



5 Kuwait, China sign 2 MoUs on Belt and Road Initiative



16 Cute or creepy: Why humans love some species, loathe others



21 The rich and famous vote in India election



28 Warriors edge Rockets, Celtics baffle Bucks in NBA playoffs



Amir receives merit certificate from World Bank delegation

Sheikh Sabah reaffirms determination to continue helping stricken countries

Amir opens Salam Palace Museum



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the Salam Palace Museum after he inaugurated it yesterday. — Amiri Diwan (See Page 3)

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was awarded a certificate of merit yesterday in appreciation for his role as a development leader and for supporting global social and economic development efforts. The honoring was held at Bayan Palace as the Amir met Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf, Vice-President of World Bank Group (WBG) for Middle East and North Africa Ferid Belhaj and his accompanying delegation.

On this occasion, HH the Amir said: "I am delighted to receive this recognition: an exceptional honor for me and my country, from Interim President of the World Bank Group (WBG) Kristalina Georgieva. I express my gratitude, as well as that of the Kuwaiti people for this kind gesture coming from one of the most important international organizations that cares and caters for socioeconomic and developmental projects and programs in developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, in a bid to achieve security and stability for their peoples."

HH Sheikh Sabah said Kuwait, since joining the WBG in 1962, has contributed to helping and financing the group's developmental programs to eradicate poverty and revitalize economies as much as possible out of its deep belief in the socioeconomic prosperity of neighboring countries or otherwise.

Continued on Page 24



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a merit certificate from Vice-President of World Bank Group for Middle East and North Africa Ferid Belhaj yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

News in brief

Expats still visiting insurance centers

KUWAIT: Informed sources said the health ministry collected around KD 20.2 million from expats through health insurance centers from January until April 24 for first-time residencies and renewals. This collection is separate from amounts collected online. They said the ministry collected KD 9.5 million from insurance centers in January, KD 4.8 million in February, KD 3.6 million in March and KD 2.3 million from April 1 to 24. The sources said 2,700 to 3,500 expats visit the centers daily. — A Saleh

No smartphones, watches in school

KUWAIT: The private education department of the education ministry issued two circulars this week banning students from bringing smartphones or smart watches to school. No student may have a smartphone or smart watch on school premises and any student who brings such devices to school risks having them confiscated, according to the circulars. The announcement comes days before private schools begin end-of-year exams.

Modest dress code at Kuwait University

KUWAIT: Kuwait University students have been told to wear "decent" clothes, as instructions were issued to not allow students not complying with the dress code to enter the campus. The administration published a poster with the list of unacceptable clothing, including transparent and short dresses, clothes with unsuitable slogans and sleeveless clothes. Shorts are banned, while male students cannot wear necklaces or earrings. — Al-Qabas

Defense minister hands Macron Amir's message

PARIS: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah yesterday discussed with French President Emmanuel Macron a number of issues and handed a message from HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on several important issues in the region and matters of mutual interest, the Kuwait Embassy in France said. Both sides discussed ways to strengthen the bilateral

relationship, especially in the fields of culture, health, environment, military and economy, within the framework of Kuwait's 2035 vision.

Macron stressed his pride in the distinguished relations between the two countries, and asked Sheikh Nasser to convey his greetings to HH the Amir. Kuwait is a strong partner of France through diplomatic representation and humanitarian action, Macron added. He noted that his meeting with Sheikh Nasser is an opportunity to give an overview of international and regional issues, especially the fight against terrorism and the situation in the Near East and Middle East. Macron thanked Kuwait for its active role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Sheikh Nasser also thanked the French president for his warm welcome and expressed Kuwait's appreciation for its distinguished relations with France. — KUNA



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron meets Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the Elysee Palace yesterday. — AFP

Aqeel says Kuwait needs expats; Ghanem denies mediating for jailed Russian woman

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel said in press statements yesterday that Kuwait still needs the services of expatriate manpower, adding that repeated changes to the labor law discourages foreign investors. Speaking to reporters, the minister said that Kuwait needs highly qualified and skilled expatriate manpower. The minister also said that there is no problem in allowing expatriates working in

the country to bring their spouses to join them if they have the financial ability.

Aqeel said that the presence of too many single male expats in the country is problematic and poses one of several problems related to the unbalanced demographic structure of the nation. Some 3.1 million expatriates live and work in Kuwait against around 1.4 million citizens. MPs have been pressing the government to reduce the number of expats to pave the way to employ more Kuwaitis. Aqeel also defended the government's opposition to amending the labor law, saying that repeated amendments are not helpful in attracting foreign investors to the country.

Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem denied that he mediated for a Russian woman currently in custody over a financial case in connection with a fund of the Ports Authority. Ghanem said the issue was raised during a recent meeting with his Russian counterpart.

Continued on Page 24

UAE spy suspect found hanged in Turkish prison

ISTANBUL: A man held by Turkey on suspicion of spying for the United Arab Emirates has committed suicide by hanging himself in prison, the Istanbul prosecutor's office said yesterday. The suspect, named as Zaki Y M Hasan, was found hanging from the bathroom door in his one-person cell in Silivri prison, west of Istanbul, when guards arrived to give him food on Sunday morning, the prosecutor's office statement said. It said the man had been registered in a roll-call that morning. An investigation has been launched and the Istanbul forensics institute has carried out an autopsy, the statement added.

The dead man was one of two suspects charged with international, political and military espionage. The pair were arrested on April 19 and had confessed to spying on Arab nationals, a senior Turkish official said at the time. UAE officials were not immediately available for comment on the death and there has been no official statement following Turkey's announcement of the arrests. Investigators are examining whether the arrival in Turkey of one of the detainees was related to the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi six months ago.

The United Arab Emirates is a close ally of Saudi Arabia. Relations with Turkey have been strained since the two Arab states launched a blockade of their Gulf neighbor, Qatar, in 2017, while Ankara supported Doha. Saudi Arabia and the UAE also view Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan's Islamist-rooted ruling AK Party as a supporter of groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, which they oppose.

Continued on Page 24

IS chief refers to Sri Lanka in first video in 5 years

BAGHDAD: The Islamic State group's elusive chief Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi has purportedly appeared for the first time in five years in a propaganda video released yesterday by the jihadist organization. It is unclear when the footage was filmed, but the man said to be Baghdadi referred to last week's deadly attack in Sri Lanka and to the months-long fight for IS's final bastion Baghouz, which ended in March. "The battle for Baghouz is over," he said, sitting cross-legged on a cushion and addressing three men whose faces have been blurred. "God ordered us to wage jihad. He did not order us to win," he said.

In a segment in which the man is not on camera, his voice referred to the April 21 Easter attacks in Sri Lanka, which killed 253 people and wounded nearly 500, as "vengeance for their brothers in Baghouz". The man said to be Baghdadi insisted IS' operations against the West were part of a "long battle", and that IS would continue to "take revenge" on members who had been killed. "There will be more to come after this battle," he said.

The man in the video had a long grey beard that appeared dyed with henna and spoke slowly, often pausing for several seconds in the middle of his sentences. He was identified as Baghdadi by both the SITE Intelligence Group, which tracks IS, and Hisham Al-Hashemi, an Iraqi expert on the group. Baghdadi, who is now 47, appeared for the first and last time in public in Mosul in 2014, where he declared an Islamic "caliphate" in the swaths of territory IS then held in Syria and Iraq. He was reported killed or injured multiple times since then. — AFP



In this undated video grab, the chief of the Islamic State group Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi appears for the first time in five years in a propaganda video. — AFP

Local



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a memento from the World Bank Group yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photos



A certificate of merit awarded by the World Bank Group to His Highness the Amir in appreciation for his role as a development leader.

Amir supports efforts to provide aid to some 100 developing countries: World Bank

Kuwait's assistance helps improve living standards of hundreds of millions of people: Khoja

KUWAIT: The World Bank Group's honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah comes in recognition of his role in supporting international efforts to achieve sustainable development and fight poverty by providing aid to some 100 developing countries. The volume of Kuwaiti government aid is about 1.2 percent of its gross national income, said Ghassan Khoja, the World Bank Group Resident Representative in Kuwait.

"Kuwait provides such assistance without conditions or political interference," Khoja said, adding that Kuwait's assistance directly contributes to improving living standards of hundreds of millions of poor people around the world. He said that this aid also contributes to the construction of infrastructure facilities of developing countries, to enable them to achieve economic development and join global economy.

Kuwait development fund

He pointed out to the establishment of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) is evidence of Kuwait's commitment to help developing countries by allocating part of its resources to serve development efforts. The total value of the loans provided by

KFAED since its inception exceeded \$16 billion, while the value of grants amounted to about \$7 billion, he pointed out. He further noted that Kuwait supports many regional and international development institutions, including the International Development Association (IDA), which is one of the most important institutions in the World Bank Group, which supports development in low-income countries.

Moreover, Khoja praised His Highness the Amir's contributions to Arab and international conferences by allocating large sums to support small projects and encouraging entrepreneurs, as well as the technology sector. Kuwait has been a key member of the IDA for over 55 years, he said, adding that the World Bank Group recognizes the importance of Kuwait as a long-time financial contributor to the Foundation since 1977.

As one of the World Bank Group's institutions, IDA

is one of the most effective platforms to fight poverty in the world. As a long-standing donor to IDA during the fiscal year 2018 (July 2017-June 2018), Kuwait assisted in achieving important results, including 1.9 million farmers in relying on improved agricultural technology methods and 530,000 trained teachers, he said. Moreover, 5.8 million people have access to improved sanitation facilities; 18.1 million children have been vaccinated; social safety net has covered 12.1 million people; nine million people have benefited from financing procedures that focus on job creation; 8.9 million people were provided with improved electricity; 36.8 million people have basic health, nutrition and population services and 13.2 million have access to improved water sources.



World Bank's honoring of Amir well deserved

World Bank's office

On the World Bank's office in Kuwait, Khoja said that it had participated with the Kuwaiti government in

a number of technical reports and advisory services. He noted that at the opening of the office in 2009, the World Bank participated in number of activities to support various ministries, as well as a number of strategic projects dealing with education and financial management, which worked to improve the social and economic conditions in Kuwait.

Khoja added that Kuwait has supported the establishment of several public bodies such as the Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), the National Center for Education Development, and Kuwait's National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). He pointed to the development of the five-year (2016-2020) World Bank's strategy to support the Kuwaiti government's efforts to promote public sector reforms, encourage non-oil businesses, create jobs, and promote the development of vital infrastructure. He said that the World Bank's program will focus on supporting the seven pillars of the Kuwaiti development plan, to be in line with His Highness's the Amir 2035 vision. He also underlined the efforts exerted by the office to intensify its role in the region, especially in Iraq, referring to Kuwait's pledges during the Kuwait Conference for Reconstruction in Iraq, held in February 2018. — KUNA

Amir receives officials, outgoing Chad envoy

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met yesterday at Bayan Palace with Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Interior's Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Essam Salim Al-Naham. His Highness also received Kuwait's Minister of State for Economic Affairs Maryam Al-Aqeel, members of a higher committee of a ceremony for honoring the winners of Kuwait Prize for distinguished women, and Fayeze Ali Al-Mutairi, the recently re-elected director general of Arab Labor Organization. In addition, His Highness received Chad's outgoing Ambassador to Kuwait Ali Ahmed Agbash. The meetings was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to President of Indonesia Joko Widodo, expressing sincere grief toward the victims of floods and landslides triggered by torrential rains in Sumatra province. In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished mercy to the deceased and swift recovery to the injured. His Highness the Crown Prince



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Interior's Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Essam Salim Al-Naham. — Amiri Diwan photos

Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Indonesian President.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to US President Donald Trump over the shooting victims in Poway near San Diego, CA, which resulted in killing one person and injuring two others. In the cable, His Highness the Amir voiced Kuwait's condemnation of the criminal horrible act that targeted innocents and he wished a swift recovery to those injured. Cables of similar sentiments were sent by His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister to the US President. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Chad's outgoing Ambassador to Kuwait Ali Ahmed Agbash.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of State for Economic Affairs Maryam Al-Aqeel, and members of a higher committee of a ceremony for honoring the winners of Kuwait Prize for distinguished women.

Defense Minister meets French counterpart



PARIS: Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with French Defense Minister Florence Parly. — KUNA

PARIS: Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met yesterday with French Defense Minister Florence Parly, as issues of common interest were dis-

cussed. The meeting, which took place late Sunday, was followed by a dinner held in honor of Sheikh Nasser and his accompanying delegation, who are on an official visit at the invitation of Parly, Kuwait Embassy said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kuwait Hong Youngki. — KUNA

Local

Amir inaugurates 'Salam Palace' Museum; cultural edifice documenting Kuwait's history

Palace documents country's history in innovative style: Official



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a memento from Head of Finance and Administrative Affairs of the Amiri Diwan Abdulaziz Ishaq, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and senior officials attend the inauguration of the 'Salam Palace' Museum yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photos

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah inaugurated the 'Salam Palace' Museum yesterday. Upon arriving to the venue, His Highness was received by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, as well as Abdulaziz Ishaq, Head of Finance and Administrative Affairs of the Amiri Diwan and Chairman of the Executive Committee for the Establishment and Management of Cultural Centers. The ceremony was also attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in addition to a host of senior state officials. Following a speech by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, His Highness toured the Museum, where he was briefed with its main sections and facilities before leaving the site just as warmly welcomed.

Innovative style

The 'Salam Palace' Museum is a cultural edifice that documents Kuwait's history in an innovative style, Ishaq said, adding that this unique building houses a collection of rare artifacts and preserve the national cultural heritage of Kuwait. The Museum has been designed to suit the modern generation provided with the latest technological display methods to presents the history of Kuwait and the civilizations it has undergone to the visitor in a creative and innovative manner, without any dazzling fun, he clarified.

The Palace, which represents great historical and national value in the hearts of Kuwait's rulers and people, was rehabilitated upon instructions of His Highness the Amir to turn it into a museum that documents the country's history, Ishaq explained. The reconstruction process comes within the concept of new cultural-oriented and historical dimensions by turning it into a museum comparable to the finest and high standers international museums. It consists of four floors (basement - ground - first - second), where the basement includes an electronic library connected to the Central Library of the Amiri Diwan, as well as areas dedicated to scientific research and staff offices, storage and service rooms plus others.

The ground floor is located on Jamal Abdelnasser Street with a VIP entrance overlooking the Arabian Gulf Road. It also includes exhibition halls for the "History of the Palace" that reflects the original construction of the Palace, as well as dignitaries who visited and stayed in it. The first floor contains the museum (the history of Kuwait through its rulers), which includes nine halls that tell the history of Kuwait since its inception, with most important achievements made during the history of the 15 rulers of Kuwait, with a display of their collectibles and personal items. The second floor includes a reception areas, a banquet hall and a central kitchen. The Palace is divided into three main sections: the Museum of Kuwait History through its rulers, the Peace Palace History Museum, and the Museum of Civilizations that inhabited the land of Kuwait. Ishaq pointed to other sections that have been developed to serve the Museum, including a special suite to receive senior guests of the state, a digital library, educational halls for school students, and a "Courtyard" with multi-parking.

Building's history

Construction of the property, which was the private residence of Late Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, began in the late 1950s. In 1960, the basic construction of the Palace started, coinciding with the independence of Kuwait in 1961. At the time, Kuwait was in need of a guesthouse for officials visiting the country and a place to hold State-level meetings and international discussions.

The ownership of the Palace transferred to the state, and converted into a guesthouse under the supervision of the late Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; back then minister of finance. The Palace received its first visitor in 1964, and then started to receive kings, emperors, and officials who reached 166. In 2013, Sheikha Mona Al-Jaber Al-Sabah proposed, after 23 years of neglect, to the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Chairman of the Higher Committee of Cultural Centers, to create a museum that combines the history of Kuwait for the first time and is kept under one roof. The reconstruction process took nearly six years that will demonstrate 300 years of undocumented history of Kuwait. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attend the inauguration of the 'Salam Palace' Museum.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrives to the venue.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the museum.



A United Nations' certificate recognizing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a "Humanitarian Leader" is displayed at the museum.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen during a tour around the museum.



Several portraits of the late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah displayed at the museum.



A musical performance at the museum.

Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A general view of Kuwait City and its suburbs. —Photo by Ali Abdullah (KUNA)

Search for missing Kuwaiti remains in Iraq won't stop: Foreign Ministry official

Kuwait follows up Hormuz Strait threats with grave concern: Jarallah

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah affirmed Sunday that search for remains of missing Kuwaitis in Iraq is still ongoing in accordance with UN procedures and will not stop. Jarallah made his remarks to reporters after taking part in a ceremony to mark the 25th anniversary of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) partnership with Kuwait. Kuwait's foreign ministry is closely following the issue during meetings with its Iraqi counterpart and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), he added.

Meanwhile, Jarallah indicated that the missions and duties of the National Committee for Missing and Prisoners of Wars Affairs (NCMPA) have been referred to the foreign ministry a few days ago. The ministry is currently dealing with the issue and has contacted families of missing and imprisoned Kuwaitis in Iraq to update their data and follow details related to this subject, said the senior official. On Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdulmahdi's visit to Kuwait, Jarallah said that no date has been scheduled yet, affirming his country's aspiration for such a visit as soon as possible due to its importance on both countries' interest.

On recent tensions in the region and Kuwaiti concerns after Iran threatened to shut Hormuz Strait, Jarallah said his country is following these threats with "grave concern." He also affirmed Kuwait's aspiration to keep the region away from such tensions, wishing that wisdom, peace, and tranquility prevail in this "vital part" of the world.

Kuwait, IOM ties

Meanwhile, Jarallah stressed the strategic relationship between Kuwait and the IOM, pointing out that this strategic relationship is working on important humanitarian sectors through which Kuwait has cooperated with the organization to implement several humanitarian projects in a number of countries. "Kuwait cannot forget the important role of this international organization during the Iraqi invasion through the issuance of many resolutions to liberate Kuwait," he added. Jarallah thanked the organization for honoring the Foreign Ministry and its officials, headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Kuwait commends IOM for alleviating people's suffering

In the meantime, the Director-General of IOM, Antonio Vittorino, praised Kuwait's continued support to all international organizations at the UN. Vittorino noted that the organization is pursuing close cooperation not only in the area of policies of common concern such as combating human trafficking, managing borders and improving the labor market for foreign workers, but also to support Kuwait in achieving its humanitarian goals. He expressed appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti Government for their assistance to IOM mission. The ceremony was marked by the selection of Sheikhha Bibi Nasser Al-Sabah as a goodwill ambassador as well as honoring senior officials of the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry.

Alleviating people suffering

In a speech during the ceremony, Sheikh Sabah Al-

involved designing robots to go through five arenas that the students prepared for along with a surprise 6th arena for which the students had to design a robot to work through on the spot. The Robotics team consisted of Othman Al-Matrouk, Alaa Bouomar and Afsah Abdullah. The team was supervised by Mohammed Zaki, Senior Instructor of Industrial Practice.

As for the Projects competition, the ACK team competed against 80 other teams. The group worked to design a medical device that would detect the vital signs of the wearer to catch any abnormalities such as heart attacks and diabetes strokes. The Projects team members were Anoud Al-Shammari, Azari Al-Yasin, Maha Fatehallah, and Shurooq Al-Kandari. This team was also supervised by Mohammed Zaki.

Zaki credits the students' success where they have been encouraged to view the competitions as fun learning activities, as opposed to purely competitive activities. "I told my students: we aren't going there to win, we are going there to enjoy and learn," said Zaki. "If you enjoy it, you will excel in it." ACK would like to thank the IEEE for providing such a great opportunity for its students, and also to thank the faculty and students who participated for their hard work and effort.



KUWAIT: Director-General of IOM Antonio Vittorino (right) honors Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah (center), as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah looks on. —KUNA

Khaled commended the IOM for alleviating suffering of people facing crises in different parts of the world, adding that cooperation with international organizations enabled Kuwait to get acquainted with its vital humanitarian projects. Kuwait, which holds an observer status at IOM, has been committed to development, humanitarian and relief projects worldwide, he said.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said the international community was experiencing critical challenges which were affecting global peace and security. He expressed

concern over high numbers of poor and hungry people. Kuwait, he added, paid a great attention to elimination of poverty in compliance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the ultimate objective of protecting and promoting human rights and human dignity. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said Kuwait sought, through its non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council, to highlight challenges facing humanitarian work like displacement of people from conflict zones. —KUNA

ACK students win IEEE 2nd SYPC GCC competitions

KUWAIT: The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) took part in the Second Students and Young Professional (SYP) competitions held by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE) and won in two competitions. The IEEE 2nd SYPC GCC competition was held in Kuwait and brought together students from around the Arabian Gulf to compete against each other in various competitions. Two groups of students from ACK took part in the competitions which were held on the 19th and 20th of April 2019. The groups competed in and were selected amongst the winners for the Robotics competition and the Projects competition.

During the Robotics competition, the ACK team competed against 14 other teams. The competition



KUWAIT: A group photo during the honoring.

Local

Survey shows strong support for raising marriage age in Kuwait

Research center hosts workshop on ending violence against women and girls

KUWAIT: The Women's Research and Studies Center (WRSC) at the College of Social Sciences at Kuwait University hosted a workshop yesterday to raise awareness on ending violence against women and girls in Kuwait. The event took place under the patronage of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (GSSCPD), in partnership with UN Women and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Kuwait, and in collaboration with the Central Statistical Bureau, and Promundo, a non-government organization that has conducted the study in four Arab states.

The workshop drew the participation of Dr Khaled Al-Mahdi, Secretary-General of GSSCPD, Dr Lubna Al-Kazi, Director WRSC, Hideko Hadzialic, Resident Representative of UNDP in Kuwait, and Josephine Moss, Coordination specialist at UN Women. The event was held within the framework of the project 'Support the State of Kuwait in the implementation of SDG 5 on Gender Empowerment' and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Kuwait's National Development Plan (KNPD) 2015-2020.

The workshop unveiled the results of Kuwait's first 'International Men and Gender Equality Survey' in the Middle East and North Africa (IMAGES MENA). Conducted in 2018, the first exercise of its kind in the GCC region focused on gender empowerment, domestic violence, personal experiences, and men's and women's attitudes and practices in this regard. Having surveyed more than 1,900 Kuwaiti men and women aged 18-59, it is one of the most comprehensive household studies in the region. The findings have confirmed significant support for protecting women and girls' rights in Kuwait.

Equal rights

The survey provides fascinating insights into the perception of women's economic and educational empowerment in the country. For instance, 90 percent of women and two thirds percent of men believe wives and husbands have equal rights to work outside the home. On the other hand, 48 percent of men think that should resources be scarce, it is more important to attend to sons than daughters.

In terms of protecting women and girls' rights, 75 percent of men and 90 percent of women support laws raising the minimum age of marriage to 18 and criminalizing domestic violence. An impressive 100 percent of women and 98 percent of men are in favor of criminalizing sexual harassment.

Examining men's and women's roles in childcare, the survey reveals that around 90 percent of fathers have attended at least one antenatal visit, and more than 75 percent were present at the birth of their youngest child. Meanwhile, 79 percent of men and 93 percent of women discuss personal matters with children.

As for the perception of marriage, more than 80 percent of women and 50 percent of men believe in a woman's right to initiate divorce. However, more than 80 percent of men and half of all women surveyed think divorce will lead to the breakdown of society.

Ending violence

Dr Khaled Mahdi, Secretary-General of GSSCPD,

said: "It is imperative that we work together to end violence against women. We must tackle the root causes of it, and adopt a systemic and comprehensive approach that recognizes and protects women's full and equal human rights. In this workshop today, we are bringing to light the results of our country's first national survey on ending violence against women and girls. Together with the help of the WRSC, we are supporting Kuwait in implementing the fifth objective of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals on achieving gender empowerment for women and girls."

Hideko Hadzialic, Resident Representative of UNDP in Kuwait, said: "We need to enable women to live a life of equality. Ending violence against women is one of UNDP's priorities and part of our mission to realize women's empowerment."

On behalf of UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States, Josephine Moss, Coordination Specialist, commended Kuwait and national stakeholders for their leadership in implementing this ground-breaking study and said: "Kuwait's innovative approach offers a model to other countries in the GCC region and beyond, to obtain the data to inform policies that will facilitate women's full and effective participation in national development."

Speaking at the event, Dr Lubna Al-Kazi, Director of WRSC, said: "Unfortunately, many women today still face violence in their lives, therefore protecting women and girls against violence is a social responsibility. The



KUWAIT: Dr Lubna Al-Kazi, Director of Women's Research and Studies Center Kuwait, speaks during the workshop.

Center shares action plan to end violence against women

findings of IMAGES MENA Kuwait shed light on a harsh reality that we need to acknowledge and prevent. The survey has been an eye opener, proving that it is imperative to implement strategies to protect women in Kuwait, elevate their status and promote gender-positive policies across the board."

The workshop also provided an opportunity to learn from the experiences of other Arab countries where IMAGES MENA Kuwait was conducted and explore how they utilized the findings and recommendations for programming purposes. The event included a presentation of WRSC's action plan to end violence against women in Kuwait.

Kuwait signs two MoUs with China on Belt, Road Initiative

KUWAIT: Kuwait has signed two memorandums of understanding with the Chinese government on the road and belt initiative for international cooperation in the framework of implementing its strategic vision in making it a safe strategic corridor and a huge trade forum.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Kuwait's Ambassador to China Samih Hayat on the sidelines of his chairmanship of Kuwait's delegation to the eSilk Summit 2i forum on the road and belt initiative for international cooperation, sponsored and attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The first memorandum of understanding signed with the state's China Development Bank is related to development, construction and consultative cooperation, whereas the second, which was signed with the State Urban Planning Commission, is related to organization of consultative planning, the Kuwaiti embassy in Beijing said in a statement yesterday.

