to their success in English conditions at this year's World Cup, batting great Brian Lara has said. Teaming with tearaway fast bowlers and aggressive batsmen, West Indies were once considered invincible and won the opening two editions of the World Cup in 1975 and 1979.

Their glory days, however, are long over and the twice winners had to go through a qualifying tournament to book their spot in the 10-team tournament in England and Wales.

The last bilateral series win for West Indies, who are ranked ninth in one-day internationals, came in 2014 but they showed signs of improvement against England. Jason Holder's men drew a five-match ODI series against top-ranked England 2-2 at home recently, in a timely boost before the May 30-July 14 showpiece event.

The likes of opening batsman Chris Gayle, all-rounder Andre Russell and spinner Sunil Narine are also much in demand in Twenty20 leagues across the globe. "Look at the Indian Premier League, look at the leagues around the world, we have got players that are the most wanted in the world," Lara, 49, told reporters in Mumbai at a promotional event last week.

"We have got match-winners, but we are going to need a little more than match-winners in English conditions to win the World Cup. We need a team that can create consistency. If we can get to the knock-out stages, we can knock out any team. We have seen that in the past. But consistency is going to take us right through to the finals."

Former West Indies captain Lara, considered one of the very best of the Caribbean islands have ever produced, retired after the 2007 World Cup at home with over 10,000 runs in ODIs. He also scored close to 12,000 runs in tests.

Lara credited franchise leagues like the IPL for creating interest among kids in the West Indies and giving young players a platform to showcase their talent before they graduate to international cricket.

West Indies suffered 2-0 losses both in India and Bangladesh late last year but staged a spectacular turnaround in a 2-1 series win against England earlier this year. The test success augurs well for the side, who are now graduating to a level where they can be competitive against top sides at least at home, said Lara. — Reuters

Sports

Solskjaer faces up to reality as Barcelona roll into town

Solskjaer has given his creative players licence to attack

LONDON: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer enjoyed a charmed life as interim Manchester United manager but Barcelona's visit to Old Trafford today will show him the scale of the task he faces as the new full-time boss.

The Norwegian was rewarded with a three-year deal after dramatically reviving United's fortunes since taking caretaker charge in December, lifting them back into contention for a top-four place and transforming the mood at the club.

The highlight of his reign so far was a dramatic 3-1 away victory over Paris Saint-Germain in the last 16 in the Champions League, which enabled United to overturn a 2-0 first-leg defeat to reach the quarter-finals on away goals.

Solskjaer has given his creative players licence to attack, with Paul Pogba and Marcus Rashford let off the leash to devastating effect. But some of the gloss has come off in recent weeks, with three defeats in four matches badly denting United's chances of qualifying for next season's Champions League and dumping them out of the FA Cup. Solskjaer, who famously scored the winning goal for United against Bayern Munich in the 1999 Champions League final in Barcelona, was upset after drawing the Spanish league leaders in the quarter-finals last month, before he was confirmed as the new long-term boss.

"We want these games against the biggest clubs and the biggest teams. We had the final against them in 2009 and 2011 (both of which Barca won) and the semi-final in 2008 when Scholesy (Paul Scholes) scored," Solskjaer said. "It's these games our fans and this club crave. We are looking forward to this one." Worryingly for Solskjaer, though, some of United's familiar failings under Jose Mourinho have returned to haunt them in the weeks since the draw was made.

They were unfortunate to lose at Arsenal but appeared

short of inspiration in losing twice to Wolves in the FA Cup and Premier League, while even Solskjaer admitted they did not deserve their solitary win since he was given the permanent job as Watford enjoyed the better of the chances in a 2-1 defeat at Old Trafford.

Solskjaer had a free ride when he took over from Mourinho, with morale at a low ebb and the club 11 points off the top four.

Despite recent hiccups, he has had notable success in his short time at the club and ultimately has his sights set higher than finishing in the top four.

"You've got to aim high," he told ESPN. "You cannot aim too low at this club. You've got to aim to win titles. "When I came back here as the manager I thought a lot about what makes a winning team. What does it really take to win on the biggest stage? I'm not one to sit back, rest on my laurels."

The 46-year-old will probably be forgiven if United fall short against a Lionel Messi-inspired Barcelona. But if he fails to reverse the mini-slump and United suffer a heavy defeat to the Spanish champions there is a danger the season could peter out and momentum could be lost.

Questions will be asked as to whether United were too quick to put their trust in a likeable leader and whether Solskjaer has the profile needed to bring in the top-level recruits that United need, particularly in defence, to become serious Premier League and European challengers again.