The statement pointed out that Ambassador Hayat signed the memorandums of understanding between the governments of the two countries by directives of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Supreme Planning Council and the Supreme Head of the North Economic Zone.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Hayat affirmed during the forum Kuwait's support for the eBelt and Road initiative, which coincides with its strategic vision of making it a safe strategic corridor, a huge trade forum and a network of railways lines starting from China and ending in Jerusalem through Central Asia and strategic countries. The China Development Bank is the largest government development bank in the world, with more than \$200 billion in funding over 600 projects under the Infrastructure Initiative of the Belt and Road Initiative since its launch in 2013. —KUNA

Kuwait beefs up monitoring of charity work

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Acting Social Affairs Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Hanan Al-Hajeri warned those involved in charity work against violating rules and regulations of collecting donations in order to avoid punishments, as there will not be any leniency with any party that violates the charity law. Hajeri asked people not to hesitate in informing authorities about any violations in collecting donations, be it at premises of NGOs, worship places or anywhere else, especially with the advent of the holy month of Ramadan next week. She said the ministry receives information about violations on the hotlines 99228954 and 22484776 during official working hours.

Hajeri said 30 societies out of 44 registered at the ministry are participating in the 16th project of collecting donations, in addition to the International Islamic Charity Organization, adding that preparations for this year began in February with coordination with the awqaf and interior ministries, Kuwait Municipality, state security and the manpower authority to check the criminal records of those working in collecting money. She added that six teams were formed to follow charity work, which is double the number of teams formed in previous years, in order to cover the entire country.

She said that an initiative called "Gharemeen" (those who cannot pay their debts) was launched at the request of NGOs, adding that a number of NGOs expressed their willingness to care for prisoners, including the Ruhamaa Beinahom Takaful society.



KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health inaugurated yesterday a forum and workshop on 'Good Manufacturing Practices in Pharmaceutical Industry.' Central Circle Company and Sanofi are among the largest sponsors participating in the four-day event, which is held under the patronage of Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah. The Ministry's Undersecretary for Medical Stores and Regulatory Affairs Dr Abdullah Al-Bader attended the event.

Zain delivers 'Ramadan Machla' through strategic partners' network

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, delivered 'Ramadan Machla' (supplies) to a number of its strategic partners of non-profit organizations, who will in turn distribute them to underprivileged families in Kuwait during the upcoming holy month of Ramadan.

The 'Ramadan Machla' initiative is one of the main pillars of Zain's annual Ramadan campaign, which comes in line with the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategy. Every year, Zain prepares boxes containing essential food supplies and delivers them through the network of its strategic partners of non-profit organizations. This year, the company favored delivering vouchers instead of the boxes to give every family the opportunity to choose specific supplies as per their different needs.

Zain delivered the 'Ramadan Machla' vouchers to strategic partners of non-profit organizations: the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), Kuwait Food Bank, Direct Aid, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Social Care

Centers, and Zakat House. The vouchers will be distributed to underprivileged families in Kuwait who are in need of support during the month of fasting. The vouchers can be used at Saveco, an all-inclusive one-of-a-kind one-stop mega market, considered one of the biggest in Kuwait and the region, and offers a vast range of products and services. Zain also dedicated a day of special deals and exclusive offers for voucher holders in collaboration with Saveco.

Zain's distribution plan included the delivery of the vouchers to the biggest official non-profit organizations across Kuwait to assure their delivery to those in need before the arrival of the Holy Month in order to ensure disadvantaged families have enough quantities of the most basic supplies. This initiative is part of a series of programs the company is preparing for the upcoming Holy Month of Ramadan with the aim of having a deep positive impact on the community's various segments, especially the most vulnerable ones.

Zain affirmed that its social and CSSR campaign during the holy month of Ramadan will include an extensive array of initiatives and programs that focus on helping less fortunate people to enjoy Ramadan happily, as well as celebrating the true spirit the Holy month brings.

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



KUWAIT: Zain delivers 'Ramadan Machla' to Kuwait Food Bank.

'Suspected felony' in couple's death

KUWAIT: The bodies of two Kuwaitis who were found dead in a chalet in the south of the country were recovered by the coroner. A police source said a suspected felony case was ordered by the prosecution as investigations began. Meanwhile, the body of a Kuwaiti woman was sent to the coroner after she was found dead by firemen as they responded to a call about a fire in a Jabriya house kitchen. The woman was found in her

house's yard, and paramedics confirmed her death.

Child molester at large

A nine-year-old Egyptian girl was molested by an unidentified person near her residence in Khaitan. The girl's father complained to police. Detectives are searching for the suspect.

Harassment

Policemen arrested a man who harassed a Kuwaiti woman near a Abu Al-Hasaniya café. The woman called police and said the man was chasing her, so police responded and arrested the man, who was drinking coffee. The suspect, also a Kuwaiti, was tak-

News in brief

Six-month grace period for bedoons

KUWAIT: Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah gave instructions to give bedoons whose security IDs have expired a six-month grace period from the start of May until the end of Oct 2019, so that they can get their security IDs. Ministry Undersecretary Dr Mustafa Redha wrote to health zones asking them to exempt bedoons from paying health fees at hospitals and health centers. —A Saleh

Residency investigations office open

KUWAIT: The Farwaniya residency investigations office opened in Rigga on Sunday, April 28, the Interior Ministry's General Investigations Department announced yesterday in a statement released by the ministry's Security Media Department. —Hanan Al-Saadoun

Jaber Causeway opens tomorrow

KUWAIT: The Jaber Causeway is scheduled to open tomorrow, May 1. The Public Works Ministry said a celebration will be held on a manmade island, which is part of the project. —Al-Anbaa

Palace of Justice to be demolished

KUWAIT: While preparations are being made to move judicial departments out of the Palace of Justice to the courts of other governorates in order to demolish it after 44 years of holding court sessions in it, judicial sources said it is not possible to move all court departments from the building unless there is an alternative in Kuwait City in particular. The sources said articles 4 and 8 of the judiciary law related to the administrative and government circuits, comprehensive court and the cassation court say that sessions must be held in Kuwait City. Therefore, sessions cannot be held elsewhere, unless the laws are amended or the state rents a building to put the courts in them. They added that holding court sessions in any other governorate will make them null and void, along with the sentences issued. —Al-Jarida

en to the police station where the woman lodged a complaint.

Nurse beats patient

A male nurse beat a patient who suffered a stroke. The investigator ordered the Indian man transferred to the central prison while waiting for court action. A policeman said that a Kuwaiti woman in Adan told police that her disabled Kuwaiti husband, who suffered from a stroke and was not aware of his surroundings, was beaten by a male nurse. The nurse was charged with negligence in caring for a disabled person and beating. Detectives arrested the suspect and took him to the police station.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai



Thousands gather in Kabul for Afghan peace meeting

US measles outbreak raises questions about immunity in adults



PEMBA: Residents stand next to a road partially destroyed by floods after heavy downpours in Pemba after the destruction caused by Cyclone Kenneth. —AFP

38 killed as Mozambique floods worsen

Around 200,000 people in Pemba city 'in danger'

PEMBA: Heavy rain battered northern Mozambique yesterday as residents and relief workers confronted the widespread devastation wrought by Cyclone Kenneth, the strongest cyclone to ever hit Africa, which killed 38 people and destroyed thousands of homes. Roads have been washed away, fields submerged and many buildings wrecked by the storm, which came weeks after Cyclone Idai hit the Mozambican city of Beira, 1,000 kilometers to the south.

Cyclone Kenneth made landfall late on Thursday in Cabo Delgado province, packing wind gusts of up to 220 kilometers per hour. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) described it as the strongest cyclone to ever lash the continent, and predicted further heavy rain over the coming days. "Cyclone Kenneth made landfall at the end of the rainy season, when river levels were already high, increasing the risk of river flooding," the UN agency said in its latest update.

"Humanitarian needs in Mozambique have sky-rocketed, and the humanitarian response will need to rapidly

scale-up." According to figures provided by the Mozambique authorities to NGOs, around 200,000 people in Pemba city, the capital of Cabo Delgado, are in danger. According to a preliminary toll from the National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC), 38 people have died, 39 have been injured, more than 23,000 people are without shelter and nearly 35,000 homes have been either partly or completely destroyed.

'We don't know what we'll do'

"The water came inside the house and all the way to the backyard," said Sumala Cabila, 23, standing in his family home in Pemba's working-class Piquite suburb which flooded on Sunday morning. As rain poured down and roads in the district

became unpassable except for 4-wheel-drive vehicles, Cabila's sister struggled to look after her one-month-old child. "If it continues to rain, we don't know what we'll do," he said as water streamed from his slanted roof.

In Pemba, a tourist destination, staff mopped up pools of water at a hotel and cleared tree branches out of the lobby fountain, while laborers struggled to clear out the city's drainage system blocked by flood debris. "(We) planned to mobilize as much aid as possible to Ibo and also from there to Quissanga via Roa," said UN OCHA official Saviano Abreu, naming two areas outside Pemba worst hit by storm damage and flooding.

"It was the priority for government and humanitarian organizations, as these two areas are in urgent need.

"We managed to send one flight with World Food Program (WFP) supplies of rice and biscuits, and some non-food items. But unfortunately the weather conditions are changing too fast and threatening the operation. It's raining again and the second flight couldn't go." To the north of Pemba, the town of Macomia was also badly hit, with homes and businesses destroyed, roofs torn off, trees and electric pylons uprooted.

"We have grave fears for the thousands of families currently taking shelter under the wreckage of their homes. They urgently need food, water and shelter to survive the coming days," said Nicholas Finney, head of Save the Children's response team in Mozambique. The northern region hit by Cyclone Kenneth is more sparsely populated than Beira, which was hit by Cyclone Idai in mid-March. But the area has also been hard hit by deadly raids by a jihadist group over the past 18 months that the army has been unable to control. Before smashing into Mozambique, Kenneth passed by the Comoros islands. — AFP



Cyclone Kenneth wreaks havoc, destroy homes

New UK rules over rape victims' digital data spark criticism

LONDON: Police are asking rape and sexual assault victims for access to their digital devices under new guidelines published yesterday that prompted criticism from women's rights campaigners in Britain. Officers now present victims with consent forms to view messages, photographs, emails and social media accounts, with police warning that prosecutions may not go ahead without the permissions. The change follows a disclosure scandal in the legal system which saw a series of rape and sexual assault cases collapse in recent years after crucial evidence emerged at the last minute.

Assistant commissioner Nick Ephgrave, of the National Police Chiefs' Council, said the new "informed consent" forms would be used "proportionately and consistently". He added police were working with victim groups and others to ensure the approach had "the necessary balance". "We would never want victims to feel that they can't report crimes because of 'intrusion' in their data," Ephgrave said in a statement.

But women's advocates as well as privacy campaigners have hit out at the consent forms as overly intrusive and argue they could deter people from reporting crimes. "We seem to be going back to the bad old days when victims of rape are being treated as suspects," said Harriet Wistrich, director of the Centre for Women's Justice. The organization said it was preparing a legal challenge to the policy alongside privacy advocates Big Brother Watch, which has dubbed the measures "digital strip searches". Prime Minister Theresa May's spokesman said Monday that the issue was "complex" and police would conduct impact assessments on the forms. — AFP

Pope urges hairdressers to cut gossip

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis yesterday welcomed hairdressers, hairstylists and beauticians to the Vatican but warned them not to indulge in gossip while feathering locks or painting fingernails. "Practice your profession in a Christian style, treating customers with kindness and courtesy, and always offering them a good word and encouragement," he said.

Snip split ends and wax limbs while "avoiding giving in to the temptation of chatter that

easily creeps into your work environment," he urged them during an audience in the Vatican. He said the cosmetologists should be guided by their patron saint, Peruvian Martino de Porres, a 16th-century barber-surgeon whose miracles include levitation, being in two places at once, instant cures, and an ability to communicate with animals.

De Porres, who is also the patron saint of mixed-race people, innkeepers and public health workers, was a barber-surgeon in Lima, an ancient trade which covered everything from haircuts to amputations and bloodletting. "Each of you, in your professional work, can always act with righteousness, thus making a positive contribution to the common good of society," Francis said. The Argentine pontiff opened a barber shop and washrooms for the homeless in Saint Peter's Square in 2015. — AFP



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis waves to the crowd from the window of the Apostolic Palace overlooking St Peter's square during the Regina Caeli prayer. — AFP

France moves to stem surge in police suicides

PARIS: The French government yesterday opened a suicide prevention unit for police officers after a sharp rise in the number taking their own lives since the start of this year. The move comes as prosecutors are investigating chants by some "yellow vest" anti-government protesters in recent weeks urging the police to "commit suicide," which have prompted widespread public outrage.

Police unions say officers are under intense strain since the eruption of the protests last November, which have often degenerated into violent clashes between demonstrators and security forces. So far this year 28 officers have killed themselves, up from a total of 35 for all of last year, according to interior ministry figures.

"We have to break the fear, break the shame, break the silence," Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said as he opened the prevention unit's offices in Paris. He said officials would also evaluate practices and procedures in the police forces of other countries as well as in private companies. Castaner acknowledged that police suicides were linked to the physical and emotional tolls of the work, which union officials say have increased significantly with the demands of securing the "yellow vest" protests.

"I don't want to hear more about 'this has nothing to do with the service, it was a personal issue'," he said. But Castaner rejected claims that a move to let officers keep their service weapons at home when off duty, implemented after the deadly 2015 terror attacks in Paris, had contributed to the increase in suicides. "Over the past 10 years, the percentage of gun use in cases of suicides hasn't changed," he said.

National police chief Eric Morvan had already raised the issue in a letter to France's 150,000 officers earlier this month, acknowledging there had been a "dramatic sequence" of suicides in the force. "The human responsibility that someone has in taking this terrible decision does not exonerate us from ours," he wrote. In two of the most recent cases, a policeman shot himself this month at home with his service weapon in Villejuif outside Paris, and a female captain shot herself in the heart in her office in the southern city of Montpellier. — AFP

International

Sri Lanka on alert for attacks by militants disguised in uniforms

Archbishop slams poor church security

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan security officials have warned that Islamist militants behind Easter Sunday's suicide bombings are planning attacks and could be dressed in uniform, as the archbishop of Colombo complained about insufficient security around churches. The militants were targeting five locations for attacks, security sources said.

"There could be another wave of attacks," the head of the police ministerial security division (MSD) said in a letter to lawmakers and other officials seen by Reuters yesterday. "The relevant information further notes that persons dressed in military uniforms and using a van could be involved in the attacks." There were no attacks on Sunday and security across Buddhist-majority Sri Lanka has been ramped up, with scores of suspected Islamists arrested since the April 21 attacks on hotels and churches that killed more than 250 people, including 40 foreign nationals.

The government has also banned women from wearing face veils under an emergency law that was put in place after the attacks. There were concerns within the Muslim community that the ban could fuel tensions in the multi-ethnic nation. But government officials said it would help security forces identify people as a hunt for any remaining attackers and their support network continues across the Indian Ocean island, which was gripped by civil war for decades until 2009.

The Archbishop of Colombo, Malcolm Ranjith, said that security had not been sufficiently stepped up around churches. "We are not satisfied with the security arrangements and urge authorities to ensure our safety," he told reporters. Authorities suspect members of two little known groups - National Thawheed Jamaath (NTJ) and Jammiyathul Millathu Ibrahim - of carrying out the Easter attacks, though Islamic State has claimed responsibility.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said a tight-knit group of people was involved, mostly close friends and families. They spoke face-to-face, possibly to evade electronic surveillance. "They were small enough that they were not using normal communications, instead meeting each other," Wickremesinghe said. He added the coordinated bombings, the type of explosives used and the tightly guarded plot suggested the bombers had guidance. "ISIS has claimed, we also felt there has to be some international links," he said, referring to Islamic State.

Authorities believe Zahran Hashim, the founder of NTJ, was the mastermind and one of the nine suicide bombers. One military source told Reuters that five sets of white attire commonly worn by Buddhists when visiting temples were recovered from a safe house in the east, the site of a gun battle on Friday that killed Zahran's father and his two brothers. His wife and daughter escaped an explosion with minor injuries, hospital staff and police said.

Row over police chief

Many Sri Lankans believe a deep rift between President Maithripala Sirisena and Wickremesinghe has undermined national security. Sirisena fired Wickremesinghe last year, after months of tension, only to be forced to reinstate him under pressure from the Supreme Court. Since then their relationship has deteriorated further to the point where their factions actively try to undermine each other, including not sharing security information, defense sources say.

Sirisena said yesterday he had appointed Chandana Wickramaratne, the second in command at the police, as acting police chief. Over the weekend, two sources at the president's office told Reuters that Pujith Jayasundara, the police chief who was appointed by Wickremesinghe, was refusing the president's request to step down for not sharing information about the attacks.

"Since there is an investigation into his possible failure in preventing the attacks, Jayasundara has been sent on compulsory leave," a source close to the president said. It was not immediately possible to contact Jayasundara yesterday. The president has also appointed General Shantha Kottegododa as the new defense secretary, replacing Hemasiri Fernando who resigned after the bombings, saying that some institutions under him had failed.

Kottegododa, 69, army commander between 2004 and 2005, was instrumental in weakening Tamil Tiger rebels by breaking away an allied group. The archbishop criticized the bickering at the top levels of government. "At a time when the whole country has been affected by a major catastrophe, politicians should stop finding fault with each other," he said. "Instead they must have broad discussion on what steps needed to be taken to solve this and take this country out of this crisis." — Reuters



COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan Special Task Force (STF) soldier checks a Muslim burial ground in Colombo yesterday, a week after a series of bomb blasts targeting churches and luxury hotels on Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka. — AFP

Military spending at post-Cold War high, fueled by US, China

STOCKHOLM: Global military expenditure reached its highest level last year since the end of the Cold War, fueled by increased spending in the United States and China, the world's two biggest economies, a leading defense think-tank said yesterday. In its annual report, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said overall global military spending in 2018 hit \$1.82 trillion, up 2.6 percent on the previous year.

That is the highest figure since 1988, when such data first became available as the Cold War began

winding down. US military spending rose 4.6 percent last year to reach \$649 billion, leaving it still by far the world's biggest spender. It accounted for 36 percent of total global military expenditure, nearly equal to the following eight biggest-spending countries combined, SIPRI said. China, the second biggest spender, saw military expenditure rise 5.0 percent to \$250 billion last year, the 24th consecutive annual increase.

"In 2018 the USA and China accounted for half of the world's military spending," Nan Tian, a researcher with the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure (AMEX) program, said. With President Donald Trump committed to strong national defense despite reducing US troops numbers in conflict zones such as Afghanistan, 2018 marked the first increase in US military spending since 2010, SIPRI said. His defense spending request to Congress this year is the largest ever in dollar terms before adjustment for inflation. — Reuters

Floods kill nearly 40 in Indonesia

BENGKULU: Floods sparked by torrential rains have killed nearly 40 in Indonesia with a dozen more still missing, officials said yesterday, marking the latest calamity for a disaster-prone nation. Landslides and floods are common during the monsoon season between October and April, when rains lash the vast Southeast Asian archipelago. Yesterday, Indonesia's disaster agency confirmed 29 deaths and said at least 13 more people were missing in Sumatra island's Bengkulu province. A landslide triggered by heavy rain in neighboring Lampung province on Saturday also killed a family of six.

Meanwhile, flooding in and around parts of the capital Jakarta last week killed at least two people, forced more than 2,000 to evacuate their homes and set 14 pet pythons on the loose. In Bogor, a satellite city of Jakarta, residents had to contend with the prospect of coming face to face with the giant serpents, after they were set loose from a private property due to the high waters.

Six of the snakes—which were as long as four meters —

have been found, but eight were still missing, officials said at the weekend. "If you find them please report it to authorities or volunteers," said Indonesian disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho. That was not much comfort for some Bogor residents. "We're terrified to hear this," said Samsudin, who goes by one name. "Apparently they're very big so we want authorities to help us find them or take action."

Illegal mining

In Sumatra, some 12,000 residents have been evacuated from water-logged Bengkulu with hundreds of buildings, bridges and roads damaged. Authorities have set up temporary shelters and public kitchens for those displaced by the rains. Hardest hit was Bengkulu Tengah district, just outside of the provincial capital, where 22 people were killed along with hundreds of livestock. Illegal coal mining was partly to blame for deadly landslides, authorities said.

"Apart from natural factors like the heavy rain, (the flooding) was also caused by human activity that destroys the environment," disaster agency head Doni Monardo told reporters in Bengkulu yesterday. Activists have long warned deforestation from rampant mining in the province could trigger a catastrophe. — AFP



BENGKULU: This aerial picture shows a general view of submerged buildings after heavy rain caused flooding in Bengkulu on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. — AFP

Jihadists kill pastor, 4 others in Burkina Faso church attack

OUAGADOUGOU: Gunmen killed four worshippers and a pastor in the first jihadist attack on a church in Burkina Faso, security and local sources said yesterday, in the latest violence to rock the formerly peaceful west African nation. Sunday's raid took place in the small northern town of Silgadji near Djibo, the capital of Soum province. "Unidentified armed individuals have attacked the Protestant church in Silgadji, killing four members of the congregation and the main pastor," a security source said. "At least two other people are missing," the source added.

It was the first attack on a church since jihadist violence erupted in Burkina Faso in 2015. Former colonial ruler France has deployed some 4,500 troops in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad in a mission codenamed Barkhane to help local forces try to flush out jihadist

groups. "The attack happened around 1:00 pm, just as the faithful were leaving the church at the end of the service," a member of the church who did not want to be identified told AFP.

"The attackers were on motorbikes. They fired in the air before aiming at the members of the congregation," the witness added. Burkina Faso has suffered from increasingly frequent and deadly attacks attributed to a number of jihadist groups, including the Ansarul Islam group, the Group to Support Islam and Muslims (GSIM) and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara. The raids began in 2015 in the north before targeting the capital Ouagadougou and other regions, notably in the east.

A total of 350 people have been killed since 2015 - mainly in hit-and-run raids - according to an AFP tally. The jihadist groups regularly target both Muslim and Christian clerics, mainly in the north. In February, a Spanish Catholic priest, Father Cesar Fernandez, was killed in a raid attributed to jihadists in Nohao in the centre of the country. He was returning from the adjoining country of Togo when it happened. Fernandez, 72, had been working in Africa since 1982 for the Salesians of Don Bosco order. — AFP

Kuwait Times
ESTABLISHED 1961
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

STAY CONNECTED

• Read Kuwait Times now on your phone for **FREE**

• Send Subscribe to **+965 944 88888**

• Enjoy the first daily paper in Kuwait on your phone

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait
Tel: 24833199 - 24833358 - 24835616/7 | Fax: 24835620 - 24835621
E: info@kuwaittimes.net

International

Australian PM clashes with rival in feisty debate as poll tightens

Political leaders trade barbs in television debate

SYDNEY: Australia's prime minister clashed with the leader of the opposition yesterday over tax, climate change and national security as the rivals squared-off in a televised debate hours after a poll showed the race narrowing. The two men vying to lead Australia for the next three years faced off over the economy and plummeting trust in politicians in a testy first televised election debate yesterday.

As polls showed the race to the May 18 vote tightening, embattled conservative Prime Minister Scott Morrison and frontrunner Bill Shorten of the centre-left opposition Labor party traded sometimes personal barbs as they debated the country's future. Morrison, who faces electoral defeat less than a year after coming to office in a party coup-painted the opposition leader as a poor custodian of this G20 economy.

"Who do you trust to manage a \$2 trillion economy?" asked Morrison, framing the debate as a choice between the Liberal party's continued stewardship and costly policy changes. While Australia's economy has grown solidly for more than two decades, storm clouds are gathering and there is unease at the rising cost of living and vast income disparities. Tapping into that sense of growing malaise, Shorten accused the Liberal government of looking after "the top end of town".

"There is a mood for change in Australia," he said, promising to improve incomes and put "middle and working class people back on top". "Everything is going up in Australia except people's wages," he said. Morrison accused the Labor leader of not being honest with voters about the cost of new emissions reduction targets and other policy changes. For months the polls have shown the opposition headed

for a sizeable victory, but ahead of the debate a Newpoll survey showed Labor's lead narrowing to two percentage points, well within the margin of error.

The campaign so far has been dominated by shrill attacks and hyperbolic accusations of impending doom if one side or the other wins. That tension was on full display, with cries of "rubbish" and frequent interruptions from the candidates as moderators in Perth tried to keep the debate on track. When asked to say what they admired about the other man, the pair could offer only tepid endorsements about public service in parliament and on a few specific issues.

Controversial tycoon

Yesterday's poll showed the election will be closely fought, but also underscored the complexities of Australia's election system—which asks voters to rank parties by preferences and encourages voting pacts between major and minor parties. The poll for the first time counted support for controversial mining mogul Clive Palmer, who has bought his way to five per cent of the vote with months of ad spending worth tens of millions of dollars.

His populist "Make Australia Great" message can be seen on billboards and TV screens across the country, echoing the campaign waged successfully by Donald Trump in his 2016 run for the White House. The Newpoll predicted that 60 percent of Palmer's supporters would prefer Morrison's Liberal party, boosting its showing relative to Labor. Morrison tried to distance himself from Palmer, but insisted Labor and the Greens were a bigger risk to the Australian economy than the controversial millionaire. —Agencies



PERTH: Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison (left) and opposition leader Bill Shorten shake hands before the first televised leaders debate in Perth yesterday. —AFP

News in brief

Seven bodies found in US

TENNESSEE: A suspect in the killings of seven people in rural Tennessee was shot and captured by police after an hours-long manhunt triggered by the discovery of the bodies in two separate homes, authorities said yesterday. Dozens of people gathered to commemorate the victims on Sunday evening at a Methodist church in Westmoreland, a town in the area where the shootings occurred, according to Nashville television station FOX 17. At least two victims attended the church, which had a sign for the vigil that read: "We are mourning with you." The suspect, Michael Cummins, 25, was in custody after suffering non-life threatening injuries during his arrest on Saturday night, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation said in a statement. The search for the suspect began on Saturday evening after an emergency call led police to four bodies in a home in Sumner County. —Reuters

11 dead in Mexico accident

MEXICO CITY: A bus rollover in northern Mexico has left at least 11 dead, including three children, an official with emergency services said yesterday. The accident took place in Zacatecas state early Sunday morning on a bus that transported around 40 passengers from Mexico City to the northern city of Torreon, according to Moises Villagrana, the head of emergency services with the Zacatecas municipality of Rio Grande. "There are still three bodies inside the bus, but it's possible that underneath it there could be more people," he said, adding that the accident may have been caused by the driver falling asleep. Among the injured are five Central Americans with humanitarian visas issued by the Mexican government that are often used by migrants seeking to reach the United States. —Reuters

Visa, MasterCard card fees

BRUSSELS: The European Union will oblige credit card giants Visa and MasterCard to reduce their fees for payments on transactions involving cards issued outside the bloc, Brussels said yesterday. The US-based firms had already committed to reduce their "inter-regional exchange fees", but this week's decision makes the promise legally binding under EU anti-trust laws. "This, together with our January 2019 decision on Mastercard's cross-border card payment services, will lead to lower prices for European retailers to do business," EU competition commissioner Margrethe Vestager said. According to the European Commission, the fees charged when Visa and MasterCard holders from outside the EU spend on the continent—which had been higher than for cards issued in member states—will be cut by an average of 40 percent. —AFP

India police raid houses

NEW DELHI: Indian police said they raided the houses of three suspects in connection with a case concerning 15 people who left India to join the militant Islamic State group, a week after bombings in Sri Lanka that killed more than 250. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) said it carried out searches at the three houses in the southern state of Kerala, located near the tip of the Indian peninsula. The coordinated suicide bombings by Islamist militants at hotels and churches in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday sent shockwaves through the Indian Ocean island state that had enjoyed relative peace since a civil war ended a decade ago. "These persons are suspected to have links with some of the accused persons in the said case who had exited India to join the proscribed terrorist organization ISIS/Daish," the NIA said in a statement, using other names by which Islamic State is known. —Reuters

Spain faces weeks of coalition horse-trading after Socialist victory

MADRID: Spain faces weeks of coalition talks after Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's Socialists won snap elections without a majority, splitting the right-wing bloc but letting ultra nationalists into parliament. With the country set to return to the polls on May 26 for regional, local and European Parliament elections, politicians' appetite for clear commitments was muted yesterday and a new government is not likely to be formed before June.

"We should wait and see what will happen in the municipal elections...in many regions and of course in the European Parliament," the president of the Socialist party told Spanish public radio. "There is no hurry...we are still campaigning," she added. The Socialists came first in Sunday's snap polls, winning 123 seats out of 350, or close to 29 percent of the vote — short of an absolute majority but much better than the 85 seats it got in the last election in 2016.

Nearest rivals the main opposition conservative Popular Party (PP) bagged just 66 seats compared to 137 in 2016, its worst showing in over two decades. Conservative votes were split among two other parties, centre-right

Ciudadanos and ultra-nationalist Vox party, which won just over 10 percent of the vote in a country that has had no far-right party to speak of since the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975. The three rightist parties together have 147 seats, far from the 176-seat majority in the 350-seat parliament needed to govern.

'Enough support'

Sanchez, who came to power in June after ousting PP prime minister Mariano Rajoy in a no-confidence vote, has several options to govern. He could try to rule on his own as he did during the ten months that he was in power with the backing of far-left Podemos and smaller regional groupings. "We will try," Deputy Prime Minister Carmen Calvo told news radio Cadena Ser.

"We think we have more than enough support to be the rudder of this boat which should continue its journey," she said. The support of Podemos is a given. The party was weakened in the election, winning 42 seats compared to 67 in 2016, and is not in a position to dictate conditions. The Socialists could rely on several other smaller regional parties without the support of Catalan separatists. All Sanchez would need is for Catalan separatist lawmakers to abstain in the second round of an investiture vote when only a simple majority is needed.

'Public danger'

Sanchez could also try to form a coalition with Podemos and the more



MADRID: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez (center) delivers a speech during an election night rally in Madrid after Spain held general elections. —AFP

moderate of Catalonia's two separatist parties, the ERC, which together would provide a majority in parliament. But the separatists have proven unreliable allies. Sanchez was forced to call the election after they in February joined the PP and Ciudadanos in opposing his draft 2019 budget. Conservative parties have accused Sanchez of being a "traitor" for trying to engage with the separatists to try to ease tensions over Catalonia's failed bid to break away from Spain in 2017. Sanchez could also try to cosy up to centre-right Ciudadanos, which won 57 seats.

Together, they would form an

absolute majority but voters from both parties would likely frown on such a move. "With Rivera no!" Socialist supporters chanted outside of the party's headquarters on Sunday night as a beaming Sanchez delivered his victory speech. Ciudadanos leader Albert Rivera built his campaign on disparaging Sanchez, criticising his attempts to negotiate with the Catalan separatists. Senior Ciudadanos leader Ines Arrimadas told radio Onda Cero yesterday her party could not ally with Sanchez, calling him a "public danger, someone capable of anything" to stay in power. —AFP

US measles outbreak raises questions about immunity in adults

WASHINGTON: Adults in the United States who were vaccinated against measles decades ago may need a new dose depending on when they received the shot and their exposure risk, according to public health experts battling the nation's largest outbreak since the virus was deemed eliminated in 2000. Up to 10 percent of the 695 confirmed measles cases in the current outbreak occurred in people who received one or two doses of the vaccine, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The figure illustrates what can happen when a large number of individuals, even those who have been vaccinated, are exposed to the measles. CDC recommends that people who are living in or traveling to outbreak areas should check their vaccination status and consider getting a new dose. Dr Allison Bartlett, an infectious disease expert at the University of Chicago Medicine, said the "continued vulnerability to infection" is why high-risk adults such as healthcare workers are routinely advised to get a second dose of the measles vaccine if they have not had one.

But knowing your vaccination status can be tricky,

Map of landmines: How Brexit might help the Scottish

EDINBURGH: Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's plans to lead her nation to independence

experts said. "It's complicated and often futile because it's very difficult to resurrect those old records," said Dr William Schaffner, an infectious disease expert at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. People vaccinated in the United States since 1989 would most likely have received two doses of the combined measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) shot under federal guidelines, and that is still considered the standard for protection.

Anyone vaccinated between 1963 and 1989 would likely have received only one dose, with many people immunized in the earlier years receiving an inactivated version of the virus. Americans born before 1957 are considered immune as they would have been exposed to the virus directly in an outbreak. Merck & Co Inc is the sole US provider of the MMR vaccine. The company said in a statement that it has "taken steps to increase US supply" of the vaccine due to the current outbreak.

Highly contagious

The measles virus is highly contagious and can cause blindness, deafness, brain damage or death. It is currently spreading in outbreaks in many parts of the world. According to the World Health Organization, 95 percent of a population needs to be vaccinated to provide "herd immunity," a form of indirect protection that prevents infection in people too young or sick to be vaccinated. US public health officials have blamed the current outbreak in part on rising rates of vaccine skepticism that have reduced measles immunity in certain communities.

For travelers to outbreak areas abroad, the CDC recommends adults consider getting another dose of MMR unless they have proof of receiving two prior doses, take a

from the United Kingdom have been muddled by Brexit, but the whirlwind at the centre of British politics may yet advance her cause. Brexit has disrupted British politics not least because, while the United Kingdom as a whole voted to leave the European Union in a 2016 referendum, the populations of two of its four nations — Scotland and Northern Ireland — voted to stay.

Since then, Britain's government has tied itself in knots in failed attempts to win parliament's approval



UTAH: In this photo illustration, sterile water is prepared for a one dose bottle of measles, mumps and rubella virus vaccine, made by MERCK, at the Salt Lake County Health Department. —AFP

blood test showing immunity, or were born before 1957. In general, the CDC says two doses of the measles vaccine should provide 97 percent protection; one dose should offer 93 percent protection. However, immunity can wane over time. This has occurred even in adults with two documented doses of the vaccine, said Dr. Michael Phillips, chief epidemiologist at NYU Langone Health, which serves parts of New York City, a hot spot in the US outbreak. —Reuters

for a deal to leave the EU, and it is now unclear when, how or even whether it will manage to do so. "The Brexit debacle has further undermined confidence in the British political system," said Michael Keating, professor of politics at the University of Aberdeen. "But it matters in Scotland because of this alternative, the independence option." In a referendum in 2014, Scots rejected leaving their 300-year-old union with England and Wales by 55 percent to 45. —Reuters

International

Violence mars voting in India eastern battleground state

Security forces use teargas to disperse protesters in Kashmir

MUMBAI: India's battleground state of West Bengal took the centre stage in the fourth phase of a staggered general election yesterday after clashes broke out between supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party and a regional bloc. In West Bengal, a populous eastern state where Modi is trying to gain seats to offset likely losses in northern India, security forces chased away people wielding sticks after workers from Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took on those from regional Trinamool Congress, police said.

An official with the Election Commission of India said paramilitary forces fired a blank round inside a polling station in another constituency in the state after a scuffle between voters and troops, who were demanding that mobile phones be kept aside while voting, as rules state.

There were no immediate reports of any poll-related injuries in West Bengal, where at least one person was killed and three injured during the third phase of voting last week. The election, the world's biggest democratic exercise with about 900 million voters, started on April 11 with Modi in the lead amid heightened tension with long-time rival Pakistan. The last phase of voting is on May 19. There are a total of 545 seats in parliament's lower house.

The BJP is in a direct, and sometimes bloody, fight in West Bengal with Trinamool, whose chief, Mamata Banerjee, is one of Modi's biggest critics and a possible prime ministerial candidate. The BJP holds only two of

West Bengal's 42 parliamentary seats. "We have asked for central forces at all polling booths so that free and fair elections can be held in the state," said Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, a minister in Modi's cabinet, referring to federal paramilitary police.

Modi told a rally in West Bengal that at least 40 Trinamool state lawmakers were in touch with him and would leave the party after votes are counted on May 23. Trinamool accused Modi of attempting to horse-trade, telling him: "Nobody will go with you". The party also alleged that federal security forces were trying to influence voters to back the BJP wherever they were deployed. Maidul Islam, a professor of political science at Kolkata's Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, said the stakes were high for both parties with Trinamool hoping to be part of a federal government coalition.

In disputed Jammu and Kashmir state's Anantnag constituency, which is voting in three phases due to security concerns, paramilitary forces fired teargas and pellets to disperse youth throwing stones at them, a police officer said. Four persons suffered pellet injuries, of which two had been hospitalized in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, the officer said, declining to be identified since he was not authorized to speak to the media.

'Some progress'

More than 128 million people are eligible to vote in this round of the seven-phase election held across 72 seats in



MUMBAI: Indian voters wait for start of voting at a polling booth in Mumbai yesterday. Voting began for the fourth phase of India's general parliamentary elections. — AFP

nine states. The election commission said about half of them had voted by mid-afternoon. Modi's coalition won more than 75 percent of the seats in the nine states in the previous election, in 2014. Many of the constituencies are in Uttar Pradesh state in the north and western India's Maharashtra, where the financial capital Mumbai is located. Uttar Pradesh elects the most lawmakers, with Maharashtra next and West Bengal third. The two former states are ruled by the BJP and its allies.

However, political analysts say the BJP may struggle to repeat its strong showing this time due mainly to a jobs shortage and weak farm prices, issues upon which the main opposition Congress party has seized. First-time

voter Ankit Bhavke, a college student in Mumbai, said she voted for economic development. "I want the country to be at par with the best in the world," she said. "There's been some progress in the last five years."

India's financial markets were closed yesterday for the election. Modi has played up his record on national security after he sent warplanes into Pakistan in late February in response to a suicide bomb attack by an Islamist militant group based there that killed 40 Indian police in the disputed Kashmir region. In recent days, he has evoked the deadly Easter Sunday bombings in neighboring Sri Lanka to remind voters of the dangers India faces. — Reuters

Thousands gather in Kabul for Afghan peace meeting

KABUL: Thousands of tribal leaders, religious figures and politicians from across Afghanistan gathered yesterday in Kabul amid tight security to discuss the war and American efforts to forge a peace deal with the Taliban. More than 3,000 people were attending the rare "loya jirga", which is being billed as the largest in modern Afghan history, in a bid to set possible conditions under which they might accept a peace settlement.

The loya jirga - literally "grand assembly" in Pashto - is being held over four days as the US and Taliban are discussing a possible foreign troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in exchange for a permanent ceasefire and various Taliban pledges. "We want to specify the main lines for the negotiations with the Taliban," Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said at the start of the summit. "We want clear advice from all of you."

The jirga is seen as an attempt by the Afghan government to influence the peace talks between the US and the Taliban aimed at ending more than 17 years of conflict. So far, however, the talks have cut out Ghani, whom the Taliban view as a US stooge. "Come to any part of the country for talks,



KABUL: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani (center), inspects a guard of honor during the first day of the Loya Jirga, or the consultative council in Kabul yesterday. — AFP

why don't you want to talk to Afghans?" Ghani said, addressing the Taliban, who have boycotted the jirga. "We are ready to talk to you without any preconditions."

High-level boycotts

Ghani's government hopes the high-stakes meeting will define Kabul's conditions for any deal, including the continuation of the constitution and the protection of women's rights, the media, and free speech. But some prominent Afghans, presidential hopefuls and government officials including the country's chief executive Abdullah Abdullah have boycotted the assembly. They have criticized it as an attempt by Ghani to boost his standings ahead

of presidential elections slated for September. Much of Kabul was locked down yesterday, with a week-long public holiday declared for the duration of the four-day event.

Streets across the capital were closed and hilly overlooks blocked. In the past, the Taliban have blasted rockets at a tent hosting a loya jirga. In a statement, the Taliban have vowed that any decisions or resolutions made at a loya jirga are "never acceptable to the real and devout sons of this homeland". The insurgents now control or influence about half of Afghanistan. They announced the start of their annual spring offensive early this month, despite talks with US representatives-dashing hopes for a quick ceasefire in the war-ravaged country. — AFP

Bangladesh jobs website aims to curb abuses

DHAKA: Bangladesh has launched an online job portal to help reduce high fees incurred by thousands of workers seeking employment abroad and curb exploitative tactics used by unscrupulous brokers. The government-run website was established by the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Bjobs.com, a local website, and launched on Sunday.

The portal will connect job seekers with the country's licensed recruitment agencies directly in a bid to cut out the layers of unofficial middlemen, who activists say have dominated and often abused the system for migrant workers for decades. "Migrants will be able to register and identify the job that will match their skills (and) the employers will get the best workers ... it (the website) is a win-win situation," said IOM's Bangladesh deputy Dimanche Sharon.

Every year, thousands of Bangladeshis look to join the 7.5 million workers already in jobs overseas, labor activists said. At least 1 million secured jobs abroad in 2017 - the highest number ever recorded by the government - with most working in the construction and cleaning sectors in the Middle East. The government in February said it was planning to sideline recruitment brokers who dupe or exploit workers they send abroad by compiling a list of certified labour agents.

The current informal recruitment system involves unofficial middlemen, who despite bringing recruiters and rural

workers together, often give false promises about jobs and pay to entice workers then charge high fees that trap them in debt bondage. Bangladesh is one of the most expensive nations in the world for those seeking to work overseas, with some migrant workers paying fees of up to \$8,500, according to the United Nations.

Eliminating the role of middlemen will help reduce the fees, said Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman, secretary general of the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, which includes majority of the licensed recruitment agencies. About half of the migrant workers who depend upon brokers experience some form of fraud or harassment, according to the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, a rights group. Remittances from migrant workers are key for Bangladesh's economy, making up the second-highest source of foreign currency earnings after clothes manufacturing, government data shows.

While the country has more than 1,200 licensed recruitment agencies, they are located mostly in cities and are out-of-reach for a huge section of job seekers, said Shakirul Islam, head of Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Program, a migrant rights group. "That's why the workers are dependent upon these middlemen to reach these recruitment agencies," Islam told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "The agencies, which lack the capacity, are also dependent upon these unofficial middlemen to get workers."

Migration experts and civil servants are, however, aware of the challenges that they may face in their bid to replace recruitment practices that have been running for decades. "After the launch (of the website), if we see problems arise, we should sit together and make sure the problems are solved," said Nasrin Jahan, joint secretary of the Ministry of Overseas Employment and Welfare. — Reuters

Hunting for fake news and trolls in Indonesia polls

JAKARTA: The first online troll I met was a middle-aged, potbellied Indonesian man, dressed casually in jeans and sneakers. He said his nickname was "Commandant". Ahead of Indonesia's elections this month, I and fellow Jakarta correspondent Agustinus Beo Da Costa had spent months trying to get into the world of fake news and propaganda that had flooded social media in the nation of 260 million people. Long before the April 17 vote, it was clear that social media would play a major role in the elections.

With more than 100 million accounts, Indonesia is Facebook's third-largest market and a top-five market globally for its platforms WhatsApp and Instagram, as well as rival Twitter. We had heard that parties and candidates had hired trolls and "buzzer teams" - so called for the online buzz they could create - as campaign tools, and managed to convince Commandant to speak to us after weeks of messaging on WhatsApp via intermediaries. He agreed to an interview, but on condition it was conducted in a hotel room and that we publish no details that would allow him to be identified.

In the end, we settled on renting a private meeting room in a downtown Jakarta residential complex. Initially jittery, Commandant turned effusive when speaking about his team of fifteen "cyber troops" and the dozens of election operations they had run together. He took out three phones and showed us the 250 or so fake accounts he personally maintained across Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp,



BANDUNG: Indonesians participate in a protest demanding the National Commission of Elections (KPU) to be fair, as the tally of votes for the recent general election continues in West Java yesterday. — AFP

Youtube, and Twitter. The members of his teams had around the same amount of fake accounts, he added.

"In one account, I pretend to be a mum so I consistently post pictures and articles about moms, babies, and taking care of newborns' health to make it believable," he said. On a Facebook and Twitter account supposedly of a young woman living in Jakarta that he showed, Commandant had posted almost daily photos of coffees he himself drank across Indonesia. The accounts, which had thousands of followers, were rented out to politicians and brands targeting millennials for their messages, to knock down opponents or defend against criticism, he said.

Commandant maintained that his activities were legal and that he did not spread fake news, but several of the posts he showed Reuters contained clear instances of disinforma-

tion. Under Indonesia's broad internet defamation law, creating and spreading fake news is illegal and a jailable offense, but holding social media accounts in false names is not, unless a real person is being impersonated. Social media companies however mostly bar holding accounts under false names.

Commandant said he considered his role as handling "communications, personal branding, and crisis management" for politicians and corporations. Da Costa and I later spoke to half a dozen current and former buzzers, typically after 2-3 prior negotiations with intermediaries. They said using their paid-for services had become the new normal in Indonesia. Political parties officially denied hiring buzzers or trolls, but party aides and advisers privately said their use was common, although they consistently denied the use of fake news. — Reuters

Indian factories under scrutiny over 'miserable' conditions

CHENNAI: A southern Indian state is inspecting more than 7,000 garment factories and spinning mills after the national human rights watchdog raised concerns over "miserable" working conditions. India's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) ordered authorities in Tamil Nadu to act after a report by the Thomson Reuters Foundation about female garment workers airing their grievances on radio stations and demanding better conditions.

Checks for basic facilities such as toilets and canteens for the more than 500,000 mostly female workers in Tamil Nadu, the largest hub in India's \$40 billion-a-year textile and garment industry, began in March. "We have found violations and have served notices to more than 200 factories spinning mills so far," said Kaveri Manoharan, head of the state's Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health.

"In most cases, there were too few toilets and hygiene was an issue. Also, canteens had not been set up even though hundreds of women were employed. We have given managements

one month to fix the problem, document it and get back to us." Manoharan said there should be one toilet for every 20 employees and a canteen where there are 30 women employed. Three radio stations set up a year ago for garment workers and broadcast through mobile phones have been flooded with complaints since they went on air a year ago. Callers discuss harassment, long working hours, poor wages and other challenges.

In February, the NHRC directed the Tamil Nadu government to respond to the complaints, stating that workers were working in "miserable conditions". It said denial of basic facilities by factory owners was "a serious violation of human rights". The Commission highlighted the complaint of a worker who was unable to access a toilet in her factory and had to use a corner of the mill where waste cotton was dumped. "Toilets, drinking water, first aid and special provisions for female workers are the most crucial and primary requirements at the workplaces," the NHRC said in its statement. — Reuters

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

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

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

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

Pak says it's on road to major change, but few are fully persuaded

Something very significant is under way in Pakistan, the government in Islamabad would like you to believe. A small group of foreign journalists, Reuters correspondents included, was given Pakistan's new narrative by Prime Minister Imran Khan, its army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, and other top government officials and generals during a visit to the country earlier this month. Some of the comments of the officials were for publication, others were not, but the message remained consistent.

In summary, Pakistan says it is tired of conflict, opposed to extremism, open for peace talks and clamping down on corruption. It also insists it is run by politicians, with the military partnering rather than dominating. That all sounds good. There is just one problem - around much of the world many with a close understanding of the situation remain highly skeptical.

In New Delhi, the view even beyond the more hawkish elements in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is that the world has seen and heard these kinds of promises before, only for Pakistan-backed Islamist groups to attack India. That is just what India says happened on Feb 14, when a suicide bombing killed 40 paramilitary police in India-controlled Kashmir and brought the two nuclear powers close to war. This was underlined by comments to Reuters from Indian foreign ministry spokesman Raveesh Kumar for this article.

"Pakistan should take immediate, credible, irreversible and verifiable action against terrorists and terror organizations operating from territories under its control," he said. "Pakistan follows an identical script after every terror attack in India where 'action' is taken to deflect the international pressure before returning to the normal situation of providing support and sanctuary to terror groups in the territories under their control." Certainly, Pakistan's positive talk has no chance of resonating in India while Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party continues to stir up patriotic fervor during the nation's 39-day general election, which ends May 19. Votes are counted May 23.

Needing friends

Islamabad urgently needs friends, Pakistani officials say India has been lobbying to get it put on the blacklist of the Financial Action Task Force, which monitors whether countries are doing enough to prevent money laundering and terrorism financing. If that happened it could lead to sanctions, cripple Pakistan's banking relations and badly hurt its trade. The country is also close to securing its 13th bailout by the International Monetary Fund since the 1980s as it tries to tackle large budget and current account deficits, and faces a soaring inflation rate triggered by high oil prices and a weak Pakistani rupee.

But Pakistani officials claim the changes they are talking about are much more than a cosmetic makeover to head off the IMF. Khan's government says it is suing for peace on all fronts. In Afghanistan, Islamabad has been key in getting the Taleban around the table for talks with the Americans. And Khan, in the face of rising tensions following bloody attacks by militant groups, visited Tehran and agreed last week to set up a joint rapid reaction force for the border area with Iran. Since taking office in August, Khan has also consistently offered talks with Modi, and Pakistani officials are hopeful that the Indian leader will eventually say yes if he wins a second term in office.

Northern Ireland lessons

The Pakistan authorities insist they are cracking down on armed militant groups on its soil, saying extremism is the biggest threat it faces. Officials talk of a Northern Ireland-style peace and disarmament process, plus state regulation of the 32,000 madrassas, or Islamic schools, in the country that can easily become breeding grounds for militants. "For the future of the country - forget outside pressure - we will not allow armed militias to operate," Khan told the journalists. And the government has "the total support of the Pakistani army and intelligence services in dismantling them", he added.

Not only that, but its military chiefs insist they report to the prime minister - rather than the other way around as is often assumed by foreign diplomats and the media. The military chiefs say they want to bring 100 million Pakistanis out of grinding poverty, and that engineering a big increase in spending on education is critical to that. During the trip, the journalists were taken to an impressively modern-looking army school complex and, separately, a rehabilitation center for teenagers showing militant tendencies. Those were both in the Swat Valley, which was overrun by the Taleban and other militant groups only 11 years ago. The image of unity, though, was shaken only a few days after the trip when Khan announced a major reshuffle of his cabinet, including the replacement of his finance minister Asad Umar, who had been at the helm of the IMF talks, and the appointment of retired Brigadier Ijaz Shah as Pakistan's new interior minister. Shah, a former spy chief and close ally of the country's last military ruler, has long been accused of deep ties to militant groups. —Reuters

All articles appearing on this page are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein.