But he will lead his team out at Old Trafford today for their first Champions League quarter-final since 2014 with the same never-say-die attitude he had as a player. "We've got a chance, it's going to be a tough one. We've got a mountain to climb, but we've climbed a few mountains before," said Solskjaer. —AFP



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Chilean forward Alexis Sanchez (CL) and Manchester United's Brazilian midfielder Fred (CR) attend a training session at Carrington training ground in greater Manchester, north west England yesterday, on the eve of their UEFA Champions League quarter final first leg football match against Barcelona. — AFP

Spain's federation plans to shake up Spanish Super Cup and Copa del Rey

MADRID: The Spanish soccer federation (RFEF) said yesterday it will organise a revamped Super Cup to take place outside of Spain from next January and revealed sweeping changes to the Copa del Rey which is set to reduce fixture congestion.

"The president of the RFEF, Luis Rubiales, told members at a board meeting today about the project

we are working on to redesign the current formats of the Spanish Super Cup and the Copa del Rey," said a statement on the federation's website.

"With regards to the Super Cup, the RFEF will develop a 'Final Four' format for the tournament to take place outside of Spain in the month of January. "The Copa del Rey will switch formats to single-game ties played at the ground of the weaker team until the semi-final stages."

In February, Rubiales revealed plans to shake up the Super Cup, the season curtain raiser which pits the winners of La Liga against the Copa del Rey holders and is usually held over two legs, saying that the new-look event would take place in August.

The shifting of the tournament to January comes after the initial plans were criticised by La Liga's organising body due to the potential for a scheduling conflict with the start of the new season.

Rubiales broke with tradition last year by turning the

Super Cup into a single game played in Tangier, Morocco, where Barcelona beat Sevilla 2-1. He opposes La Liga's plans to play Spanish top flight games abroad and his organisation blocked a proposal to move last January's game between Girona and Barcelona to Miami.

The RFEF has not yet revealed which country the revamped Super Cup will take place in. The RFEF added that teams competing in the Super Cup will earn a bye to the last 32 of the Copa del Rey, with each tie apart from the semi-finals being played over one game at the ground of the smallest side.

The plans for both tournaments must be approved by clubs at an extraordinary general assembly taking place on April 29. In its current format, La Liga sides enter the Copa del Rey in the round of 32, and this season's finalists Barcelona and Valencia had to play eight games to reach the showpiece, clogging their schedules in January and February. — Reuters

Chelsea fans savour Eden Hazard magic

LONDON: With Real Madrid reportedly lining up a huge offer to tempt Eden Hazard to the Bernabeu next season, Chelsea's fans may wonder how many more times they will be able to savour watching the Belgian maestro at his dazzling best.

An inspired Hazard, whose contract expires next season, scored both goals in the 2-0 victory over West Ham United on Monday, the first a dazzling solo effort that brought back memories of Diego Maradona in his pomp.

His second, in the 90th minute, capped a mesmerising display that took Chelsea to a third consecutive league win. Manager Maurizio Sarri said having Hazard in such unstoppable form made winning "easy" but appeared almost resigned to losing him.

West Ham's fans might even have enjoyed Hazard's display too, but they took pleasure in teasing the home faithful that the 28-year-old, who joined the club in 2012, might be performing his tricks in front of a new audience next season.

Hazard offered a modicum of comfort afterwards but the fear remains, for Chelsea fans and anyone who enjoys watching a master craftsman at work, that his days in London might be numbered. "They are wrong," Hazard, who has scored 19 goals in all competitions for Chelsea this season to equal his best haul, said. "For now I am just focusing on Chelsea until the end of the season. We are in good momentum. We have won three in a row. For the mentality, it is good to keep going. Top four and the Europa League is our target so we need to do well in both."

Victory lifted Chelsea into third place in the Premier League-above London rivals Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur who both have played a game less. Sarri said he "can do nothing" to keep Hazard at the club if he wants "another experience".

"We are trying to become one of the best teams in Europe but I have to respect his decision," the Italian



LONDON: Chelsea's English midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek (L) vies with West Ham United's Irish defender Declan Rice during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and West Ham United at Stamford Bridge in London. — AFP

said. "Hazard played a wonderful match. He did well against Brighton too. We are very lucky because it is very easy to win the match when he is able to make that kind of difference."

Asked about the fee of 100 million pounds

(£130 million) Real Madrid are reported to be willing to pay, he added: "It is too cheap in this market! We have seen in the last few windows every price I think. So it is very hard to get another player like him." — Reuters

Pele back in Brazil after hospital stay

SAO PAULO: Football great Pele arrived back in Brazil yesterday after having surgery for a "severe urinary infection" during a six-day hospital stay in France. The three-time World Cup winner was discharged late Monday from the private American hospital in the Paris suburbs where he had been taken after falling ill following an appearance at a promotional event with France striker Kylian Mbappe.

After arriving at the Sao Paulo-Guarulhos airport in Brazil, the 78-year-old was taken through the terminal in a wheelchair and was driven away in a van. "Once again, thank God, everything went well. I'm alive. Long live Brazil," said Pele, a gold cross hanging around his neck, after he arrived in Brazil's biggest city. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Brazilians and all those who called the hospital, who called me, for my operation, to wish me a rapid recovery," he added. In a statement on Monday on the Globoesporte.com site, Pele said he had required "medical assistance and surgery" for a "severe urinary infection."

Before he was discharged, current Brazil star Neymar, who plays alongside Mbappe for Paris Saint-

Germain, paid him a visit at the hospital. Neymar posted a photo on his Instagram account Monday of himself next to a smiling Pele in his hospital bed with the two holding hands. Brazil's G1 reported that Pele had intended to come out of hospital on Saturday to return to his home country, but had been delayed by further tests. The infection was not serious and was under control, members of Pele's entourage had said.

Pele has had several health scares in recent years. A similar infection put him in intensive care in November 2014. In 2016, Pele, who played 1,363 professional matches, scoring 1,281 goals, was unable to light the flame at the Rio Olympics because of severe pain in the hip. In January 2018, he cancelled a trip to London fearing a "stressful" and "tiring" journey. — AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	
Manchester United v FC Barcelona	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 1	
Ajax Amsterdam v Juventus FC	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	

Ronaldo return vital to Juventus' Champions League success

MILAN: Cristiano Ronaldo's return to fitness could be vital to Juventus' bid to end their Champions League drought going back 23 years as they head to Ajax today with uncertainty over whether their superstar will play or not.

Ronaldo hasn't played for the Serie A leaders—who are just one point away from sealing an eighth Italian league title—since scoring the sensational hat-trick that saw Juve come back from a 2-0 first-leg deficit to knock out Atletico Madrid last month.

He was rested in the subsequent 2-0 league defeat at Genoa and then picked up a thigh injury on international duty with Portugal two weeks ago. But coach Massimiliano Allegri remains confident the 34-year-old will be ready for today's game in Amsterdam.

"He (Ronaldo) always feels ready. We are confident of having him at Ajax on Wednesday," said Allegri after Saturday's 2-1 league win over AC Milan. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner joined his teammates for training on Monday and is expected to travel with the team to the Netherlands.

Portuguese teammate Joao Cancelo, himself recovering from a calf strain, believes that Ronaldo will be present. "Cristiano's training, he's a serious professional. He has committed himself to do everything possible to be there and help the team," right-back Cancelo told Sky Sport Italia.

"I really think he'll be called up, after that we'll see if he plays from the first minute or if he will come on later. The coach will decide." Ronaldo himself has given no updates on his injury, apart from a short video posted on his social media accounts, looking relaxed as he drove his car and singing along with his partner Georgina Rodriguez and son.

Ronaldo's presence would be a physiological boost for Juventus who signed the Champions League goal king for 100 million euros (\$117 million) last summer and agreed to pay him a 31 million-euro annual salary to end their search for the title they last won in 1996.

Ronaldo is the only player to have won the title five times and is the record goalscorer in the competition with 124, including 15 last season. The Italian champions were beaten finalists in 2015 and 2017, with Ronaldo on target for Real Madrid in the latter.

This campaign, Ronaldo was sent off in the opening group game against Valencia, with only one goal against Manchester United before his spectacular hat-trick against Atletico.

But he brings further energy and enthusiasm to the team. Allegri predicted after last month's two-goal defeat in Madrid that Ronaldo would pull them through in Turin, and he duly delivered. "In matches of this kind he gets really excited and enthusiastic, having him gives us a great advantage," Allegri said.