A banner bearing the portrait of Sudanese teacher Ahmed Al-Kheir, who died from wounds suffered in detention during Bashir's regime, hangs on a tent outside the army headquarters in the capital Khartoum yesterday. —AFP

Sudan village seeks justice for teacher's death

Ahmed Al-Kheir's friends and family are delighted with the Sudanese president's ouster but say justice will only be served once ex-regime officials are made to pay for the village teacher's death in custody. "We, the family of Ahmed Al-Kheir, are very happy with the toppling of (president Omar al-) Bashir and his regime," Kheir's brother Saad told AFP at their family home in Khashm el-Girba, a small village in the eastern province of Kassala along the border with Eritrea. "We believe that Bashir's entire regime was responsible for Ahmed's killing."

Kheir, 36, was arrested in late January in his village by agents of the powerful National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) on allegations he was one of the organizers of anti-Bashir protests in the area. Days later, Kheir's family was told to collect his body from a local mortuary. A top official in Khartoum confirmed in February that Kheir had died from wounds suffered in detention. Kheir "had wounds on the back, legs and other parts of his body that led to his death", the official said.

Security agents of the NISS had launched a deadly crackdown on protests that erupted in December in response to the Bashir government's decision to triple the price of bread. The protests swiftly mushroomed into nationwide demonstrations against Bashir's iron-fisted rule, with protesters urging him to step down. Dozens of people died in a crackdown by security forces, while hundreds were wounded and thousands jailed. On April

11, the army finally ousted Bashir after months-long protests that were initially led by a group of teachers, doctors and engineers.

'Honest man'

Saad, 35, charged that senior officials of Bashir's regime were behind the killing of his brother. "The group that came to take my brother was acting on orders from the higher ups," he said. "Had the regime's top officials objected, that unit would not have done something like this." Kheir's death fuelled anger against Bashir's regime, not just in Khashm el-Girba but also across Kassala and in Khartoum, where protesters held rallies to express solidarity.

Thousands of protesters who remain encamped outside army headquarters in central Khartoum still chant: "Blood for blood, we will not accept compensation." They demand punishment for officials responsible for killings by the regime during Bashir's 30-year rule. Protesters outside the army complex want the military council that took power after Bashir's ouster to step down, making way for civilian rule.

Khashm el-Girba is a farming village, with one main road that cuts through its mud houses, many painted in pink. Kheir whose one-storey pink structure has a courtyard in the middle, was a popular teacher, colleague Bakhit Mohamed Ahmed said. "He was an honest man who took part in community functions," he said. Ahmed recalled an

incident when Kheir returned to local authorities around 30,000 pounds (\$630) that had been saved from the school's meals-for-children program. Kheir was also a member of the Popular Congress Party. Sudan's top Islamist party and an ally in Bashir's government. The party later called for a probe into all deaths during the initial weeks of protests.

'Freedom, peace, justice'

Last week, Sudan's acting prosecutor general Al-Waleed Sayyed Ahmed lifted the immunity of an unspecified number of NISS agents allegedly involved in Kheir's death. "Those who killed him should be tried in a civilian court," said Ahmed. Salah Ali Al-Nour, 55, one of Kheir's neighbors, said the teacher had given his life for "freedom, peace, justice," the catch-phrase of the protest movement. "We hope that freedom, peace and justice will be achieved," said Nour, his voice choking as tears swelled in his eyes. "We want all the criminals to be punished."

Nationwide, protest leaders are calling for Bashir and his regime officials to be held accountable for crimes committed during his rule. "We are not seeking retaliatory measures... but we want to rebuild our justice system to hold them accountable," said Amjad Farid, a spokesman for the protest movement. Bashir himself, who was initially detained by the new ruling military council, has been transferred to the capital's Kober prison, according to a family source. —AFP

Extra holidays pose dilemma for Japanese

For the Emperor's abdication on April 30, Japanese workers are enjoying an unprecedented 10-day holiday as a rash of special days off combine with the traditional "Golden Week" in May. But not everyone is popping the champagne corks in famously workaholic Japan. "To be honest, I don't know how to spend the time when we are suddenly given 10 days of holidays," said 31-year-old finance worker Seishu Sato. "If you want to go travelling, it's going to be crowded everywhere and tour costs have surged... I might end up staying at my parents' place," he said.

A survey by the Asahi Shimbun daily showed 45 percent of Japanese "felt unhappy" about the long vacation, with only 35 percent saying they "felt happy". "I won't be able to take days off. On the contrary, we'll be super-busy," said Takeru Jo, a 46-year-old pizzeria worker. Others who have to work over the period complain about childcare. "For parents in the service sector, the 10 days of holiday is a headache. After-school care, nurseries - everything is closed," tweeted one disgruntled parent.

Many expect Tokyo and other large cities to empty as Japanese seize the rare opportunity for an overseas trip. "Most of our tours for the holiday period were sold out last year," said Hideki Wakamatsu, a spokesman for Nippon Travel Agency, adding that many others were on the waiting list. As the holiday kicked off on Saturday, airports were packed and there were long queues for Shinkansen bullet trains. Highways out of Tokyo were jammed with motorists aiming to make a getaway from the capital.

'Love marriage'

Still, if people are curiously indifferent to the idea of extra holidays as a result of the emperor, the imperial family remains as popular as ever. A poll by public broadcaster NHK found almost no one would admit to a "feeling of antipathy" towards the emperor with the vast majority saying they had a "positive feeling" or "respect". Only 22 percent voiced indifference. This positive sentiment has risen every year since 2003,

according to the NHK poll.

Takeshi Hara, a politics professor at the Open University of Japan, said much of this stemmed from the imperial couple's "welfare-related activities". "Their attention to the elderly, the disabled and the victims of natural disasters - those ignored by politicians in the past three decades - has earned public support," Hara told AFP. The fact that Emperor Akihito married his sweetheart Michiko "for love" - the first love marriage in imperial history - has also boosted his standing, said Hara.

But Hideto Tsuboi, from the Kyoto-based International Research Center for Japanese Studies, said one of the main reasons for Akihito's popularity lay in the fact that he was "conscious of the responsibility of the post-war generation" to reflect on Japan's wartime atrocities. On the 73rd anniversary of the end of World War II last year, Akihito reiterated "deep remorse" over the war and his continued wishes for peace. Unlike in many constitutional monarchies, there is almost no republican movement to speak of and criticism of the emperor is anathema - a phenomenon known as the Chrysanthemum taboo, after the throne.

Hara said that while tabloids are beginning to dig deeper into the royals' private lives, memories of right-wing atrocities against imperial opponents "means there is pressure not to criticize the emperor in public". In 1961, a right-winger invaded the house of a publishing company's president and stabbed his housekeeper to death over a novel perceived to be critical of the imperial family.

More recently, in 1990, the then-mayor of Nagasaki was shot and injured after he remarked that Akihito's father Hirohito was partially responsible for World War II. However, a reminder that security needs to be maintained was provided just days before the abdication ceremonies when two knives were found at the school desk of Japan's Prince Hisahito, Akihito's grandson.

'Highly religious nature'

While criticism of the emperor is virtually non-existent, there has been some opposition to the financing of some of the ceremonies surrounding the abdication and enthronement. More than 200 Japanese citizens have filed a lawsuit against the government for planning to use taxpayer money to fund the ceremonies. They say the ceremonies are religious in nature and funding them from the public purse breaks the constitutional principle separating religion and state. —AFP

Firm accused of coercing farmers by India group

An influential Hindu nationalist group with close ties to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused PepsiCo Inc of coercing four Indian farmers who have been sued by the US company for allegedly infringing a patent. After suing four farmers for cultivating the FC5 potato variety, grown exclusively for PepsiCo's popular Lay's potato chips, the snack food and drinks maker on Friday said it wants to "amicably settle" the issue.

The Purchase, New York-based company said the four farmers had to either sell their potatoes to PepsiCo or stop cultivating the FC5 potato variety. In return, PepsiCo said it would withdraw the suit filed against the farmers. Ashwani Mahajan, who heads the Swadeshi Jagran Manch, said PepsiCo was "coercing" the farmers by using legal action to force them to either sell their output to the company or to stop growing the FC5 potato variety at all. SJM is the economic wing of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological parent of Modi's BJP.

The dispute comes at a particularly sensitive time in India, which is about half-way through a 39-day staggered general election, in which its rural population still has a dominant voice. Modi and the BJP are seeking a second term and most political strategists think they will likely get it. "Other than coercing these farmers, PepsiCo is also intimidating and exploiting them. It is a clear case of a large MNC (multi national corporation) arm-twisting India's poor farmers," Mahajan told Reuters.

The federal government should step in to ensure that the farmers do not get harassed by PepsiCo, he said. In response, a PepsiCo India spokesman said in a statement that it "has already proposed to amicably settle with people who were unlawfully using seeds of its registered variety." Adding: "The company was compelled to take the judicial recourse as a last resort to safeguard the larger interest of thousands of farmers that

are engaged with its collaborative potato farming program."

Less moisture

The FC5 variety has a lower moisture content required to make snacks such as potato chips. PepsiCo maintains that it developed the FC5 variety, which has a lower moisture content required to make snacks such as potato chips, and registered the trait in 2016. In April, the company filed the lawsuit in a court in Ahmedabad, the business hub of Gujarat, requesting the court to restrain the four farmers from growing the FC5 variety. The court has asked the farmers not to use the variety until the next hearing scheduled for June 12. The court also appointed an officer to examine the issue.

Other than filing the lawsuit, the company has also sought more than 10 million rupees (\$142,840) each from the four farmers for alleged patent infringement. PepsiCo shouldn't have gone to the court seeking heavy damages from farmers and a large corporation cannot be allowed to take on a handful of farmers, Mahajan said. PepsiCo, which set up its first potato chips plant in India in 1989, supplies the FC5 potato variety to a group of farmers who in turn sell their produce to the company at a fixed price. The state government of Gujarat has assured the farmers that it will help them, Nitin Patel, deputy chief minister said last week.

The opposition Congress party has also criticized PepsiCo for suing the farmers. "PepsiCo's decision to take Gujarat's potato grower farmers to court is ill-advised and brazenly wrong," senior Congress party leader Ahmed Patel, who comes from Gujarat, said in a tweet. The All India Kisan Sabha, or All India Farmers' Forum, has asked the Indian government to protect the farmers and also called for a boycott of Lay's chips and PepsiCo's other products.

So far the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has not commented on the issue. PepsiCo is the second large US company to face major patent infringement issues in India. Stung by a long-standing intellectual property dispute, seed maker Monsanto, now owned by German drugmaker Bayer AG, withdrew from some businesses in India over a cotton-seed dispute with farmers. —Reuters

Business

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2019

12 Kuwait's project awards remained low in 2018, hampered by delays

13 VIVA reports KD 66.6 million of revenues for first quarter 2019

14 Boursa Kuwait highlights new market developments in panel discussion



Gulf Bank records a net profit of KD 11.8 million for Q1 2019

Net profit grows 9% in Q1 2019 vs Q1 2018 • Total assets increase to KD 5.8bn

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank K.S.C.P. ("The Bank") recorded a net profit of KD 11.8 million in the first quarter of 2019, an increase of 9 percent over the same quarter in 2018. The Bank's return on assets improved from 0.77 percent in the first quarter of 2018 to 0.81 percent and return on equity grew from 7.4 percent to 7.7 percent.

Compared with 31st March 2018, total assets increased by 2.3 percent to KD 5.8 billion, loans and advances to customers climbed 1.8 percent to KD 3.9 billion, customer deposits grew by 1.1 percent to KD 3.6 billion, and shareholders' equity increased by 4.8 percent to KD 614 million.

The improvement in Net profit was driven primarily by lower credit provisions / impairments of KD 8.0 million offset by lower non-interest income of KD 1.8 million, higher staff expenses of KD 1.8 million, higher depreciation expense of KD 0.8 million, and a KD 2.8 million provision related to a service disruption that was previously disclosed.

Commenting on the results, Omar Kutayba Alghanim, Gulf Bank's Chairman said: "I'm pleased to announce that the Bank started the year positively with an increase of 9 percent in our first quarter net profit compared to the same period of last year. I am also happy to inform our investors about the inclusion of Gulf Bank shares within the FTSE-Russel emerging markets index during its March review. This inclusion will attract more regional and international investors to support the liquidity and attractiveness of Gulf Bank's shares."

On March 11th, 2019, Gulf Bank held its Annual General Meeting and obtained approval from its shareholders to pay cash dividends of 10 fils per share.

"A" credit ratings

Gulf Bank continues to be well recognized in terms of its credit worthiness and financial strength internationally as it is rated "A" by all four leading credit rating agencies.

Fitch: "A+" rating with a "Stable" outlook

S&P Global Ratings: "A-" rating with a "Stable" outlook

Moody's Investor Services: "A3" rating with a "Positive" outlook

Capital Intelligence: "A-" rating with a "Stable" outlook.

Corporate activities

During the first quarter of 2019, Gulf Bank held several corporate activities. At the start of the year, the Bank held its annual draw for its Al-



Omar Kutayba Alghanim

Danah account at The Avenues Mall, awarding a lucky winner with the grand prize of KD 1,000,000. A similar youth-driven event was held at The Murouj complex for its Kuwaiti Salary account holders and another lucky customer won a total of KD 250,000. Moreover, Gulf Bank hosted its second annual WISE Investment Forum at the Four Seasons hotel Kuwait and discussed with its guests global and regional market outlook for 2019.

As part of its commitment to empowering the youth of Kuwait, and the continued Kuwaitization of the private sector, Gulf Bank was the Platinum Sponsor of the 2019 edition of the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) Career Fair during which the Bank conducted on the ground screenings, as well as interviews of potential employees offering employment contracts to Kuwaitis on the same day. In line with the same commitment, Gulf Bank showcased a first-of-its-kind virtual recruitment experience at the 21st edition of Gulf University for Science and Technology's (GUST) Career Fair.

Commenting on the bank's continued commitment to social responsibility, Alghanim said, "This year, we're determined to continue our drive for sustainability by supporting initiatives focused on youth, health and environment." Sustainability has taken a lead in Gulf Bank's success and continued to play an integral role in its corporate social responsibility initiatives. The Bank's participation in the Qout Market highlighted its focus on the environment by hosting a unique planting workshop. In addition, Gulf Bank set up an innovative outdoor recycling station to encourage recycling. The Bank also joined the Global Earth Hour move-

	Q1 - 2018	Q1 - 2019
Net Profit (KD Million)	11	12
Earnings per share (fils)	4	4
Capital Adequacy Ratio (minimum = %14)	16.9%	16.9%

	Rating	2018
MOODY'S	Long Term Deposits	A3
	Outlook	Positive
Fitch Ratings	Long Term IDR	A+
	Outlook	Stable
S&P Global Ratings	Issuer Credit Rating	A-
	Outlook	Stable
CAPITAL intelligence	Financial Strength	A-
	Outlook	Stable

ment, highlighting the issue of climate change by going dark and turning off all unnecessary lighting at its Head Office and several of its branches.

Appreciation

Alghanim continued to say, "I would like to thank everyone that contributed to these results. I'd also like to convey my deepest appreciation to our shareholders and the Central Bank of Kuwait for their continued support. I especially want to thank our customers for their loyalty and reiterate

our commitment to place them at the center of everything we do."

Gulf Bank is one of the leading conventional banks in Kuwait with total assets of KD 5.8 billion for year ended 31 March 2019. The Bank provides a broad offering of consumer banking, wholesale banking, treasury, and financial services through its large network of 58 branches and more than 200 ATMs in Kuwait. The Bank was founded in 1960 and is listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (Boursa Kuwait) since 1984.

9% YEAR ON YEAR INCREASE



As of or for the three months ending 31 March 2019

Business

NBK economic report

Kuwait's project awards remained low in 2018, hampered by delays

PPP program suffered from structural, technical, legal and financing issues

KUWAIT: Project awards declined for the third consecutive year in 2018, with only KD1.7 billion in awards, the lowest since 2009. This is less than half of the KD3.8 billion in awards planned at the beginning of 2018. Awards in 2018 were hindered by numerous delays, setbacks, and cancellations. Kuwait has attempted to make progress with its public-private-partnership (PPP) program, which has suffered from structural, technical, legal and financing issues. Setbacks in 2018 may also be attributed to the restructuring of Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), along with a review of the Public Authority for Roads and Transportation's (PART) mandate.



son, the chance of delays or cancellations in this sector is low. Notable planned projects include the Ministry of Public Works Northern and Southern regional roads, currently under bid evaluation and due to be awarded soon, with a combined value of KD 405 million and the DGCA airport expansion phase I, valued at KD 150 million.

Construction

The construction sector is expected to be the largest contributor to total estimated awards in 2019, with KD 523 million awarded in 1Q19, and an additional KD 1.1 billion planned for the remainder of the year. Among the awards was the Al-Jahra low cost housing city, valued at KD 432 million. This is one of the anticipated projects of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), which has been tasked to meet the growing demand for affordable low-cost housing. The project will consist of 9,800 units over 830 hectares, and is expected to be completed in 2030. Other notable construction projects planned for later in the year include the MPW Mubarak Al-Kabeer seaport project and the MOH Ibn Sina Hospital, with a combined value of KD 439 million. These projects are currently in the main contract pre-qualification stage, and will likely be tendered soon. With a growing population, and with the development of various energy-intensive projects as part of Kuwait's development plan, the demand for utilities is projected to grow significantly. These projects include the construction of new housing cities, in addition



A decent start to the year

The outlook for project awards is expected to improve as some of last year's delayed projects are rolled over into 2019, as further rescheduling is becoming difficult amid an increased urgency surrounding power and water, and road-work projects. Awards are expected to be in the vicinity of KD4.4 billion in 2019, to be driven mainly by major construction projects, as well as overdue projects in the transport and power and water sectors. The pace of awards in 2019 so far has been promising, with a total of KD 0.7 billion contracts as of April. However, given the low execution rate of recent years, this number (KD4.4 billion) still looks optimistic. Moreover, Kuwait's track record for delivering on PPPs has been weak, and the pressure to deliver is rising, given their importance to Kuwait's development plans and vision 2035.

The transport sector is expected to see large awards in 2019, with KD73 million awarded so far and KD1.4 billion still in the pipeline. Many of these projects were postponed from 2018 due to structural issues with PART, the authority responsible for executing road works and transport projects. These projects have become of pressing concern, and have been the subject of political pressure, as maintenance and upkeep of the country's transport infrastructure becomes increasingly overdue. For this rea-

addition, MEW will commission its own, 'Al-Nuwiseeb I' IWPP, expected to be awarded in 2020.

Oil, gas and chemicals

Although the focus this year will be on projects in other sectors, the oil and gas sector saw the awarding on April 1 of the KOC - New Gas Export Pipeline, at a contract value of KD 144 million. A further KD 432 million in planned oil and gas projects are to be awarded later this year. The chemical sector on the other hand, having been dormant for many years, is expected to receive a major boost in 2020 with the implementation of the much-awaited Al-Zour petrochemical complex, valued at KD 3 billion and delayed from 2018 due to technical and financing setbacks. This sector has been burdened in recent years by repeated changes in leadership, which makes the outlook for the oil, gas, and chemical sector somewhat uncertain. On a positive note, the recent approval by the Council of Ministers for the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation to obtain a KD 16 billion loan to finance its strategic plans over the next five years should support project activity in this sector in over the next few years.

While no awards have taken place in this sector so far in 2019, KD 0.8 billion in projects are expected to be awarded later this year, most notable of which is the KD 0.4 billion Al Dibdibah Solar Power Plant in Shagaya Renewable Energy Complex, currently under bidding and due to be awarded soon. In addition, despite still being in the early (planning) stage, KAPP has made progress on its two major planned IWPPs, the Al-Zour North and the Al-Khيران IWPPs. Firms were invited to express interest last November, and KAPP is in the process of appointing a transaction advisor for both projects, after which the procurement process is expected to begin. Al-Zour North is expected in 3Q19, while Al-Khيران is expected in 2020. In

IMF Country Focus

GCC oil exports projected to improve slightly to 2.1% in 2019

KUWAIT: In the best of times, countries in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAP) region would face a formidable task of creating jobs for the millions of young people entering the workforce. Now, they must tackle this challenge amid a slowing global economy, volatile oil prices, and uncertainty around trade tensions.

A steadfast commitment to reforms that build resilience and help secure higher and more inclusive private-sector-led growth is more urgent than ever.

Growth in oil exporters is projected to remain subdued relative to 2018. Although growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is projected to improve slightly to 2.1 percent in 2019 from 2 percent in 2018, a sharp decline in Iran's economic activity (of 6 percent) amid sanctions results in a mere 0.4 percent rate of growth for 2019 for the region's oil-exporting countries.

Meanwhile, growth for oil importers is projected to slow from 4.2 percent in 2018 to 3.6 percent this year, reflecting the slowing global economy and domestic factors. However, this aggregate projection does not reflect the wide variation among oil-importing countries. Egypt, for instance, continues to perform strongly, while weak growth in Pakistan weighs on the region's aggregate growth rate.

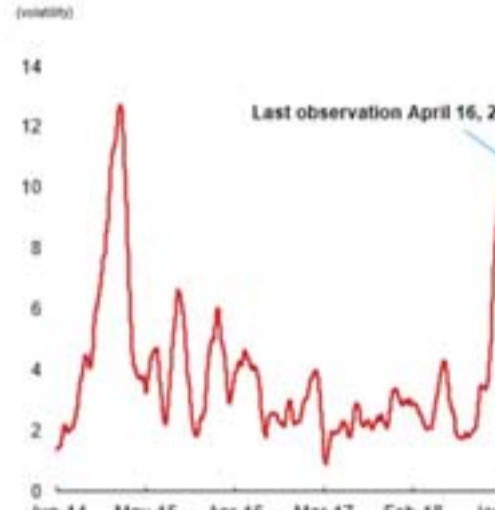
One key development that will shape the region's economic outlook is oil price volatility, which recently reached levels not seen since the shocks of 2014-15. This trend may continue amid uncertainties around global trade tensions, Iran sanctions, and the OPEC+ production strategy. Other risks to the region include

High debt levels
Oil-importing countries face ongoing fiscal strain, with public debt now exceeding the recommended levels in many.



Source: National authorities, IMF Regional Economic Outlook database and IMF staff calculations. Notes: Djibouti and Mauritania data include public and publicly guaranteed debt. Country abbreviations are International Organization for Standardization (ISO) country codes. EM = emerging market economies.

Oil price volatility
Oil prices became highly volatile at the end of 2018.



Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and IMF staff calculations. Note: The volatility is measured as the 3-month rolling standard deviation. APOP = average petroleum spot price. APOP is the average of US Brent, Dubai Fateh, and West Texas Intermediate crude oil prices.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

geopolitical risks, security concerns, and uncertainty surrounding global financial conditions.

Lower oil prices with bouts of volatility and a slower pace of fiscal consolidation will weigh on fiscal balances in oil-exporting countries. At the same time, there are indications that government spending may no longer be able to boost growth as it could when oil prices and investment were high, and the external environment was strong. This combination underscores the need to resume fiscal consolidation while sustaining growth. Anchoring fiscal policy, including government spending, in a medium-term framework would help insulate economies from rapid and pronounced oil price swings and

gradually rebuild fiscal space.

Public debt ratios have continued to rise in several oil-importing countries in recent years despite fiscal consolidation efforts. In fact, debt ratios have increased by 20 percent of GDP on average since 2008, with two-thirds of countries carrying public debt of at least 70 percent of GDP, a level associated with a higher risk of debt distress. And as the chart below shows, the debt levels for some countries, such as Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, exceed 80 percent of GDP, limiting the fiscal space needed for critical social and infrastructure spending, and leaving economies vulnerable to less favorable financial conditions.

Iran inflation could reach 40% this year as economy shrinks further: IMF

DUBAI: Iran's economy is expected to shrink for the second consecutive year and inflation could reach 40 percent, an International Monetary Fund senior official said, as the country copes with the impact of tighter sanctions imposed by the United States.

Washington, which re-imposed sanctions against Iran's oil exports last November, this month demanded buyers of Iranian oil to stop purchases by May or face sanctions, ending six months of waivers which allowed Iran's eight biggest buyers to continue importing limited volumes.

Iran's economy shrank by 3.9 percent last year, according to IMF estimates, and is expected to shrink by 6 percent in 2019, Jihad Azour, director of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia department, told Reuters adding, however, that the projection preceded the latest elimination of waivers. "Clearly the re-imposition of sanctions and the removal of the waivers will have additional negative impact on the Iranian economy both in terms of growth and in terms of inflation, where inflation could reach 40 percent or even more this year," he said.

US sanctions against Iran have denied its government more than \$10 billion in oil revenue, a US official said earlier this month. The Iranian currency, the rial, lost more than 60 percent last year, disrupting Iran's foreign trade and boosting annual inflation.

The Iranian rial official rate is set at 42,000 rials to the US dollar, but its market rate stood at around 144,000 against the US dollar on Sunday, according to foreign exchange website Bonbast.com. Iran should work to eliminate the gap that currently exists between the market exchange rate and the official exchange rate, said Azour. "By aligning the market and official rates this will help tame and control inflation and will reduce pressure on the exchange rate."