The Portuguese ace's on-pitch performance had been unaffected by off-pitch concerns including an investigation of rape allegations against him in the United States dating back to 2009 which he vehemently denies. "This is why Juventus bought me, to help them in games like this," said Ronaldo. In the case of Ronaldo's absence Allegri would most likely line up with Mario Mandzukic, Federico Bernardeschi and Paulo Dybala. — AFP

25 Basic beginnings to global exposure: F1 reaches 1000 races

26 Australia can be surprise package at WCup: Gregan

27 Solskjaer faces up to reality as Barcelona roll into town



Edwin homers twice as Mariners top Royals

Astros rally past Yankees for fourth straight win



HOUSTON: Aaron Judge #99 of the New York Yankees hits a home run in the fifth inning against the Houston Astros at Minute Maid Park in Houston, Texas. — AFP

KANSAS: Edwin Encarnacion hit a pair of home runs in the sixth inning, and the visiting Seattle Mariners scored eight times in the frame to earn a 13-5 victory over the Kansas City Royals on Monday. The Mariners have scored five or more runs in 11 of their first 12 games and became the first team in the major leagues to win 10 games. Encarnacion became the first major-leaguer to hit two home runs in an inning in almost three years. Mark Trumbo of the Los Angeles Angels did in on April 15, 2016, at Texas. Seattle also got homers from Daniel Vogelbach, Dylan Moore and Jay Bruce. Roenis Elias (1-0) picked up the win, pitching three scoreless, hitless innings of relief. Royals starter Homer Bailey (0-1) gave up seven runs on eight hits, including three home runs, in five-plus innings.

ORIOLES 12, A'S 4

Jonathan Villar homered and had four RBIs while Cedric Mullins tripled twice and drove in three as Baltimore defeated visiting Oakland. While most of the Orioles were enjoying a big offensive night, it was the opposite for Baltimore's Chris Davis. He set a major league record for the longest hitless streak by a position player, going 0-for-5 to leave him 0-for-49 dating back to last year. Eugenio Velez had the previous record of 0-for-46. Trey Mancini hit a solo homer in the first inning, and Mullins delivered a two-run triple in the second while scoring on a throwing error on the same play to give Baltimore an early 4-0 lead. The early margin helped the Orioles stop a four-game losing streak.

CUBS 10, PIRATES 0

Ben Zobrist and Kyle Schwarber each drove in two runs, and Chicago rode a six-run second inning to a victory over Pittsburgh in the home opener at Wrigley Field. The Cubs' second win in eight games came with a caveat, as starter Jon Lester left during the third inning because of left hamstring tightness. Lester struck out four, walked one and gave up three hits in two-plus innings before four relievers combined to finish Chicago's first shutout. Brad Brach (1-0), who replaced Lester, gave up one hit in two innings. Pittsburgh starter Jameson Taillon (0-2), who gave up six unearned runs and four hits, left after two innings and will be re-evaluated after he took at least a glancing blow to the head on a comebacker by Anthony Rizzo.

BRAVES 8, ROCKIES 6

Ronald Acuna Jr. hit his third home run of the season to spark Atlanta past Colorado in Denver. Acuna was 2-for-3, scored three runs and hit a two-run homer in the

first inning to help give the Braves their sixth win in the past seven games. Dansby Swanson drove in three runs, and Nick Markakis was 3-for-4 with two RBIs for Atlanta. Braves starter Julio Teheran (1-1) pitched five innings and allowed six runs, all coming in his last inning. The struggling Atlanta bullpen closed the game with four scoreless innings, handing the Rockies their fourth straight loss and their eighth defeat in the past nine games.

ASTROS 4, YANKEES 3

Robinson Chirinos hit a two-run, game-tying double in the seventh inning, and Carlos Correa drove in the go-ahead run an inning later as Houston rallied for a victory over visiting New York. Chirinos drove home Yuli Gurriel and Tyler White with his two-out double off the wall in front of the Houston bullpen, striking his blow against Yankees left-hander Zack Britton, who surrendered a leadoff single to Correa after entering in relief of starter Masahiro Tanaka. The Astros stretched their winning streak to four games. Ryan Pressly (1-0) earned the win with a perfect eighth inning before Roberto Osuna notched his third save with a six-pitch ninth.

ANGELS 5, BREWERS 2

Mike Trout did not hit a home run for the first time in five games, but he did steal a home run from reigning National League MVP Christian Yelich, helping Los Angeles extend its winning streak to four games with a win over Milwaukee at Anaheim, Calif. Trout had at least one homer in four consecutive games (five total), but Brewers pitchers were able to keep him in the ballpark. Trout went 0-for-2 (strikeout, lineout) with two walks. He made up for it with his defense, reaching above the fence in left-center in the third inning to rob Yelich of what would have been his sixth homer of the year. The Angels got a two-run homer from Tommy La Stella, a solo homer from Andrelton Simmons and a two-run blast by Justin Bour. Yelich wound up 2-for-4 with two singles.