The currency's slide, from levels around 43,000 at the end of last year, has eroded the value of ordinary Iranians' savings, triggering panic buying of dollars. The weak currency and galloping inflation have been a complaint of sporadic street protests since late 2017. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.000
Euro	345.110
Sterling Pound	398.480
Canadian dollar	229.240
Turkish Lira	52.630
Swiss Franc	303.630
US Dollar Buying	303.800

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.729
Indian Rupees	4.379
Pakistani Rupees	2.187
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.743
Nepali Rupees	2.737
Singapore Dollar	225.760
Hongkong Dollar	38.875
Bangladesh Taka	3.603
Philippine Peso	5.893
Thai Baht	9.616
Malaysian Ringgit	78.005

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.388
Qatari Riyal	83.826
Omani Riyal	792.723
Bahraini Dinar	810.420
UAE Dirham	83.095

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.850
-----------------------	--------

Egyptian Pound - Transfer 17.726

Yemen Riyal/for 1000 1.225

Tunisian Dinar 105.170

Jordanian Dinar 430.670

Lebanese Lira/for 1000 2.033

Syrian Lira 0.000

Morocco Dirham 32.344

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer

US Dollar	304.840
Canadian Dollar	228.350
Sterling Pound	95.450
Euro	344.725
Swiss Frank	307.490
Bahrain Dinar	810.685
UAE Dirhams	83.400
Qatari Riyals	84.640
Saudi Riyals	82.185
Jordanian Dinar	431.245
Egyptian Pound	17.628
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.744
Indian Rupees	4.412
Pakistani Rupees	2.160
Bangladesh Taka	3.618
Philippines Peso	5.851
Cyprus pound	18.135
Japanese Yen	3.725
Syrian Pound	1.595
Nepalese Rupees	2.758
Malaysian Ringgit	75.435
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.805

Thai Baht 10.550

Turkish Lira 54.575

Singapore dollars 225.511

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY BUY SELL

British Pound	0.388018	0.402918
Czech Korune	0.005256	0.014566
Danish Krone	0.041597	0.046597
Euro	0.333695	0.347395
Georgian Lari	0.132435	0.132435
Hungarian O.001151	0.001341	
Norwegian Krone	0.031208	0.036408
Romanian Leu	0.065474	0.082324
Russian ruble	0.004733	0.004733
Slovakia	0.009141	0.019141
Swedish Krona	0.028177	0.033177
Swiss Franc	0.293361	0.304361
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.207048	0.219048
New Zealand Dollar	0.197625	0.207125
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.221755	0.230755
US Dollars	0.301200	0.306500
US Dollars Mint	0.301700	0.306500
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003033	0.003834

Chinese Yuan	0.043895	0.047395
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037152	0.039902
Indian Rupee	0.003840	0.004612
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002654	0.002834
Korean Won	0.000252	0.000257
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070293	0.076293
Nepalese Rupee	0.002687	0.003027
Pakistan Rupee	0.001514	0.002284
Philippine Peso	0.005823	0.006123
Singapore Dollar	0.219069	0.229069
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001404	0.001984
Taiwan	0.010191	0.010371
Thai Baht	0.009225	0.009775
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.795243	0.811743
Egyptian Pound	0.017782	0.020382
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.425704	0.434704
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021290	0.045290
Omani Riyal	0.786669	0.792439
Qatar Riyal	0.079568	0.084508
Saudi Riyal	0.080327	0.081627
Syrian Pound	0.001296	0.001515
Tunisian Dinar	0.097044	0.106044
Turkish Lira	0.045608	0.057108
UAE Dirhams	0.081697	0.083397
Yemeni Riyal	0.000993	0.001073

Business

VIVA reports KD 66.6 million of revenues for first quarter 2019

Net profit reaches KD 9.6 million

KUWAIT: Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA), Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the financial results for the first quarter of the period ended 31 March 2019; whereby VIVA's revenues reached KD 66.6 million whereas the net profit reached KD 9.6 million during the first quarter in 2019.

Commenting on the Q1-2019 financial results, Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, VIVA's Chairman said: "Despite the continued competition witnessed in the Kuwaiti telecom market, VIVA was able to achieve good levels of revenues as well as enhanced the operational efficiency to ensure generating positive return to our shareholders. VIVA achieved these results due to an integrated management approach by a highly professional team that reinforces VIVA's substantial and positive role as a leading telecommunications company that always provides intelligent communications solutions to satisfy the needs of its customers and meet their needs."

He added: "VIVA was able to achieve revenue of KD 66.6 million during Q1- 2019 compared to KD 77.6 million for the same period last year. Also, VIVA managed to achieve positive earnings for its shareholders as a result of the commitment to elevate the quality of customer service and improving the operational efficiency".

On his part, Eng Maziad Nasser Al-Harbi, VIVA's CEO said: "During Q1-2019 VIVA achieved a good levels of its revenues and profitability in addition to strengthen its leadership in the telecom market; in line with its plan to



Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman



Eng Maziad Nasser Al-Harbi



our strategy to enhance our competitiveness and further growth and success in the Kuwaiti telecom market by launching a unique and innovative portfolio of services, products and offerings that are in line with the technological development and customer needs and requirements".

Commenting on VIVA Financial Results Al-Harbi added: "The Company's revenues declined in Q1-2019 to reach KD 66.6 million compared to Revenues of KD 77.6 million during Q1-2018. The reason for the decline is that the comparative period of 2018 witnessed extraordinary promotions resulted in high increase in the revenue. Currently and during 2019, VIVA has adopted a balanced operating policy in its marketing strategy to focus on the quality, which is reflected in the financial and operational efficiency of the company."

launch the fifth generation 5G network in the near future in Kuwait, to be one of the first telecommunications companies in the Middle East to introduce this service to its customers to match the world's largest companies in this field. It is noteworthy to mention that VIVA won recently "the third place as Best Company in the Middle East in Investor Relations for 2018 and the first in Kuwait to be the "Leading Corporate in Investor Relation of 2018" according to MEIRA and Best Network Development Award for Best Network Development in the Middle East and North Africa at the 5G MENA Awards 2018.

He added: "We will continue our efforts to implement

Despite this decline in revenues during Q1-2019, VIVA recorded a growth of 4.2 percent in its EBITDA to reach a KD 18.7 million with EBITDA margin of 28 percent during the first quarter of 2019 compared to 23 percent in the first quarter of 2018. As a result, VIVA reported a net profit of KD 9.6 million (earnings per share of 19 fils) during the first quarter of 2019 with a profit margin of 14.5 percent. VIVA's customer base reached approximately 2.04 million at the end of March 2019.

On his part, Mohammed Bin AbdulMohsen Al-Assaf, VIVA's CFO, said: "VIVA's financial results reflected its ability to compete, sustained revenues and maintain its position as the second largest telecom operator in the Kuwaiti market in term of revenues in the telecom sector. Due to VIVA's secure financial policy we continued to implement the cost reduction program adopted by the company during the previous year to reach the best results to enhance profitability by adopting a balanced and effective financial policy in operating and capital expenditures. To shed the light on the financial position of the company as of 31 March 2019, Al-Assaf Added: The Total assets at the end of the period reached KD 331.8 million where total shareholders' equity reached KD 181.6 million, with a book value per share of 364 Kuwaiti fils. In addition, VIVA has strong financial solvency position, which is considered to be the best across the Middle East telecoms companies."

Tightening cycle over, slower ride for global growth ahead

BENGALURU: Major central banks are done tightening policy, according to a majority of economists polled by Reuters, with the growth outlook wilting across developed and emerging economies along with scant prospects for a surge in inflation. While that is largely reflected in bond markets, with major sovereign bond yields falling this year, global equities have rallied, and the S&P 500 index is near record highs after its best start this year in more than three decades.

One striking conclusion from the latest surveys of over 500 economists from around the world, covering more than 40 economies, was not just a toning down of the economic outlook, but a clear shift away from long-held optimistic views.

Although economists who answered an additional question were split on whether a deeper global economic downturn was more likely than a synchronized rebound, this year's growth outlook was downgraded or left unchanged for 38 of the countries polled. "The recent weakness of global growth will persist for much longer than is commonly assumed. A dovish turn by central banks and stimulus in China will not be enough to boost world GDP growth from its current slow pace," noted Jennifer McKeown, head of global economics at Capital Economics.

"Disappointing economic performance will leave inflation very low and cause monetary policy to be loosened almost across the board. But we do not see this prompting any meaningful recovery until 2021." Global growth was forecast to average 3.4 percent this year, the lowest since polling began for 2019 almost two years ago. The most optimistic prediction was also more modest than at the start of the year.

The 2020 forecast held at 3.4 percent, the joint lowest since Reuters began polling on it. However, the 2019 consensus was a touch higher than the International Monetary Fund's latest view of 3.3 percent.

The risk of an escalation of the US-China trade war and prospects of Britain exiting the European Union without a deal - two of the more prominent threats that initially drove the current slowdown - have eased. Yet most major central banks have been hinting at a move away from hiking rates, and nearly 60 percent of more than 200 economists who answered a separate question said they were confident the global tightening cycle was over.

On Thursday, the Bank of Japan dispelled any doubt about its commitment to ultra-loose policies and Sweden's central bank said a forecast interest rate hike would come slightly later than it had planned.

The US Federal Reserve is done raising rates until at least the end of next year, with about a third of economists polled predicting at least one rate cut by then.

With eurozone economic growth and inflation prospects dimming, the European Central Bank may have missed its opportunity to raise rates before the next downturn.

"The ECB blames the eurozone weakness on a slowdown in China and concerns about the trade war. The Fed, meanwhile, pointed the finger to Europe and China as the main drags on US growth. But with everyone looking across the border for a scapegoat, someone must inevitably be watching the wrong space," noted Elwin de Groot, head of macro strategy at Rabobank. "One could speculate that the central banks are pointing the finger just because they have little confidence that their actions are effective."

Growth forecasts for developed economies - including Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Britain, Japan, Australia, the United States and Canada - for this year and next weakened.

It was not very different for emerging market economies, despite efforts from policymakers to boost sluggish growth. Economic growth in major economies from Asia to Africa to Latin America was predicted to lose more momentum.

Although India is still expected to be the fastest-growing major economy, growth predictions were lowered compared with the previous poll.

"Looser fiscal and monetary policy should help to cushion the impact of weaker export demand on growth in emerging Asia."

Nevertheless, regional growth this year is still likely to slow to its weakest rate in a decade," added Capital Economics' McKeown. — Reuters

Asia Express Exchange rebranded as LuLu Exchange

MUSCAT: Asia Express Exchange, the leading financial services company in the Sultanate of Oman has announced its rebranding as LuLu Exchange at a gala ceremony held at Sheraton Oman on Sunday. The name change brings all companies of LuLu Financial Group under the LuLu Exchange brand in the GCC.

The new brand name and logo was revealed by Sultan bin Salim bin Said Al-Habsi, Deputy Chairman, Central Bank of Oman in the presence of Munu Mahawar, Ambassador of India to Oman, Adeb Ahamed, Managing Director, LuLu Exchange, Sheikh Mohammed Hamed Ali Al-Ghazali, Director, LuLu Exchange and other dignitaries. Officials from the Royal Oman Police, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Ministry of Manpower also graced the function.

"As a brand that the world trusts, the new name change embodies our vision to make the lives of our customers better, easier and more meaningful. We would like to thank the Central Bank of Oman for allowing us this name change. We are sure that the residents of Oman will welcome this move, as with their love for our brand," said Adeb Ahamed, MD, LuLu Exchange.

"The operations of the company will continue as is and we will continue offering the enhanced financial services that our customers trust. The refreshed brand and visual identity is an exciting change for us and marks a strategic pivot in our future direction as a financial services company."

The newly branded LuLu Exchange, which has 32 branches across Oman has over the years emerged as a preferred exchange house providing fast and reliable money transfer worldwide and foreign exchange services to a cross-section of society, powered by a robust network, reputed partners and high standards of customer care.

LuLu Exchange is part of LuLu Financial Group which is an ISO 9001:2015 certified global financial services enterprise that has its global headquarters in Abu Dhabi and operates more than 180 branches across several GCC countries such as Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain as well as India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Seychelles, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

LuLu Exchange is also at the forefront of technological innovation and is currently working on its mobile app which will have various features including instant online transactions, payment tracking in real time and payment history, among others.



US-China trade talks nearing decisive moment

WASHINGTON: Trade talks between the world's dominant economies are in the decisive phase that will determine whether a final agreement is possible, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said yesterday of negotiations with China. Mnuchin and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer travel to Beijing this week for another round of talks with Chinese negotiators starting Tuesday, and they will meet next week in Washington to try to finalize a deal that President Donald Trump has demanded to repair what he calls an unfair and unbalanced relationship.

"I think there's a strong desire from both sides to see if we can wrap this up or move on," Mnuchin said in an interview on Fox Business Network. "We hope within the next two rounds — in China and in DC — to be at the point where we can either recommend to the president we have a deal or make a recommendation that we don't."

Trump imposed steep punitive tariffs on more than \$250 billion in imports from China, and Beijing has retaliated with duties on \$110 billion in US goods. US businesses nationwide report that the tariffs are raising costs on key inputs for production, and the uncertainty is causing them to delay investments and hiring.

However, Mnuchin again defended Trump's aggressive trade policies, saying "tariffs have been a big part of getting people to the negotiating table. The president's objective is make sure we have fair and balanced trade." — AFP

Total Revenues

66.6 KD Million

The Board of Directors of the Kuwait Telecommunications Company (VIVA) is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company has achieved a net profit of KD 9.6 million during the first quarter of the financial year 2019.



Business

Boursa Kuwait highlights new market developments in panel discussion

CMA, S&P Dow Jones aim to raise awareness about benefits of market indices

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait recently participated in a panel discussion, jointly hosted by the Capital Markets Authority and the leading equity index compiler S&P Dow Jones Indices (S&P DJI) at the JW Marriott Hotel Kuwait City, with the objective of raising investor awareness about the benefits of market indices for institutional investors. Speaking on the 'Indices and Passive Investing' panel, Noura Al-Abdulkareem, Acting Head of Markets, Boursa Kuwait, highlighted new developments in the Kuwaiti capital market, including upcoming market reclassifications.

Al-Abdulkareem shed light on Boursa Kuwait's ongoing efforts to developing a sound capital market that offers promising opportunities to local and foreign institutional investors. Driven by its ambitious market development strategy, the company has focused on infrastructural upgrades, regulatory reforms, and diversification of offerings to improve the business environment, expand its issuer and investor bases, and increase the depth and breadth of its products.

Stressing on Boursa Kuwait's relentless commitment to transforming itself as an attractive destination for investment, Al-Abdulkareem said the stock exchange has placed significant emphasis on providing investors with liquid and transparent benchmarks of the different markets, to enable them to track and

grow their investments. She said the inclusion of Boursa Kuwait in the FTSE Russell Emerging Markets Index in May 2018 and the forthcoming market status reclassifications by S&P DJI and the global index compiler MSCI are a true reflection of the company's commitment to all market participants.

MSCI has announced that it will consider the reclassification of Boursa Kuwait's market status in its 2019 Annual Market Classification Review set to take place in June. If approved, the Exchange's status will be upgraded from the current Frontier Market to the Emerging Market in 2020. The company is also gearing up for the inclusion of its index to S&P Dow Jones Indices' Global Equity Indices with the Emerging Market status later this year.

As part of its market development plans, the company has also launched several initiatives, including a new rulebook, which helped the company specify new three-tiered market segments. In addition, the company has introduced the Over-the-Counter (OTC) trading platform to enable investors to trade unlisted securities with greater transparency. Furthermore, Boursa Kuwait has recently launched a trading platform for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), introduced the trade at last session, and stock swaps and tender offer facilities as part of its third phase of market developments.



Huawei announces first quarter 2019 business results

KUWAIT: Huawei announced its business results for the first quarter of 2019. In Q1 of this year, Huawei generated CNY179.7 billion in revenue, an increase of 39 percent year-on-year. The company's net profit margin in Q1 2019 was about 8 percent, slightly higher than the same period last year. Huawei maintained its focus on ICT infrastructure and smart devices, and continued to boost the efficiency and quality of its operations, which has helped contribute to its solid performance in Q1 2019. 2019 will be a year of large-scale deployment of 5G around the world, meaning that Huawei's Carrier Business Group has unprecedented opportunities for growth. By the end of March 2019, Huawei had signed 40 commercial contracts for 5G with leading global carriers, and had shipped more than 70,000 5G base stations to markets around the world.

Also in Q1 2019, Huawei's Enterprise Business Group launched its Digital Platform and its new "Huawei Inside" strategy. Huawei is committed to building the foundations of a digital China and the core of a digital world by delivering the Digital Platform along with ubiquitous connectivity and pervasive intelligence. Huawei's Enterprise Business Group also deployed the world's first 5G-enabled Wi-Fi 6 access point. As of the end of Q1 2019, Huawei had shipped more Wi-Fi 6 products than any other company worldwide.

Huawei's Consumer Business Group continues to create value for consumers with its innovative products. Its core strategy is to deliver an intelligent experience to consumers across all scenarios. In Q1 2019, Huawei shipped 59 million smartphones. In other business segments like PCs, wearables, and smart home, Huawei has been welcomed by global consumers for its leading, innovative products and superior user experiences. Huawei Cloud remains committed to innovation. It aims to build the best possible hybrid cloud, provide full-stack AI solutions for intelligent industries, and make inclusive AI a reality. More than one million enterprise users and developers have chosen to work with Huawei Cloud. In Q1, Huawei Cloud services were launched in Singapore, and Huawei Cloud released its AI model market. Huawei Cloud's one-stop-shop AI development platform - ModelArts - came first in both image classification training and inference in the Stanford DAWN Bench deep learning competition.

AUB announces Chat Room service at The Avenue branch

KUWAIT: AUB launched Video Text Chat Room Service at the Avenues Branch, providing customers a privacy space for voice or video chatting with the bank customer service staff, and to get appropriate guidance on any inquiries or needs. This is part of the Bank's drive to introduce new technology and services to support the evolving financial needs of its customers.

Ranjan Sen, General Manager of Retail Banking at Ahli United Bank, specified: "The Chat Room service provided to the customers at The Avenues Branch will give the customer access to the Bank for enquiring about any products, services or campaigns. Huda Al-Madani, General Manager of Digital Transformation and Alternative channels at Ahli United Bank specified that this service is part of the development of AUB - Avenues Branch, which recently opened and being one of the most advanced branches in the region.

The Avenues branch, in Phase 4, has the advantage of a strategic location and an iconic design in a way that permits the introduction of new technologies in the future. The Branch provides customers with an instant e-banking experience through a wide range of innovative financial solutions and self-service banking that provide customers ample time in an atmosphere of privacy and convenience.

The Avenues Branch also enables customers to control their banking transactions using the most advanced ATMs and cabins, taking advantage of the availability of customer service staff in the branch. Al-Madani added: "This strategy will be followed by launching more interactive and innovative services throughout the channels and within the framework of the digital transformation to build a unified and convenient banking experience with AUB."

Today is the last date to enter Al-Danah's second quarterly draw of 2019

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced that today, 30 April 2019, is the last date for customers to open an Al Danah account or increase their deposits for entry into Al-Danah's second quarterly draw of the year, which will be held on 26 June 2019, for the prize of KD 250,000.

The third quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 on 25 September 2019. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1,000,000, will be held on 16 January 2020, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced at a live event. Open an account now or deposit more to increase your chances to win in the upcoming draws, including weekly draws of 5 winners

KAICO service team named 'Best After Sales Service Provider' in ME by Eicher

KUWAIT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Company, Kaico Al Shaya & Al Sagar, the authorized distributors of Eicher trucks and buses in Kuwait, has been named the "Best after Sales Service Provider" in the Middle East by Eicher international office in India during the MTech annual competition.

Kaico achieved this award as a result of series of initiatives and improvements implemented to improve its products and services which resulted in a significant growth in customer numbers in 2018.

Kaico's service team is reliably & qualified to not only diagnose any error, but also repair it from the first time, thus increasing customer confidence in the service level provided.

The MTech annual competition was held with participants from 50 countries with a total number of 2263 of the



Special discount at Cozmo for Burgan Bank's BuBa customers

KUWAIT: Bringing its little customers more opportunities to enjoy the best seasonal activities and entertainment in Kuwait, Burgan Bank announced its latest partnership with leading family destination, Cozmo. The latest offer presents numerous discount packages at any of the nine branches of Cozmo.

that receive KD 1,000 each!

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

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the weekly draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2019 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.

The Al-Danah draws are all approved by and held in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. Furthermore, Gulf Bank have partnered with Ernst and Young Kuwait (EY) with reference to

best technicians from the Middle East, Africa and South Asia regions. And the award was added to a long list of regional awards for Kaico which first started operating in 1936.

The company has received this award after its diligent efforts and investing heavily obtaining the latest technologies, such as various maintenance departments, thermal spray paint rooms and numerous outdoor mobile services.

Kaico has witnessed a record growth in vehicles sales and after sales service since 2009, and has been the authorized distributor of Eicher in Kuwait since the year 2000.

On the occasion of the award, Ashish Tandon, General Manager of Kaico stated: "The Company provides top quality maintenance services to our customers and we are proud to receive this prestigious award which reflects our ongoing efforts to achieve the best service for our customers."

And added "The professional services we have introduced in recent years have increased the efficiency and quality of our work, which has led to faster and more efficient service to our customers, with a focus on the continuous development of our business fundamentals. We believe that investing in our certified technicians and their skills is a key factor to stay in line with the rapid development in the field of trucks and vehicles. This award is a testament to their hard work and commitment."

The year 2019 witnessed significant successes for



"Al-Danah Prize Draw" system in order to assist in assessing processes, technical controls considering relevant parameters and provide recommendations in-line with industry leading practices. The study was conducted in line with industry standards and control requirements relevant to similar prize draw schemes wherein, a detailed review of prize draw management system along with draw scheme parameters, data extraction for draw, filtration of customers as per defined business criteria and necessary system interactions was conducted to advise on any potential areas of improvements.

Kaico, which included huge improvements in the speed of vehicle maintenance, while the Rapid Service Workshop ensured the completion of simple vehicle maintenance as quickly as possible, such as the installation and repair of car bumpers and glass windows to ensure that vehicles return to the roads in no time.

"Commitment to our customers is part of our culture in Kaico and this competition is one of the many ways in which professionals are encouraged to develop their skills," said Mohammed Abu Eloun, senior executive manager-after sales. Also added "Our Company owns the latest technology & advanced workshops in the middle east and GCC region in order to provide our customers with the best after-sales experience.

Gopalakrishnan, spare parts manager stated "Eicher trucks and buses parts are readily available for all fleet requirements. And our TCO (total cost of ownership) is most competitive in Kuwait. Additionally we provide over 96 percent uptime for all our customers."

Kaico is keen to connect with its customers through its digital platforms, build a strong relationship with them to ensure that their needs are better met, and offer special prices on services and guidance to interested customers. These efforts result in high customer satisfaction, and are a main key factor in the company winning the award for best after-sales service provider in the Middle East.



Cozmo Entertainment offers exciting games and activities such as a video games arcade, children competitions, and their very own Bowling alley. It serves as a popular choice for events, birthday parties, all-inclusive within the promotional offer. BuBa Account customers will enjoy a 20 percent extra credit when paying a minimum charge of KD 5 at the Cozmo Arcades and other attractions, 20 percent discount at Cozmo bowling and when hosting birthday parties at Cozmo.

The "BuBa Kids Account" aims at providing creative solutions for parents who want to earn more from their savings for their children and at the same time enjoy a wide range of benefits. The BuBa Kids Account is a savings account, with the minimum opening balance of KD 10. Children, up to 14 years old, will also enjoy special offers and promotions throughout the year as well as attractive discounts at selected merchants across Kuwait.



What's On



Gaming enthusiasts participate in Ooredoo, Blink Gaming tournament

In tandem with its commitment to embracing digitalization and leading the way in meeting the growing demands for online digital users in Kuwait, Ooredoo Kuwait in collaboration with Blink Kuwait, the leading gaming console and accessories company in Kuwait, organized the Ooredoo and Blink Gaming tournament last weekend at Ooredoo's headquarters in Kuwait City. Gaming enthusiasts competed in Kuwait's ultimate competition for gamers in high octane battles in Fortnite, Mario Kart 8 and Forza. Valuable prizes were awarded to the top 3 winners.

Mohamad Eid Zakaria won the first place and was awarded with a KD 600 voucher from Blink, and one year membership in the ProPing service powered by FASTtelco; Mohamad Majed Al-Zoghbi won the second place and was awarded with a KD 400 voucher from Blink, and a six month membership in the ProPing service powered by FASTtelco; and Mohamad Ali won the third place and was awarded with a KD 200 voucher from Blink, and a three month membership in the ProPing service powered by FASTtelco. In addition to the tournament, FASTtelco, a subsidiary of Ooredoo Kuwait launched its new service from Shamel Home, prices for ProPing; which is a tailor-made service for gaming enthusiasts that start at KD 22 per month.

ProPing has been tailor-made for gaming enthusiasts, who

need fast, reliable, and consistent internet service, with speeds reaching 100 mbps, providing an unparalleled gaming experience. Customers will be able to add more service in addition to routers with competitive prices. Commenting on the Ooredoo and Blink Gaming Tournament, Nouf Al-Meshaan, Director of Marketing at Ooredoo Kuwait said, "Ooredoo continues to prove its commitment to embrace digitalization and leads the way in meeting the growing demands for online digital services in Kuwait, especially in the fast-paced telecom industry where customers need reliable, consistent, and fast internet. This is especially crucial nowadays when digital entertainment content is witnessing substantial growth in the region due to the rising popularity of smart devices, as well as the increase in gaming and streaming."

Al-Meshaan added that this new service perfectly complements the company's core values of caring, connecting and challenging, while also upholding its commitment to providing customers with services and plans that match their expectations and lifestyle at home. Ooredoo also provided exclusive packages from both FASTtelco and Blink which include comprehensive and exclusive gaming solutions that cater to the needs of different tiers of gamers at competitive prices which will be announced today and for a limited time only.



Health

Cute or creepy: Why humans love some species, loathe others

Physical characteristics elicit parental instincts

PARIS: The Chinese giant salamander, the largest amphibian in the world, is not cute. Weighing as much as an adult human, it has slimy brown skin, a giant mouth curled to a gormless grin, and puny, mistrustful eyes. It is also one of the world's most endangered species. And yet, unlike its compatriot the giant panda, the giant salamander rarely makes the news. Why do some animals strike a chord with humans, prompting them to donate millions towards their conservation, while others draw little more than disgust?

And is a sad-eyed panda really worth saving more than a slimy salamander? Size, intelligence, behavior, rarity, how closely an animal resembles the human form—all play a part in our reaction to various endangered creatures. "One of the biggest factors is 'cuteness': physical characteristics such as big eyes and soft features that elicit our parental instincts because they remind us of human infants," Hal Herzog, emeritus professor at West Carolina University's Department of Psychology, told AFP.

An expert in human-animal relationships,

Herzog said the dark rings around pandas' eyes triggered humans nurturing instincts. "Compare that to the Chinese giant salamander," he said. "Google it. It looks like a six-foot-long, 150-pound bag of brown slime with beady little eyes." The salamanders are a vital part of their ecosystem, just as worms are essential to soil health around the steams and lakes they live in—which is just about everywhere. Yet, like maggots, rats and snakes, the main instinct they inspire in humans is revulsion.

Learned disgust

According to Graham Davey, a specialist in phobias from the University of Sussex's School of Psychology, we learn to revile certain creatures at a young age. "Disgust is a learned emotion. Babies are not born with it... it's probably transmitted socially, culturally and within families," he said. Some animals are reviled due to their resemblance to "primary disgusting things" such as mucus or faeces, Davey said, while others are perceived—rightly or wrongly—to pose a direct danger to the beholder.

"In terms of threat to humankind, disease and illness are bigger than being attacked by an animal," he said. This might explain why most of us don't find lions and bears repellant—they are covered with the same type of soft fur that coat cuddly toys for children, even if it might be better to avoid one in real life.

An orca by any other name

As with most things, popular culture has a huge effect on how society perceives animals. Whereas the movie "Free Willy" prompted a wave of sympathy for the protection of endangered orcas, "Arachnophobia" hardly helped spiders' cause. See also: "Jaws" for sharks. Even the depiction of fictional creatures can have a knock-on effect on public perception towards certain animals. Take the main being in "Alien", for example. "Seeing the one from the first film that had that mucus-y drawl dripping from the alien's mouth... sensitizes people to disgusting things," Davey said. Nor is it just the public at large who are liable to "speciesism", or discrimination against other species in favor of our own. —AFP



FRANCE: In this file photo female panda Huan Huan eats bamboo inside her enclosure at the Beauval Zoo in Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher, central France. — AFP

CLINIC

PAGE





248 33 199

EYE



248 33 199



Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid
Consultant



Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally
Senior Registrar



Dr. Abeer Khattab
Specialist



Cataract Surgery



Glaucoma



Retina



General Ophthalmology



Follow-Up All Treatments

Tel: 1828282
Whatsapp Us
+965-6000 2184

Dr Sahar Ghannam

Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser



Timing: Saturdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am until 5 pm

Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm.

Friday is a holiday.

Address: Fourth Ring Road - Abdallah Fadalath Street, Meidan Hawally, opposite fire station - block 35, building 31.

Clinic Phones: 25610407/ 409/ 314 Fax: 25610465
Mobaile: 90974754/ 99166746

 saharpolyclinic
 Dr.saharghannamclinic
 Email: drsgderma@gmail.com

WELCOME

Dr Tammam Abou Ali

Consultant ENT, Head & Neck
Facial Plastic Surgeon.

Fellowship of the royal college of surgeons in UK and Ireland.
10 years work experience in Ear Hospital MSH Kuwait.
In Head of ENT department in European Hospital MSH Kuwait
10 years work experience in UK and Ireland.

-  Endoscopic Sinus Surgery
-  Septoplasty and turbinate reduction surgery by laser or RF
-  Snoring and OSAP Surgery
-  Rhinoplasty with open and closed techniques
-  Microscopic Middle Ear Surgery and Tympanoplasty
-  Salivary gland and parotid surgery
-  Thyroid and parathyroid surgery
-  Micro laryngeal surgery

1 888 883

www.qmc-kuwait.com





Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or

Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617

or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

Dr. Husain Alenezi

-Board Certified Urologist.
-Endourology Society-Approved Fellowship In Endourology And Robotic Surgery At Western University, Ontario, Canada.



Expert in diagnosing and treating:

- 1- Urinary Stones (Kidney, Ureter & Bladder) By Endoscopy & Laser
- 2- Prostate Cancer And Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia
- 3- Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms In Males And Females
- 4- Tumors And Malignancies Of The Urinary Tract (Kidney, Adrenals, Ureter, Bladder And Testes)
- 5- Male Factor Infertility And Varicoceles (Microscopic Surgery)
- 6- Erectile Dysfunction

Contact Taliba Hospital: 1808088 94449452 Twitter: @DrHusain_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!





Dr. Kiran Turaka
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Zareena Zahir
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Hasan Khan
Senior Cardiologist



Dr. P. Seshendra Nath
Orthopedic Consultant (AUSTRALIA)
Specialist in Neck, Shoulder
Hip and Knee

50721507

24551555

www.exircenterku.com

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER

Block No. 4 Jahra - Kuwait

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

Tel : 24568857 / 24568859 info@exircenterku.com www.exircenterku.com

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

DR. MOHAMMAD AL HAJRY
Canadian Board of Otolaryngology
Head & Neck Surgery and Facial Plastics.
Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons-Canada
A rare Subspecialty in Microscopic Ear Surgery, Cochlear implant & Ear diseases

- ◆ Diagnosis/ Treatment of General Ears, Nose, and Throat conditions in adults & pediatrics
- ◆ Minimally invasive Endoscopic sinus surgery including Balloon sinuplasty
- ◆ Minimally invasive Microscopic & Endoscopic Ear surgery
- ◆ Diagnosis & treatment of Otolaryngology and Audiology (Hearing loss, Tinnitus & balance disorders)
- ◆ Facial Plastic and reconstructive surgeries (Rhinoplasty, Otoplasty, Fillers & Botox injections)
- ◆ Diagnosis & treatment of snoring & obstructive sleep apnea in clinic without surgery
- ◆ Diagnosis & Treatment of voice and swallowing disorders
- ◆ Diagnosis & Treatment of Head and Neck benign & malignant tumors.

Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122

DR. FAHAD S BUHAIMED
Consultant Cosmetic Dermatologist & Hair Transplant, NY

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

- o Dermatology board certified.
- o Fellowship training program in cosmetic dermatology and hair transplant, New York, USA.
- o Member of American cosmetic dermatology society.
- o Referee reviewer of International Journal of Dermatology.

SPECIALIZED IN:

- o Dermatology & Cosmetic Treatments.
- o Laser Treatments.
- o Hair Transplant & Restoration.
- o Body & Face Contouring.
- o Injectable Fillers & Botox.

SHARD, Ahmad Alsheer st., Building 14, Floor 13.
Tel: (+965) 22060777
@DrFahamed, @Fahadabb, @daralshifa
Email: drfahamed@beautybeyond.com.kw

To advertise on this Page

Call: 24833199 ext:101,102
or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617
or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

Dr. Ahmad Alaeddine
Head of Cardiology departmenta at Dar Al Shifa hospital

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

مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

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

Specialized in:

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

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

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

Specialized in:

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

American Board Certified in General Surgery
Member of the Society of American Gastrointestinal & Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES)
Higher specialization in Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary surgery & Organ Transplantation
Member of many prestigious surgical societies.

- ◆ Day case surgeries
- ◆ Minor surgeries (lipoma, sebaceous cyst, ingrowing nail)
- ◆ Diagnosis, treatment and follow up of all surgical emergencies
- ◆ Hemorrhoids, fistula & anal fissure surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for morbid obesity (sleeve, gastric bypass)
- ◆ Breast surgeries
- ◆ Hernia repair
- ◆ Thyroid & adrenal surgeries
- ◆ Surgery for reflux disease
- ◆ Cholecystectomy & laparoscopic appendicectomy
- ◆ Liver, pancreas & bile ducts surgeries

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant
http://www.international-clinic.com **Tel: 1886677**

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

Academic Certificates - Training

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

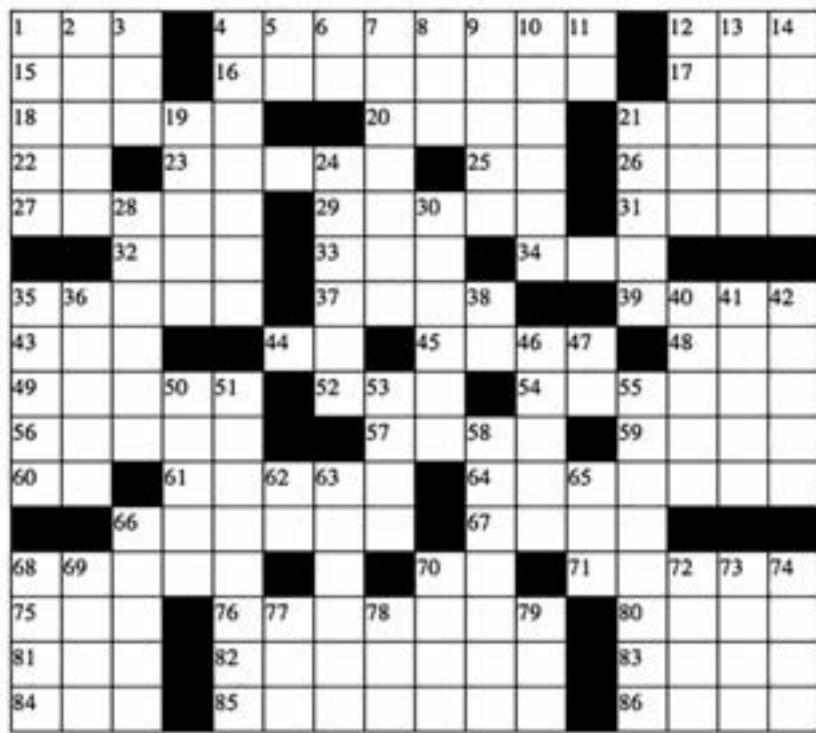
Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

Stars

CROSSWORD 2196



ACROSS

1. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
4. Lean dried meat pounded fine and mixed with melted fat.
12. (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
15. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
16. A salt or ester of propanoic acid.
17. Made warm or hot.
18. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
20. Any cone-shaped artifact.
22. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
23. 100 thebe equal 1 pula.
25. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
26. A city in northern India.
27. Club consisting of a heavy stick (often bamboo) bound with iron.
29. The space between two lines or planes that intersect.
31. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
32. An associate degree in applied science.
33. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
34. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
35. The Oceanic language spoken by the Maori people in New Zealand.
37. Cattle that are reared for their meat.
39. Narrow wood or metal or plastic runners used for gliding over snow.
43. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
44. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
45. English writer and a central member of the Fabian Society (1858-1943).
48. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
49. One of two pieces of armor plate hanging from the fauld to protect the upper thighs.
52. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
54. 1 species.
56. The capital and largest city of Jordan.
57. A city in east central Texas.
59. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
60. (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
61. By chance.
64. Of heavy boots.
67. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
68. Deciduous South African tree having large odd-pinnate leaves and profuse fragrant orange-yellow flowers.
71. (Phoenician and Philistine) God of agriculture and the earth.
75. An ester of adenosine that is converted to ATP for energy storage.
76. United States writer of hard-boiled detective fiction (1894-1961).
80. Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
81. Japanese ornamental tree with fragrant white or pink blossoms and small yellow fruits.
82. (of time) Having passed or slipped by.
83. A condition requiring relief.
84. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
85. French architect who introduced the mansard roof (1598-1666).
86. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.

DOWN

1. Relating to the deepest parts of the ocean (below 6000 meters).
2. Any plant of the genus Erica.
3. (Irish) The sea personified.
4. An ancient board game resembling backgammon.
5. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
6. A form of address for a man.
7. An ancient city in southern Greece.
8. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor.
9. (astronomy) An indistinct surface feature of Mars once thought to be a system of channels.
10. Spider monkeys.
11. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
12. God of wealth and love.
13. United States baseball player (born 1925).
14. An advantageous purchase.
19. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
21. Wasting of the body during a chronic disease.
24. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
28. Chinese Taoist sect claiming to follow the teaching of Lao-tzu but also incorporating pantheism and sorcery.
30. A genus of tropical and subtropical Old World climbers or shrubs or trees.
36. The mission in San Antonio where in 1836 Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged and massacred American rebels who were fighting to make Texas independent of Mexico.
38. A heavy ductile magnetic metallic element.
40. The Mongol people living the central and eastern parts of Outer Mongolia.
41. Of or relating to Iraq or its people or culture.
42. American dwarf fan palms.
46. The fluid (red in vertebrates) that is pumped by the heart.
47. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
50. Silkworm moths.
51. Eruption on a mucous membrane (as the inside of the mouth) occurring as a symptom of a disease.
53. Inspired by a feeling of fearful wonderment or reverence.
55. Large and brightly colored handkerchief.
58. Reed pipe with finger holes on which the melody is played.
62. A soft silvery metallic element.
63. A salesman who travels to call on customers.
65. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
66. Anthropologist and linguist.
69. The content of cognition.
70. Flat tableland with steep edges.
72. A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
73. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
74. A quantity of no importance.
77. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
78. A widely distributed system of free and fixed macrophages derived from bone marrow.
79. (astronomy) A measure of time defined by Earth's orbital motion.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You find yourself trying to break out of old patterns today. Anything new and different catches your eye and at least makes you take a second look. Work mates find you talkative and open to suggestions. They like listening to you now because you come up with good ideas. Stay away from shopping today. Spending money isn't your best option now. You may find that you buy without thinking. Get out in the yard and do something you like this hopefully nice Spring. Aries. Try to take it just a little easier although your mind is running ninety-to-nothing and you feel you can't get it all done.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Be careful you don't have a run in with police officers in the form of a traffic ticket or some other infraction. You want this to be a great day not one that is marred with having to visit a judge. You want education but not in this manner. Taurus. You're thinking of redecorating your home now but may not be ready to buy the paint yet. This is the start of a new life's cycle for you. It'll be more hectic later. Take some time to enjoy and celebrate this day now.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You're at your mental best as you already know. Mental acuity has you discerning what you need to keep and what you need to toss giving you a better picture of life in general. Work benefits by this knowledge you've gained. Keep your head down and keep busy working. Take time off later this evening to enjoy. Go ahead with your ideas of getting yourself into better shape physically. You know your mental faculties are fine. Add more and better foods to your diet. Get some air and walk for exercise and thinking. Take a walk too with your lover for a romantic evening as well.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Work hard and work smart now. This is a time of mental and physical energy just when you're getting the best ideas for new projects. You want to help others on a larger than life basis which might take you into charity work or something that impacts people on a larger, more humane scale. Along with the thoughts about how to help others, you find yourself more aware of your needs as well. Love is a biggie. Romance is too. Love making is a need that you should participate in later tonight with that right person. Philanthropy is in your heart and should be in your job as well.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You'll find yourself more assertive today. Perhaps it's because you meet someone who sets the hairs on the back of your neck on end. This person won't seem to have any redeeming qualities and you don't feel like giving him or her a second chance. Thankfully, this isn't around chosen friends but it's almost as bad because it's at work. Keep your cool. Be cordial and try not to show your disgust. You have energy and drive with just the right amount of being able to channel that drive without making people think you're too pushy. Leo, you know what you want and how to get it.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Right now you're realizing why you've had more than the usual disagreement this month. Even that isn't a distraction from what you're considering now. People seem to watch your every move at work. You feel like a bug under a microscope but it's not a bother at this time. That's because you've finally figured out, you're worth their time. If they weren't watching what you're doing, then there'd be no argument. You're someone worth watching. Virgo. You go! Take some time to yourself after this revelation and enjoy.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You need to be respected and you have a need for others to like what you do no matter the project. This is understandable at work because your boss has to like your work but this isn't a necessity elsewhere. Others don't live your life for you. The ones that count will give you the accolades you crave because they love you and probably have the same standards you possess. They're heaping praise on you is worthy. Libra. Others don't matter. Pat yourself on the back because you're the one that matters most and keep on, keeping on.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Get your work done as quickly and silently as you can and get home. It's time to reassess your living situation. Solitude is your best friend right now. It provides you with the ability to look your work situation over as well as any life experience to see how to best use it to make your life better. While doing so you can assist others as well. Unusual ideas come which involve helping those who can't help themselves or on the technology front. Scorpio, you're making huge strides for helping humanity now.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You go from spiritual, thoughtful research yesterday, to wanting what it takes to create a materialistic environment for you today. You don't mind working hard and you don't appreciate any kind of tomfoolery when it comes to making money now. On the other hand, it's a great time to be working with others and working period. Sagittarius. You like being able to see what you invent come to fruition right before your eyes and making money from it is even better. Others let you know how much they appreciate you. This feels good to you.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Friends and family are known and seen as the only real riches available to man, as thought by you. But, and this is a big but, you realize in your mind that money and material success of most kinds can help you with showing love to others. Besides that, you love pitting yourself against something hard in order to see how smart you really are. Capricorn. That is measured by your success in financial matters. Others know how intelligent you are. You don't mind sharing the wealth if you make it with the help of those for whom you care. That's where you are today. Ambition is in full force right now along with a true need for those you help to realize and give you the respect you deserve. A word of warning is that children rarely do.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could spend this day giving advice to those in need. It's not that you mind doing so. It's just that you have work to do also. Your managerial expertise is being noticed today by others at work. You're persuasive and draw co workers thoughts to you now, Aquarius. Your ideas and words create a nicer work place and give workers the need to make you like their work. This is a good quality to have. Tell them what they're doing for you and the company. It'll promote more good will and willingness to follow your lead. You can use this same tactic at home when you need to be noticed.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Feeling emotional over events that's happened is not in your mindset though the reasons for it are showing up more today. You're not in the mood. You don't want to have to forgive anyone, especially not yourself. So, you push it to the back of your mind like Scarlett O'hara in "Gone with the Wind." You'll take care of it tomorrow, you think. Pisces. Others haven't realized you're in this mode and seek you out for the counseling on their lives they generally get from you. If only they knew how you felt deep down in your soul now.

Wordsearch Puzzle

European Countries 2 - Word Search

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

- | | | |
|------------|---------------|----------|
| ALBANIA | GEORGIA | SCOTLAND |
| ANDORRA | HUNGARY | SLOVENIA |
| AZERBAIJAN | ITALY | TURKEY |
| BELARUS | LATVIA | UKRAINE |
| BELGIUM | LIECHTENSTEIN | WALES |
| BULGARIA | MONACO | |
| CYPRUS | NETHERLANDS | |
| ENGLAND | POLAND | |

Yesterday's Solution

European Countries 1 - Solution

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

- | | | |
|---------|------------|-------------|
| ARMENIA | IRELAND | SERBIA |
| AUSTRIA | LITHUANIA | SLOVAKIA |
| CROATIA | LUXEMBOURG | SPAIN |
| DENMARK | MALTA | SWEDEN |
| ESTONIA | MOLDOVA | SWITZERLAND |
| FRANCE | MONTENEGRO | |
| GERMANY | NORWAY | |
| GREECE | PORTUGAL | |

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily Sudoku

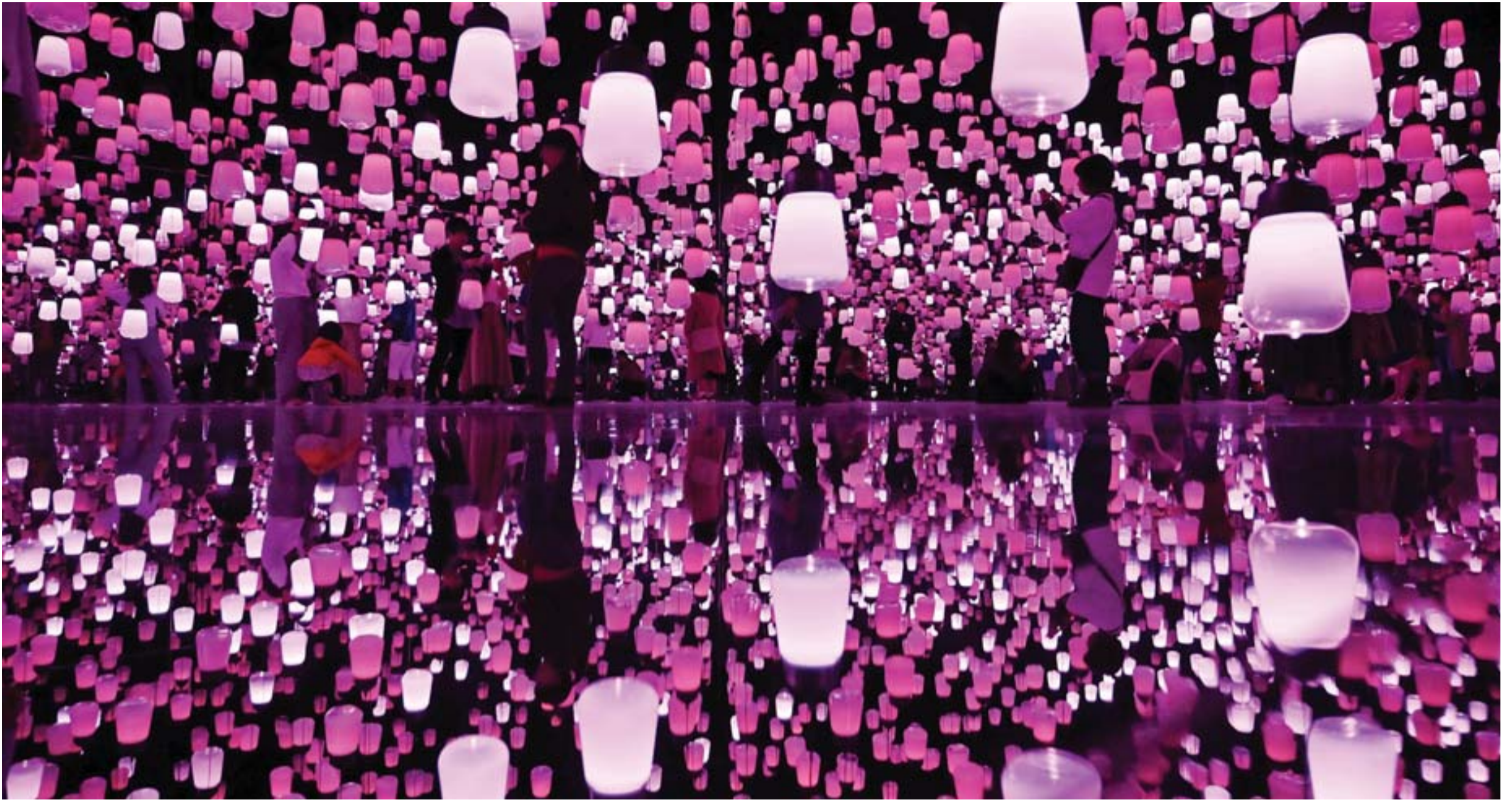
		7			9
			5		2 3
2 5				3 6	
	1		3 7		2
		7			8
	6		9 8		5
		1 3			6 7
2 6			1		
	8			9	

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 2019



This picture shows people enjoying their visit at the team lab borderless museum of Tokyo. Collective teamLab, known internationally for their innovative "digital art" that combines projections, sound and carefully designed spaces to create immersive experiences. — AFP

Revamped Russian animation goes for global audiences

In a slick Moscow loft, dozens of graphic designers peer at computers, compiling the latest scenes of "Fantasy Patrol", a cartoon produced by Russia's Parovoz animation studio. With its Netflix contracts, state-owned Parovoz—which means locomotive in Russian—is at the forefront of a resurgence of the country's animation industry. But, for some observers, the revival comes at the expense of a tradition for innovation dating back to the Soviet-era heyday. Russian authorities have invested heavily in the animation sector in recent years, after it, like others, was left in ruins following the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Parovoz is part of a state media holding and has grown from around 20 to 300 employees. Its animated series are shown in 55 countries. Chief executive Anton Smetankin, who co-launched the studio in 2014, said it had "a product for every market". Last year, two Parovoz productions were bought by the US-based streaming service Netflix—one of them, "Leo and Tig", is about the adventures of a tiger and leopard in Siberia. "We have taken the best from the Russian school (of animation)," said artistic director Yevgeny Golovin. "All of our films are full of kindness and can be watched by children of all ages." The studio also signed two contracts with China and had several of its projects dubbed and adapted for the Chinese market. Today they are shown on four of China's top streaming channels whose total users are estimated to number 1.5 billion a month.

From the ashes

Soviet animators won global reputes for their creativity but the sector has seen mixed fortunes since then. Soyuzmultfilm, a studio launched in the 1930s which made many of the Soviet Union's animated greats, faced funding problems in the 1990s and lost control of its back catalogue.