PADRES 6, GIANTS 5

Franmil Reyes capped a San Diego rally with a pinch-hit, two-run home run in the seventh inning as the visiting Padres overcame a five-run deficit and a Kevin Pillar grand slam to overtake San Francisco. Fernando Tatis Jr. and Wil Myers also homered for the Padres, who had won three in a row before losing the finale of a series at St Louis on Sunday. The Giants, who have lost all three of their series this season, staked Madison Bumgarner to a five-run lead in the fourth

inning. However, the ace left-hander wound up allowing five runs in six innings.

PHILLIES 4, NATIONALS 3

Rhys Hoskins hit two solo homers, including the tiebreaker on a full-count pitch in the last of the sixth, and Philadelphia beat visiting Washington. Hoskins added an insurance run in eighth with a homer off Justin Miller to make it 4-2. It was the fourth multi-homer game of Hoskins' career. The first homer came off Anibal Sanchez (0-1), who was making his second start for the Nationals after coming over from the Atlanta Braves. He gave up seven hits and three runs in 5 2/3 innings with six strikeouts and two walks.

RAYS 5, WHITE SOX 1

Blake Snell allowed one run in six innings, and Tampa Bay continued to match its best start in franchise history with a win at Chicago. Snell (2-1) gave up six hits while striking out 11 and walking none. Willy Adames had three hits, a walk and scored two runs in the No. 9

spot, and Avisail Garcia, Daniel Robertson and Yandy Diaz had two hits each for Tampa Bay, which has won eight of its first 11 games for the second time in team history. Coming into the game, Tampa Bay starting pitchers had not allowed a run in their past 31 innings, and Snell had thrown eight straight shutout innings. He ran that streak to 12 before Jose Rondon hit a solo homer in the fifth to make it 4-1.

CARDINALS 4, DODGERS 3

Marcell Ozuna lined a two-run homer, and Paul Goldschmidt scored the decisive run on a wild pitch as St. Louis beat visiting Los Angeles. Jose Martinez added a run-scoring single as St. Louis halted the Dodgers' five-game winning streak. Los Angeles didn't trail for 42 innings until the Cardinals moved ahead in the bottom of the sixth inning. Cardinals starter Miles Mikolas (1-1) gave up three runs and five hits over six innings. He struck out three and walked one. John Gant pitched two hitless innings, and Jordan Hicks finished up for his second save. — Reuters

Injury-time heroics earn win for Antlers

HONG KONG: Defending champions Kashima Antlers scored twice in injury time to secure a come-from-behind 3-2 win over South Korea's Gyeongnam FC despite finishing their Asian Champions League clash with 10 men yesterday evening.

The Japanese side trailed by two goals with 19 minutes remaining after Tomoya Inukai headed into his own goal and Jordan Mutch's side-foot volley doubled Gyeongnam's advantage. An own goal from Korean defender Woo Ju-sung halved the deficit with 15 minutes remaining, only for Inukai to cap an eventful evening when he was sent off six minutes from time for a second bookable offence.

Antlers looked destined to slip to their first defeat since winning the title last year, but Takeshi Kanamori levelled a minute into injury time from close range and Serginho smashed his shot into the top corner two minutes later to give Go Oiwa's side all three points.

"I think we can be proud that we fought to win here with 10 men," said Oiwa. "But we need to turn our sights to the next game, not bask in this win for long. We managed to keep our composure when we were under pressure, and that led to the goals in the

end." Kashima move on to seven points from their first three games and lead group E by two points from Shandong Luneng, with the Chinese Super League side securing a 2-1 win - their first of the campaign - against Malaysia's Johor Darul Ta'zim. Marouane Fellaini scored with a close range header to claim his debut Asian Champions League goal for Shandong Luneng, and Graziano Pelle doubled the side's lead from the penalty spot seven minutes before the break.

Safawi Rasid's spectacular curling effort just before the hour mark gave JDT hope of salvaging a point, and Gonzalo Cabrera hit the cross bar late in the game as the Malaysian side narrowly missed out on a draw. Cedric Bakambu, meanwhile, scored a hat trick for Beijing Guoan, who claimed their first win in group G with a 3-1 victory over Thailand's Buriram United that pulls Roger Schmidt's side into contention for a place in the next phase of the competition.

The Chinese side move on to four points and trail leaders Jeonbuk Motors by two points after Adriano scored the only goal of the game, as the South Korea champions saw off fellow two-time champions Urawa Red Diamonds of Japan. — Reuters