In 2011, then prime minister Vladimir Putin stepped in to try to restore the Russian animation industry to its former glory. By the early 2000s, Soyuzmultfilm had been reorganized and



State-owned Parovoz animation studio CEO Anton Smetankin poses in Moscow in the studio which, with its Netflix contracts, is at the forefront of a resurgence of the country's animation industry. — AFP photos

was again a state company. The government returned the distribution rights for its classics back to the studio and invested about \$14 million over five years.

'Masha and the Bear' effect

But it is a cartoon series produced by a private Russian studio, Animaccord, that has proven a big international commercial hit. Since 2009, "Masha and the Bear" about a mischievous little girl and an amicable, retired circus bear has been viewed dozens of billions of times on YouTube alone, as well as been broadcast in 100 countries, and has inspired several spin-offs. "Our theme, which revolves around the relationship of a child and an adult, is universal," Animaccord CEO Vladimir Gorbulya told AFP.

"There is a good amount of humor and things to reflect upon for viewers of both age categories." Encouraged by the global success of the computer-animated duo, the Russian government has continued to boost support for the industry, announcing massive subsidies and, in

2017, tax reductions. "There is a desire to make sure our children look at animated films with our national cultural codes, our mentality, our language and culture," said Irina Mastusova, who heads the Russian animation association. She noted that the Russian animation sector was still relatively up-and-coming, with around 3,000 employees.

Commercial 'propaganda'?

The government attention is in line with Moscow's increasing efforts to inject conservative, patriotic values avowed by the Kremlin into the cultural sphere. Smetankin, of the Parovoz studio, conceded that animation was part of Russia's drive for "soft power" abroad, a form of cultural diplomacy to explain Moscow's view of the world, especially at a time of tensions with the West. In November, Britain's The Times newspaper cited experts in a report who called "Masha and the Bear" a form of "propaganda", saying that "feisty but plucky" Masha "punches above her weight" while the bear's sanguine character painted Russia in a positive light.

The studio rejected the depiction, pointing out that the cartoon was made without government funding. Larisa Malyukova, a culture reporter for the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper, said that government support prioritized commercial success, rather than innovative and poetic projects of the kind that made Soviet animators famous. "The culture ministry pays less and less attention to original animation," she said.

"This worries artists, since this is what, at least in Russia, is a laboratory that creates new talent." Joel Chapron, a Russian film expert for the Cannes Festival for two decades, agreed that Russia's animation was changing. "Before, the legacy of animation in Russia was associated with prodigies and big names. Today, nobody knows who the authors are." — AFP

Buena Vista Social Club's Portuondo blows final round of kisses

As revolutions go, the emergence of Cuban music collective Buena Vista Social Club was certainly a peaceful one—but it sent cultural shockwaves still vibrating today. It is more than 20 years since the ensemble of mostly elderly musicians burst onto the scene in the mid-1990s, going on to win a Grammy and sell millions of albums globally. But one of its last original living legends, 88-year-old singer Omara Portuondo, is still on the road—enchanting audiences worldwide with her lush vocals.

"I feel very honored to be able to take our culture, our music, to the entire world," she told AFP in Spanish prior to the New York date of her "Last Kiss/Ultimo Beso" world tour, cast as her final global hurrah. "The Cuban music, the essence of being Cuban, the way we make our music and how people receive it with so much fervor ... we have to travel the world," said the octogenarian, whose skin remains smooth and luminous against her crimson painted lips. Gracing the stage to wild applause at a candlelit Manhattan cabaret-style club, Portuondo played a set of Cuban classics marked by pulsating Afro-Caribbean rhythms and warm, sensuous melodies, including the beloved "Guantanamera."

Power of music

The Buena Vista ensemble's principal musicians came from Cuba's pre-revolutionary musical old guard—coaxed out of retirement by Cuban star Juan de Marcos Gonzalez, the World Circuit's Nick Gold and American guitarist Ry Cooder. Named after a Havana members' only venue, the Buena Vista Social Club became a global household name after putting out the eventual best-selling Cuban album of all time.

The 1997 eponymous work, recorded in just six days, exported a colorful portrait of Cuba infused with lust and sizzle—in sharp contrast to the dreary image of Fidel Castro's communist nation crafted by the capitalist West. Shrugging off questions over US-Cuba tensions—which thawed in recent years, only to frost over again under US President Donald Trump—Portuondo remains defiant: "Nothing can stop music."

'Paints with music'

It appears nothing can stop the Cuban diva, either. Donning a long white gown with a sheer red floral overlay, she shimmered in her seat as she brought her audience in New York to its feet. Asked how she's managed to keep performing decades after most hunker down for their twilight

years, Portuondo raised her eyebrows at the suggestion she might be considered old. "I feel like I'm 15!" she laughed, saying that her fountain of youth is simply being born in Cuba.

"We are hot, we love rhythm, joy, life," she said of her brethren. That sensibility, she added, has ensured the staying power of the Buena Vista Social Club—whose story has been immortalized in several documentaries including one by the acclaimed German director Wim Wenders. Sporting a shiny red bow in her hair and gold hoop earrings, Portuondo's steamy voice remained clear as ever, accompanied by the keys of another Cuban star, pianist Roberto Fonseca.



Cuban singer Omara Portuondo speaks during an interview with AFP in New York City. — AFP

In his youth Fonseca attended a concert of the legend—who has worked the likes of Edith Piaf, Nat King Cole, Herbie Hancock and Chucho Valdes—and approached her afterwards to share his aspiration to play with her. Today, the pair share a flirty but familial relationship with chemistry as palpable offstage as on. "Now my dream has come true," 44-year-old Fonseca told AFP. "Playing with her, I'm learning a lot of things," he said, adding Portuondo "paints with music." "It gives you a lot of knowledge about music; gives you a lot of knowledge about your own culture."

Ever-young

The Buena Vista Social Club performed its farewell "Adios" tour several years ago under the name "Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club," given the dwindling numbers of veteran performers and an infusion of young talent. But even if her "Last Kiss" tour truly is her ultimate, Portuondo appears set to keep performing until the end, even if only in her beloved Cuba—still her favorite spot to play.

"Hello babies!" she crooned to cheers to kick off her Manhattan concert. When Fonseca, who plays beside her and turns her pages, told the crowd halfway through Portuondo's set the singer would take a break, she gave off airs of surprise. As he led her offstage the enraptured audience whistled in delight, the animated Portuondo continuing to clap to the beat of conga drums, her hips never ceasing to sway. — AFP



Employees work at the state-owned Parovoz animation studio in Moscow.



Scherzinger is on a 'mission' to make new music this year

Nicole Scherzinger is on a "mission" to make more music this year. The pop beauty - who is best known for being the lead singer of The Pussycat Dolls - is desperate to release some fresh songs in 2019 and show the world what a serious artist she is. Speaking to online publication #Legend Magazine, she said: "I wish they were more educated on my talents. The best way that I love to communicate is through song so I'm making it a mission to get more music to create more this year and share with my fans." The former 'X Factor' judge hasn't released a single under her own moniker since 2014's 'Bang' but in 2018 she did feature on The Black Eyed Peas single 'Wings'. In the interview, Nicole also described that her perfect day would involve her "medi-

tating" and participating in "high-intensity workout" sessions. She said: "I think I would have to start my day meditating, praying and getting a sweat on whether it's a run, whether it's hot yoga or doing some high-intensity workout." Nicole, 40, also revealed that to wind down, she would throw in a trip to the beach so she could walk in the sand and go for a "candlelight, beautiful" dinner somewhere. She said: "I love the beach. I love anywhere near the water so if I could be sun kissed walking in the sand, playing in the ocean I would love that. "And then I don't know a candlelight beautiful dinner somewhere."

Swift went to 'cat school' for film role

Taylor Swift went to "cat school" for her role in the upcoming 'Cats' film. The 29-year-old singer will play the flirty feline Bombalurina in the live-action adaptation of Andrew Lloyd Webber's iconic stage musical, which also stars the likes of Idris Elba James Corden, Rebel Wilson and Dame Judi Dench. And the 2019 TIME 100 honoree has revealed that she knew she had to portray her character in the much-anticipated movie because she is "obsessed" with own feline friends and she has spilled that she even went to a kitty class on set, which taught her how to act like a feline as much as she "possibly could". She told TIME's 'Three Things That Have Influenced Me' series: "I have Cats, I'm obsessed with them. They're just a real joy to live with. And I love my cats so much that when a role came up in a movie called 'Cats', I just thought like I've gotta do this. Like this is my calling in life, to do this for the ladies. "And so I went to cat school which they have on set, readily available for us and learned how to be as much like a cat as I possibly could and yeah cats are just really cool." The 'ME' hitmaker - who has pet pussies Olivia Benson, Meredith Grey and Benjamin Button of her own - also really "respects" her animals because they're "capable of dealing with their own life". She added: "They're really great. They're very dignified. They're very independent. They're very capable of dealing with their own life. And if you fit into that on that day, they'll make some time for you. Maybe. I just really respect it."



Marina has no ego now

Pop star Marina says she has "lost" her ego now. The 33-year-old singer has just released her new album 'Love + Fear', which is her first studio effort since 2015's 'Froot' and the first record released under her new singular Marina moniker as her previous three records were credited to Marina and the Diamonds. As well as dropping her old stage name, Marina - whose real name is Marina Diamandis - has dropped her ego about her music, even though her attitude shift worried her at first. In an interview with Gay Times magazine, she said: "A lot of my motives were coming from a place of ego as opposed to creativity or love, but then I lost that feeling and it worried me because I thought all artists have big egos, or at least really good ones do. I thought, if I don't have that feeling anymore, maybe it means I'm not a good artist and I should just stop." 'Love + Fear' - which features the song 'Baby', her collaboration with her boyfriend Jack Patterson's band Clean Bandit - is split into two eight-song collections, with each collection exploring psychologist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross' theory that humans are only capable of experiencing those two emotions. Marina has also toned down her "stylized" image now she is older and more comfortable in herself. She said: "A shift took place and it just felt like that identity had taken over, everything stopped feeling fun. I just didn't feel comfortable any more with this very stylised persona that I was building with my imagery." The 'Primadonna' hitmaker also opened up about her attitude to online trolls, and claims many men want to hurl abuse at strong women because they want to "silence" them. She said: "When a woman uses her voice in public or speaks up, men send abuse to that female figure. What matter is you're saying something, and they basically want to silence you."



Osbourne announces rescheduled 'No More Tours 2' dates

Ozzy Osbourne has announced his rescheduled 'No More Tours 2' dates. The 'Paranoid' hitmaker was forced to postpone all of his shows after battling an infection in his hand, a lengthy war with pneumonia, and most recently having fallen in his home and "dislodged metal rods" in his body from a previous injury. However, after a recent health update from his son Jack Osbourne - who quipped that the 70-year-old rocker is "back to being his cynical old self" - the former Black Sabbath star has confirmed a six-week run, kicking off at Nottingham's Motorpoint Arena on January 31, 2020, and wrapping in Zurich on March 16, 2020. He said: "I'm really looking forward to getting back to Europe for these shows. Thank you to all the fans for sticking with me and waiting for the new dates to be announced. I can't wait to see you all next year." The tour, to replace the shows originally scheduled for earlier this year, also include dates in Dublin, Ireland, Manchester, Newcastle, The O2 in London, Glasgow and a hometown gig in Birmingham. The 'War Pigs' singer will then head to Germany, Finland, Sweden, Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, and Switzerland. The latest rescheduled dates come after Ozzy - who is married to Sharon Osbourne - confirmed his North American dates, which will kick off in February 2020. Asked how is dad is doing, Jack said recently: "He's doing good, yeah. He's back to being his cynical old self. It's always a good sign when he's complaining about mundane things, you know he's good. He's back to normal when everything on TV sucks, and when everything in the house is broken. You know, he's in a good spot." Tickets remain valid for all rescheduled tour dates, with the exception of the now cancelled Barcelona and Frankfurt shows, with refunds for the latter two shows available at the point of purchase.



Jonas Brothers lead first wave of artists confirmed for Capital's Summertime Ball

The Jonas Brothers will play their first UK show in almost a decade at Capital's Summertime Ball. The pop trio - comprised of brothers Kevin, Nick and Joe Jonas - will perform at the annual one-day music extravaganza at Wembley Stadium on June 8, a day after the release of their eagerly-awaited new album 'Happiness Begins'. The siblings - who last performed in the British capital on their world tour in 2009 - made their huge comeback with the single 'Sucker' in March and they followed the instant hit up with recent album track 'Cool'. The announcement was made on the 'Capital Breakfast show with Roman Kemp' yesterday, where it was also confirmed that Mark Ronson, Halsey, Ellie Goulding, 5 Seconds of Summer and Khalid are playing the event. More artists will be confirmed today on Roman's early morning show on UK radio station Capital FM. Several billboards were placed around the UK teasing the news, with a 'Ball Board' texted in to the show to help Roman Kemp, Vick Hope and Sonny Jay unveil the star-studded bill live on air. Ashley Tabor OBE, Founder & Executive President of Global, said: "Today we kicked off our massive reveal week on the brand-new national Capital Breakfast show, by announcing some of the world's biggest artists for Capital's Summertime Ball. "We're thrilled that listeners could take part in the reveal by finding our 'ball boards' around the UK with the names of the performers on them, lots of fun! "We're only just getting started and we can't wait to reveal yet more huge acts for the UK's hottest summer party on Capital Breakfast with Roman Kemp tomorrow morning!" The likes of Shawn Mendes, Camila Cabello, Charlie Puth and Rita Ora played the Summertime Ball in 2018. Listeners are advised to tune in to 'Capital Breakfast' from 6am to find out who else is on the bill. They can also follow @CapitalOfficial and #CapitalSTB on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat for the latest news. — Bang Showbiz

Colin Farrell joins sci-fi film Voyagers

Colin Farrell has joined the cast of new sci-fi film 'Voyagers'. The 42-year-old actor has been announced for Neil Burger's latest project along with Tye Sheridan, Lily-Rose Depp - the daughter of Johnny Depp and Vanessa Paradis - and Fionn Whitehead. According to reports, talks are also ongoing with 'Game of Thrones' star Isaac Hempstead Wright, Chante Adams, Kelvin Harrison Jr and Madison Hu. The new movie tells the story of 30 youngsters who are sent on a mission as part of a multi-generational mission to populate a new planet. However, things go awry after the captain is mysteriously killed and the young crew are left alone leading to the young crew to form separate tribes and regressing to primal instincts of survival. The story seemingly has similarities to William Golding's literary classic 'Lord of the Flies'. The novel - which was released in 1954 and has been adapted into a film on three occasions - tells the story of class of British school children who are left stranded on an uninhabited tropical island and must survive without the help of any adults. AGC Studios and Thunder Road are developing the project which will start filming in Romania in early June.



Collins worked with 'dialect coach' for Tolkien

Lily Collins worked with a "dialect coach" to prepare for her role in 'Tolkien'. The 30-year-old actress - who lives in Los Angeles - plays Edith Bratt in the much-anticipated biographical drama about English writer-and-academic J. R. R. Tolkien, famous for penning 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings'. Lily - whose father is English musician Phil Collins, whilst her mother is his ex-wife, American Jill Tavelman - had to work on losing her Californian accent for her upcoming role because she wanted her voice to be "absolutely spot-on" and felt an "extra level of pressure" to get the voice of Tolkien's lover and later wife correct. In an interview with The Observer newspaper, Lily - who was born in England - said: "She [my character] was very creative and very passionate and driven, and he was intellectually stimulated by her. At that time women of her status and in her position weren't really afforded the opportunity to seek higher. But she encouraged him to continue on his path. It's very selfless, and, at times, heart-breaking. "I did worry that people were going to be like, 'Well, she is actually British, her accent should really be better. There's an extra level of pressure. I worked with a dialect coach as I needed it to be absolutely spot-on." Lily accepts that many people think she has only made it as an actress because of her Genesis star dad Phil, she insists her success has come from her own hard work because she wanted to "carve" her own "path" because it would make the end result "so much more worth it". She added: "I'm so proud of my family, but I have also worked really hard to carve my own path and to not have that define me. "I did get told that I could have other ways in but I never wanted to give anyone the opportunity to say, 'Well, she only got X or Y because of that.' I knew it would take longer to do it on my own, but it would be so much more worth it." Lily also stars in the film alongside Nicholas Hoult - who plays Tolkien - Colm Meaney, Derek Jacobi and Anthony Boyle.



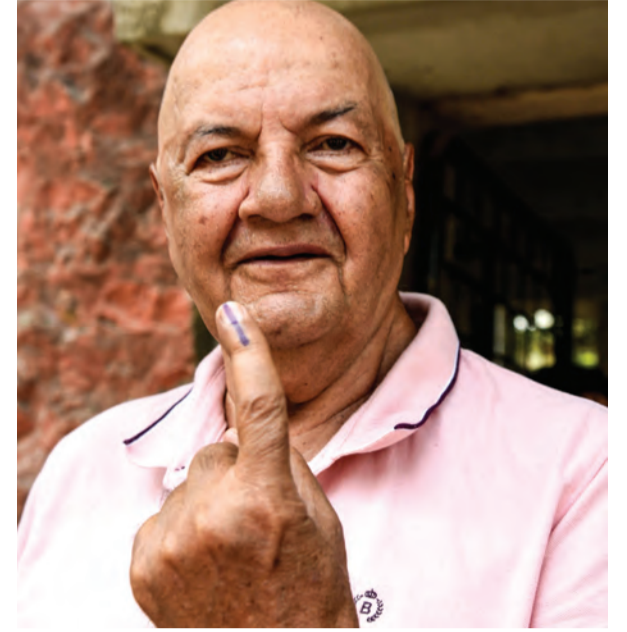
Lifestyle | Features



Bollywood actors Amitabh Bachchan (right), wife Jaya and daughter-in-law Aishwarya Rai Bachchan (left) pose for a picture after casting their vote at a polling station during the fourth phase of general election in Mumbai yesterday. — AFP photos



Indian Bollywood actor Aamir Khan (right) along with his wife and film director Kiran Rao.



Indian Bollywood actor Prem Chopra.



Indian Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh.



Indian Bollywood actor Salman Khan.



Indian Bollywood actor and film director Ajay Devgn.



Indian Bollywood actress Vidya Balan.



Indian Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone.

The rich and famous vote in India's election

Billionaires and Bollywood stars urged Indians to go out and vote as they took their turn with Mumbai's millions of slum dwellers yesterday to cast ballots in the world's biggest election. India's film and finance capital took center stage in the fourth of seven rounds of the mammoth democratic exercise due to wrap up on May 19 with results expected four days later. At least 40,000 police and security personnel were deployed across the megacity of 20 million people while workers were given a holiday to vote for Mumbai's six lawmakers. Twenty-six of the 10,000 polling stations were staffed by women only.

Media scrums were set up at the stations where India's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, Bollywood superstars including Amitabh Bachchan and Aamir Khan, as well as Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar voted. "It's a very proud and happy day for all of us today. Happy voting day everyone," Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan said alongside his director wife Kiran Rao at a school in the plush Bandra area. "This is the moment that matters... Every vote is a voice that counts," tweeted Priyanka Chopra Jonas, husband of US star Nick Jonas, alongside a selfie of herself showing indelible ink on her finger nail.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and their partners Shiv Sena, a Hindu chauvinist party, together won all of Mumbai's seats at the last elections in 2014. They also won all but a handful of seats in Maharashtra state, of which Mumbai is the capital. Now former MP Priya Dutt, a member of one of India's most famous acting families, is trying to make a comeback for the opposition Congress party in the city. Actress Urmila Matondkar is also running for Congress.

Ambani has regularly spoken in support of Modi's BJP government and the Reliance Industries tycoon's son, Anant Ambani, attended a recent Modi rally. Yesterday's voting in nine states will be particularly crucial for Modi's chances of securing a second term after his landslide win in 2014. More than three dozen seats were at stake in



Indian Bollywood actor Shahrukh Khan (right) arrives along with his wife and film producer Gauri Khan (left) and their son AbRam (center).



Indian Bollywood actress and National Congress candidate for Mumbai north constituency Urmila Matondkar.

Tycoon backs Congress candidate

The concerns of the rich and famous-Ambani and his family live in 27-storey luxury high-rise-were far from the ordinary voters in line however. "The most pressing issue for Mumbaiers is unemployment and rising costs of living," shop trader Jignesh Shah told AFP as he queued in the suburb of Chembur. "As a middle class family it gets really difficult when real estate costs are so high and transportation is a mess," the 56-year-old added. About 60 percent of Mumbai's population live in slums. At the other end of the wealth spectrum, Ambani has raised eyebrows by backing the opposition Congress candidate in his Mumbai constituency, although the BJP is not standing in that seat.

Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan states, all traditional BJP Hindu strongholds.

Defeats suffered by the ruling party in three recent state elections have raised Congress hopes that it can eat into the government's majority. Modi's party won 282 of the 543 seats contested last time but analysts say this election will be closer. Congress has hit out at Modi's handling of the economy, the failure to produce promised jobs and massive debt in rural India which has seen thousands of farmers commit suicide. The 68-year-old prime minister, still seen as the frontrunner, has increasingly relied on his tough security stance and his nationalist credentials.

At a rally in Mumbai on Friday, Modi said only his BJP government can guarantee safety for the city, the scene of militant attacks 10 years ago. "Modi is confident those who strike with terror on this city will be hunted down. That is how a city and that is how a country is run," said the prime minister who has given himself the nickname of "the watchman". Heavy security has been deployed across the country for the election and police baton-charged rival BJP and followers of the regional Trinamool Congress party in West Bengal state, officials said.

Fighting broke out in the Asansol constituency over security at polling booths, said Amit Jyoti Bhattacharya, a spokesman for the state election commission. Trinamool Congress activists surrounded the car of local BJP candidate Babul Supriya and smashed its windows. "Police used batons to control the situation," the spokesman added. — AFP

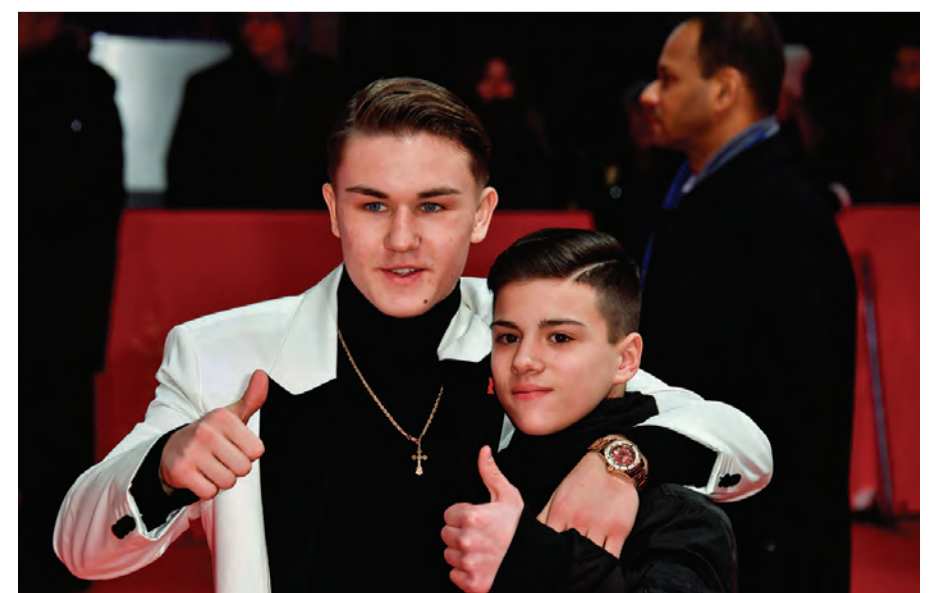
Actor from young mobster film stabbed in Naples

A teenaged actor who appeared in an award-winning film about child criminals in Naples has been stabbed in the Italian organized crime stronghold, media reported yesterday. Ukrainian 18-year old Artem Tkachuk played one of the gun-wielding, drug-peddling teens in "Piranhas", based on a novel by renowned investigative journalist and mafia expert Roberto Saviano. Tkachuk was attacked by a so-called "baby gang" in the early hours after a night out last week with a friend, national dailies said.

The actor was stabbed twice while his friend was beaten. Neither suffered life-threatening injuries. Police believe the youngster may have been set upon because of his role in the film, which won the Silver Bear for Best Screenplay at the 69th Berlin film festival in February and is coming to European cinemas this summer. Italy's far-right League party is backing a bill to tackle the baby-gang phenomenon, which would lower the age of criminal responsibility in the country from 14 to 12. According to the National Observatory on

Childhood and Adolescence, 6.5 percent of youngsters in Naples-home to the feared Camorra crime group-belong to baby gangs. Anti-mafia author Saviano has lived under armed guard since publishing his international bestseller "Gomorrah" in 2006. — AFP

In this file photo actor Artem Tkachuk (left) and cast member pose on the red carpet ahead of the screening for the film 'Piranhas' (La Paranza dei Bambini) at the 69th Berlinale film festival in Berlin. — AFP





A pond full of red-eared sliders at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum in Singapore. — AFP photos



A soft-shelled turtle in its enclosure at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum in Singapore.



A snapping turtle in its pen at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.

CRAWLING TO EXTINCTION: SINGAPORE TURTLE HAVEN FIGHTS FOR LIFE



Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum owner Connie Tan interacting with a sulcata tortoise in the museum.

Hundreds of turtles and tortoises, including rare and endangered species, face an uncertain future after their Singapore sanctuary—a Guinness World Record holder—was forced to relocate due to government redevelopment plans. At its peak around 1,000 of the creatures were housed at The Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum, which opened in 2001 at popular tourist spot Chinese Gardens. It also showcased specimens and memorabilia such as figurines and stuffed toys.

While the venture built up a loyal following, there had been criticism online of the conditions the reptiles were kept in. Authorities decided to repurpose the area, and evicted them — leaving owner Connie Tan scrambling to find and finance a new location. “I gave up quite a lot for this, and it’s tough. My son’s university education fees have gone into keeping this place alive,” explains Tan, whose father created the original museum, securing the Guinness World Record for the “largest collection of tortoise and turtle items”.

tourism hotspots. The collection of animals has been amassed by the Tan family for more than 40 years. Many of the reptiles were pets that were rescued after the owners abandoned them.



Children playing with red-eared sliders at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.



A child playing with a sulcata tortoise at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum, while other visitors look on.



This picture taken shows Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum owner Connie Tan posing for a photo in front of a display cabinet of tortoise memorabilia.



Xiao Hei, an Aldabra giant tortoise, in its enclosure at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.

She spent Sg\$250,000 (\$185,000) on the new venue but was only able to secure a short two-year lease and conceded the venture is running low on funds—a situation that has raised concerns about the long-term future for the turtles and tortoises. Tan has battled hard to keep the museum going, even seeking out help from Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on social media when she needed more time to find a suitable location.

Endangered species

During the move, she closed her event management business to house the turtles and tortoises at her office, leaving her temporarily without an income. Today there are around 700 turtles at the new site in Yishun, a residential area far from Singapore’s main leisure and

“Tortoises may not react to you as much as how dogs can do, but they do have the ability to communicate with you if you pay attention to them. So, those people who’d like to buy turtles and tortoises, you must be ready to accept them for who they are,” she explains. Tan says there are around 50 different species including some that are facing extinction such as the Reeves’ Turtle, which is used in Chinese Traditional Medicine and has been over-hunted in the wild.

It is classed as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s “Red List of Threatened Species”. The museum also houses African spurred tortoises and Indian star tortoises—often taken from the wild for the exotic pet trade—both are classed by the IUCN as “vulnerable”. Despite the challenges, Tan hopes visitor support will ensure her project’s survival. The 48-year-old says: “Friends of the museum have been generous with their donations, and I’ve started receiving visitors from places as far away as Russia, Poland, and even Israel.” She adds: “It does give me hope for the future.” — AFP



Red-eared sliders sunbathing at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.



A sulcata tortoise roaming around a grass patch in the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.



Red-eared sliders sunbathing at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum.

Israeli Eurovision champ says boycott calls spread ‘darkness’

Israeli singer Netta Barzilai, who won last year’s Eurovision song contest, said yesterday that calls to boycott this year’s event in Tel Aviv amount to “spreading darkness.” Due to Barzilai’s victory last year in Portugal with her #MeToo-inspired song “Toy”, a performance that included clucking sounds and chicken-like dance moves, Israel hosts this year’s competition from May 14-18. There have been calls from artists such as Pink Floyd’s Roger Waters and British singer Peter

Gabriel to move the competition to another country over Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians.

Waters has also called on Madonna to abandon plans to perform at Eurovision. While carefully avoiding delving into politics, Barzilai, 26, argued that calls for a boycott went against the purpose of the competition. “Being on the same stage no matter what your religion is—your ethnicity, your color—from all these countries, all these cultures combined together, this is a festival of light,” she

told foreign journalists in Jerusalem.

“For people to boycott light is spreading darkness, is doing the exact opposite thing, and that’s why I think they might be going against their own beliefs.” Asked whether she would perform for Palestinians, Barzilai said: “I wasn’t invited, but if my singing could solve problems, I would go.” Barzilai declined to comment on Israel’s recent elections, which saw right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu win a fifth term. “When I will say

my political opinion, I will bring hearts apart instead of bringing them together,” she said. Israel has occupied the West Bank since the 1967 Six-Day War. It has also fought three wars with Hamas, the Palestinian Islamist movement that rules the Gaza Strip, since 2008 and has blockaded the enclave for more than a decade. — AFP

Classifieds

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

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

STATE OF KUWAIT
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

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

DAY: Monday 29/04/2019 Valid From 7 PM To 7 AM

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Fair with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h.

BY DAY: Relatively hot with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings		
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 29/04/2019 1200 UTC		
KUWAIT CITY	35 °C	20 °C			
KUWAIT AIRPORT	34 °C	17 °C			
ABDALY	36 °C	16 °C			
BUBYAN	- °C	- °C			
JAHRA	35 °C	18 °C			
FAILAKA ISLAND	33 °C	18 °C			
SALMIYAH	30 °C	21 °C			
AHMADI	30 °C	21 °C			
NUWAISIB	31 °C	19 °C			
WAFRA	33 °C	16 °C			
SALMY	33 °C	15 °C			

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	04/30	Relatively hot	36 °C	17 °C	VRB	06 - 20 km/h
Wednesday	05/01	Hot and some scattered clouds will appear	38 °C	19 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 26 km/h
Thursday	05/02	Hot	39 °C	21 °C	VRB-SE	10 - 35 km/h
Friday	05/03	Hot and Clouds will increase gradually with a chance for rain that might be thundery later on	39 °C	23 °C	SE	15 - 38 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:42
Sunrise	05:08
Zuhr	11:45
Aar	15:21
Sunset	18:23
Isha	19:47

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	18 °C
MAX. RH	93 %
MIN. RH	29 %
MAX. Wind	NE 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	10.7mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UP:0 2019/04/29 14:24 UTC V1.00 T2.4 8-1/ع.ع.ع

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mustafa Sabbir Virpurwala father of Husaina, holder of Indian Passport No. M4642603, issued at Kuwait on 21/01/2015, permanent resident of Bhawani peth Vishal apts 3rd floor Pune, India and presently residing at Salmiya, block 10, building no. 13, Kuwait do hereby change my daughter name from Husaina to Husaina Mustafa Virpurwala, with immediate effect. (C 5521) 30-4-2019

I, Deepthi Thankachan passport holder No. T0309013 hereby change name as it appears in my passport from given name: I, Sajan Rajasekharan Nair Indian Passport holder No. L1429316 issued in Kuwait hereby change name as it appears in my Passport from given name: Sajan Rajasekharan Nair to surname: Nair and given name: Sajan Rajasekharan for all future purposes. (5520) 29-4-2019

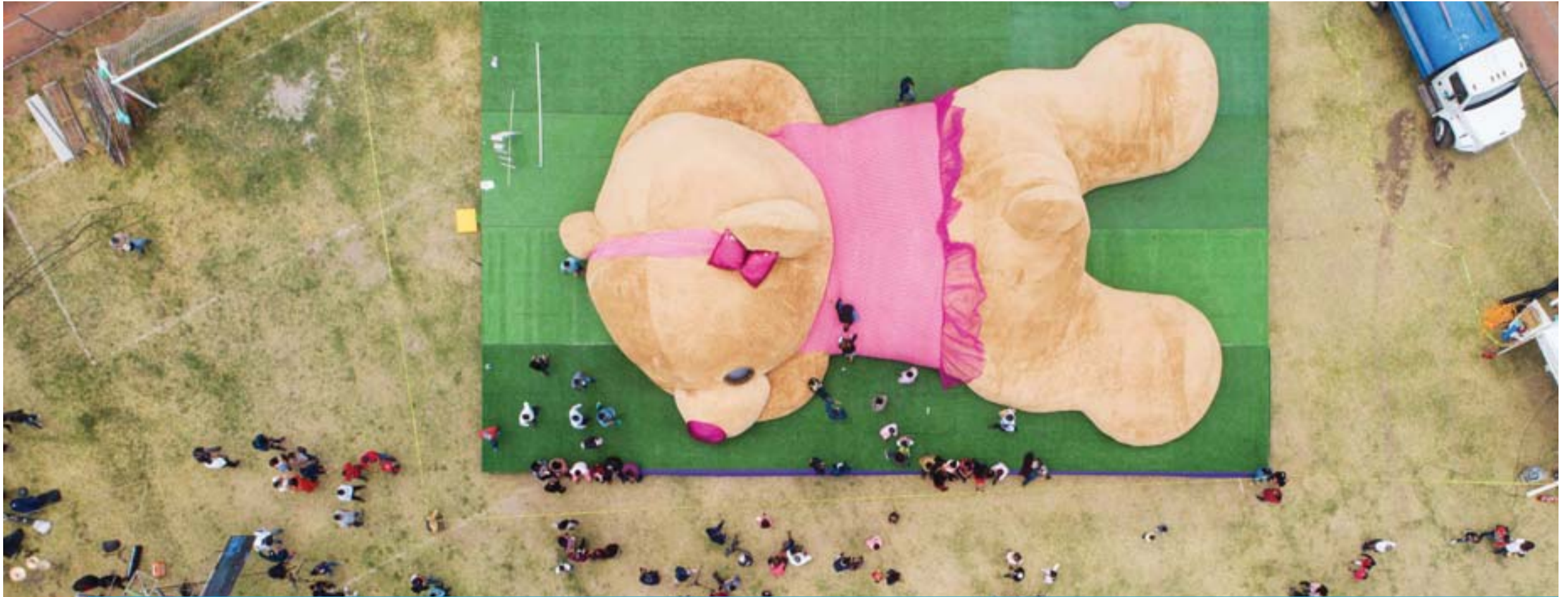
By this did, I undersigned Kuldeep Singh (new name) S/o Ram Singh, previously called Kuldip Singh S/o Ram Singh, resident of ward no. 7, Cinema Chowk, Hajipur road, Dasuya, Punjab. (C 5518) 26-4-2019

Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
Jet Airways	22087426
FlyDubai	22924455
Qatar Airways	22414400
KLM	22423888
Royal Jordanian	22425747
British Airways	22418064/5/6
Air France	22425635
Emirates	22430224
Air India	22921555
Air India EXPRESS	22456700
Sri Lanka Airlines	22438185/4
Egypt Air	22424444
Swiss Air	22421578
Saudia	22421516
Middle East Airlines	22426306
Lufthansa	22423073
PIA	22422493
Bangladesh Airlines	22421044
Indian Airlines	22452977/8
Oman Air	22456700
Turkish Airlines	22456700
Aeroflot	22453820/1
	22404838/9

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw) DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 30/4/2019				Departure Flights on Tuesday 30/4/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	254	Amman	00:05	JZR	1075	Doha	13:00
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:15	KAC	545	Cairo	13:30
THY	766	ISL	00:30	JZR	113	Doha	13:30
JZR	734	Cairo	00:50	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:50	JZR	123	Dubai	13:40
JZR	722	Alexandria	00:55	MSR	611	Cairo	14:10
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:00	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	102	London	01:20	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
DLH	625	Dammam	01:25	QTR	1079	Doha	15:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	673	Dubai	15:40
IGO	1757	Kochi	01:55	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	743	Dammam	15:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:05
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
RBG	211	Luxor	03:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KKK	1268	Istanbul	03:05	FEG	342	Sohag	16:25
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
MSR	606	Luxor	03:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:40
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:45
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	JZR	105	Bahrain	16:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	04:00	SYR	342	Damascus	17:00
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:45
JZR	716	Sohag	04:40	QTR	1073	Doha	17:50
UAE	873	Dubai	04:55	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
KAC	382	Delhi	05:05	JZR	733	Cairo	18:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	404	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	253	Amman	18:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:10	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	JZR	127	Dubai	18:35
JZR	112	Doha	05:25	JZR	501	Lahore	18:40
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:40
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	381	Delhi	18:55
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:05	FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
KAC	362	Colombo	06:10	JZR	721	Alexandria	19:20
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:10	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:25	QTR	1081	Doha	19:55
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:55	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
BAW	157	London	07:05	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	708	Luxor	07:15	NIA	0162	Cairo	20:30
JZR	358	Kochi	07:35	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	KAC	301	Mumbai	20:35
FEG	241	Alexandria	07:40	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:55
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:55
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
KAC	304	Mumbai	08:20	OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	DLH	624	Dammam	21:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KAC	1543	Cairo	22:15
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	KAC	205	Islamabad	22:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
JZR	410	Delhi	10:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
KAC	624	Doha	10:40	KAC	303	Mumbai	22:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	383	Delhi	22:30
JZR	122	Dubai	11:10	ICV	675	Hong Kong	22:45
JZR	116	Doha	11:10	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:35	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:25	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
JZR	714	Sohag	12:35	RBG	214	Sohag	23:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	795	Madinah	23:15
JZR	142	Al Najaf	12:50	QTR	1083	Doha	23:25
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50				



In this aerial view, officials measure a giant teddy bear 20 meters long and weighing 4 tons, which entered the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest of its kind on Sunday in Xonacatlan in Mexico. — AFP

World's largest falcon hospital caring for Emirati heritage

ABU DHABI: When a falcon in the Gulf Arab countries falls sick, the owners of these much-loved and expensive hunting birds know where to take them: The world's largest falcon hospital, in Abu Dhabi. "It's their baby, they want the best for it," said hospital director Margit Muller, a German veterinarian with over 25 years of experience in treating falcons. "Sometimes when the falcons have an accident at night, the owners will sit there for hours into the early morning."

The birds are more than pets and the practice is more than a sport. Falconry is an important part of the cultural desert heritage of Arabs of the United Arab Emirates and neighboring countries such as Saudi Arabia going back thousands of years. "The Bedouin used falcons to hunt meat ... so the falcon was essential to ensure the survival of the Bedouin's family," said Muller. "The birds have always been considered like the children of the family and this remains until today."

With flight speeds exceeding 300 km

an hour, falcons can suffer serious injuries as they collide with prey, misjudge a landing or ingest infected meat. The government-supported Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital is the world's main center for falcon medicine, research and training. Its subsidized prices means people of all income levels can use its falcon care, Muller said. "Nowadays falconry is one of the very few opportunities for the former Bedouin to reconnect to their past," she said.

Falcons are recognized internationally as endangered and only captive bred falcons can be legally owned in the UAE. Hunting in the UAE outside a few special reserves is illegal, so owners train their birds using meat and then fly them to countries like Pakistan, Morocco and the central Asian region during colder months. The UAE issues falcons their own passports and the birds travel with their owners in airplane cabins, sometimes dozens at a time for specific hunting trips. — Reuters



An Emirati man inspects a houbara bustard hunted by a falcon at the Al-Marzoon hunting reserve, 60 km south of Madinat Zayed, in this Feb 1, 2016 file photo. — AFP

Major opposition figures not among those given back Bahrain citizenship

DUBAI: Major opposition and activist figures who were stripped of Bahraini citizenship are not among hundreds of people whose nationality will be restored under an amnesty announced last week, a Reuters review of the list shows. Bahrain, which hosts the US Navy's fleet in the region, was the only Gulf Arab state to have experienced major unrest during the 2011 "Arab Spring" of regional

protests, which it quashed with the help of Saudi Arabia.

The country has seen periodic clashes between protesters and security forces, who have been targeted by several bomb attacks. The government denies repressing the opposition and says it is protecting national security from groups it calls terrorists backed by Iran. Since the protests it has prosecuted hundreds of activists in mass trials, banned the main opposition groups and revoked citizenship from around 1,000 nationals.

Bahrain's Interior Ministry on Saturday issued a list of 551 people regaining citizenship under a decree from King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, which a government spokesperson said aimed to give them "an opportunity to rehabilitate themselves". The spokesperson said the government has begun the process of reinstatement for those on the list, adding that "court decisions to revoke citizenship are taken to ensure safety and security throughout Bahrain".

Those identified were mainly from Shiite families, activists told Reuters. But prominent figures such as Isa

Qassim, the spiritual leader of the kingdom's Shiite majority, were not on the list. Qassim's citizenship was revoked in 2016. The government subsequently allowed him to travel to Britain for medical care, and he moved from there to Iran. Most of the country's leading opposition figures and rights activists are imprisoned or have fled abroad.

The Britain-based activist group the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) said Bahrain has stripped at least 990 people of their citizenship since 2012. "Since amendments to the anti-terrorism law were passed in 2014, the use of revocation of citizenship has increased dramatically, in many cases targeting journalists, human rights defenders and critics of the government," BIRD's director Sayed Ahmed Al-Wadaei told Reuters on Sunday. A prominent activist, he was stripped of his citizenship in 2015.

Reuters spoke to one person on the list who had previously been jailed for membership of a terrorist group and possession of weapons, and who for safety reasons asked not to be identified. — Reuters

Amir receives merit certificate...

Continued from Page 1

Thus, Kuwait established the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development in 1961, which since then has largely contributed to financing projects in more than 120 countries, the Amir said.

Sheikh Sabah added that Kuwait has also co-partnered with many global developmental institutions, mainly the WBG, with which Kuwait is honored to be one of the most cooperative countries. HH the Amir reaffirmed determination to continue on the path of helping countries plagued with natural disasters and human tragedies.

Addressing the reception, Belhaj said he was very happy to represent the World Bank Group in honoring HH the Amir in appreciation for his key role in supporting economic and social development worldwide through aid to more than 100 countries. He said Kuwait, under the wise leadership of HH the Amir, is playing a significant role in safeguarding stability in Middle East and North Africa by means of bankrolling development in regional countries. He added that the honoring of the Amir came due to Kuwait's contributions to several regional and international institutions, including the WBG's International Development Association.

The WBG's vice president said his delegation, together with partners in Kuwait, will celebrate 10 years since the opening of the WBG's office in Kuwait, which has helped in the promotion of relations between Kuwait and the WBG. In this context, he voiced much thanks to the Kuwaiti government for its

unlimited backing of the office. Belhaj echoed appreciation to the Kuwaiti government and people for supporting international efforts in economic and social sustainable development, and eradicating poverty worldwide. He concluded by saying he was honored to gift HH the Amir, on behalf of the WBG President, a WBG shield in recognition of his efforts in the social domain and international cooperation against poverty.

The reception was attended by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah. Following the event, the vice president of the WBG said he was honored to meet HH the Amir, which was an opportunity to make use of his experience and discuss a set of issues and subjects, mainly WBG-Kuwait cooperation. Hailing this cooperation as deep-rooted, he vowed that his bank would continue this cooperation positively, especially regarding the role of Kuwait and HH the Amir in bolstering regional and global economy and development.

Meanwhile, the WBG's Executive Director and Dean of the Board of Executive Directors Merza Hussain Hasan said in a statement following the meeting with HH the Amir that a memorial shield was given to the Amir from the WBG. He said on behalf of the WBG president, Belhaj presented the Amir with the shield as a sign of thanks and gratitude to the leading role played by HH the Amir and Kuwait in sustainable development.

He added that Kuwait has helped in many WBG projects aiming at wiping out poverty, improving services and providing basic services, mainly power, water, sanitation, education and health, to many people and more than 100 countries. Hasan noted that the honoring of HH the Amir reflected the WBG's appreciation of Sheikh Sabah for his efforts in providing a dignified life to those people and taking them out of poverty. He concluded by saying that he is very proud to honor HH the Amir for the first time in appreciation for his internationally recognized efforts. — KUNA

Indonesia eyes moving capital from Jakarta

JAKARTA: Indonesia is considering a plan to move its capital away from sprawling megalopolis Jakarta, officials said yesterday, but any jump to a new city could still be years away. The idea of moving Indonesia's seat of government from an urban conglomeration of nearly 30 million people with some of the world's worst traffic jams has stretched on for decades. Lying Jakarta is also prone to annual flooding and is one of the world's fastest sinking cities due to excessive groundwater extraction.

On Monday, urban planning minister Bambang Brodjonegoro said the long-stalled relocation plan won approval from President Joko Widodo who favored moving the capital away from Indonesia's most populous Java island. Jakarta, which suffers billions of dollars in annual congestion-and-flood linked economic losses, would remain the country's financial hub. "(Widodo) decided on ... the option to relocate the capital," Brodjonegoro said after a cabinet meeting.

In a statement before the meeting, Widodo expressed support for the idea, but he did not give an alternate location or a timeline for any move. "In the future, would Jakarta be able to carry the double burden of being both the center of government and its business center?" he asked in the statement. "If we prepare well from the very beginning, this great (relocation) idea could be realized," he added. During his re-election campaign, Widodo pledged to spread economic growth more evenly in the nation of 260 million. He won a second term this month, according to unofficial poll results. Local media have reported that a possible new capital would be Palangkaraya city on the island of Borneo. — AFP

UAE spy suspect found hanged in...

Continued from Page 1

Turkey has not identified the nationality of either detainee but Turkish state broadcaster TRT's Arabic service said both were Palestinians and carried Palestinian passports. Hasan was a 55-year-old retired major general and a senior intelligence official, TRT said on its website. In an interview with Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya TV, a man who identified himself as Hasan's son said his father had gone to Turkey to search for a job and the family had lost contact with him on April 7. "We were surprised that he was suddenly arrested after the false accusations against him," the son Youssef said.

He said he wanted Hasan's body sent home and urged Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and world

Aqeel says Kuwait needs expats...

Continued from Page 1

but he said that he told her that the Kuwaiti judiciary is independent and fair and that any requests should be made directly to the judge through lawyers. Ghanem called on the press and all media outlets not to cite him for saying anything unless he makes statements directly to reporters or through official releases.

In their Assembly news, MPs Riyadh Al-Adasani,

powers to investigate his father's death. "I want the creation of a specialized medical committee, including a trusted Palestinian doctor who can go there and do the autopsy on my father's corpse in order to find the truth himself," he said. A woman who identified herself as Hasan's sister in the same interview said she was certain her brother would not have committed suicide.

Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist and critic of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was killed in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct 2 by a team of Saudi operatives, provoking an international outcry. According to the senior Turkish official, one of the two men arrived in Turkey in October, days after Khashoggi was killed, while the other arrived later to help his colleague. The Saudi public prosecutor has indicted 11 unidentified suspects on charges of ordering and committing the crime, including five who could face the death penalty. Erdogan has urged the United States to put its weight behind the investigation into the Khashoggi killing and not to set the matter aside because of its ties with Riyadh. — Reuters

Adel Al-Damkhi and Mohammad Al-Dallal reiterated yesterday that their grilling of Information Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri is in line with the constitution and Kuwaiti laws. Responding to a request by the minister to clarify certain parts of the grilling, the lawmakers insisted that the grilling is very clear and the minister's request is an attempt to escape accountability. The lawmakers also insisted that they will make public during the debate a large number of violations committed by Jabri. The grilling is on the agenda of today's session, but the debate could be delayed for two weeks if the minister demands so. The Assembly is also due to debate a grilling against Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh over alleged violations.

Sports

Zobrist, Chicago Cubs outlast Diamondbacks in 15 innings

Donaldson's 3-run homer lifts Braves over Rockies

PHOENIX: Kris Bryant and Willson Contreras homered, and Ben Zobrist broke a tie with a two-run double in a three-run 15th inning as the Chicago Cubs outlasted the Arizona Diamondbacks for a 6-5 victory on Sunday in Phoenix. Tyler Chatwood, the Cubs' seventh pitcher, doubled to the fence in right-center field with one out in the 15th inning off Matt Andriese (3-2) and took third on Albert Almora Jr.'s single to center. Zobrist, who entered the game in a double-switch in the 11th inning, doubled into the right field corner and took third on the throw to home, which failed to beat Almora. Bryant followed with a sacrifice fly. David Peralta singled with two outs in the 15th off Kyle Ryan before Christian Walker doubled, and pinch hitter Caleb Joseph hit a two-run single to make it 6-5. Cubs right-hander Allen Webster entered and got Nick Ahmed to fly out to the warning track in left field for his first career save.

NATIONALS 7, PADRES 6 (11 INNINGS)

Matt Adams led off the last of the 11th with a homer off Matt Wisler as host Washington came back from a 6-0 deficit to beat San Diego, avoiding a three-game sweep. Juan Soto (age 20), Victor Robles (20) and Carter Kieboom (21) all hit homers for the Nationals. Washington became the first team to have three players under the age of 22 hit a homer in the same game, according to Elias Sports. Fernando Tatis Jr., who turned 20 in January, had a career-high three hits for the Padres but left the game in the last of the 10th with an injury.

BRAVES 8, ROCKIES 7

Third baseman Josh Donaldson slammed a three-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning to lift host Atlanta to victory over Colorado. Tyler Flowers and Ozzie Albies reached on singles against Seungwhan Oh, and Donaldson hammered a 1-1 pitch deep in the right field stands for his fifth home run. The victory allowed the Braves to salvage one game in the weekend series and end Colorado's eight-game winning streak in games played in Atlanta. Albies had three hits and a pair of home runs, and Freddie Freeman added two hits and his fifth homer. Ian Desmond and Daniel Murphy went deep for Colorado.

METS 5, BREWERS 2

Steven Matz pitched seven strong innings, and New York scored three late runs to beat visiting Milwaukee to salvage the finale of a three-game series. Reigning National League MVP Christian Yelich of the Brewers left the game with lower back discomfort following the top of the fifth inning. The Mets lost second baseman Robinson Cano when he was hit on the hand by a pitch in the first inning. Matz (3-1) allowed two runs on five hits while striking out four without a walk, after the Brewers had bested Mets starters Jacob deGrom and Noah Syndergaard in the first two games of the series. Mike Moustakas homered for Milwaukee in defeat.

YANKEES 11, GIANTS 5

Gary Sanchez and Gleyber Torres each hit two-run homers, and visiting New York blasted San Francisco to complete a three-game sweep. Sanchez hit his second homer since returning from a calf injury—and eighth overall—in the sixth to put the Yankees up 8-0. Sanchez's 430-foot blast helped the Yankees improve to 6-1 on their nine-game trip and win for the 11th time in 13 games. New York's latest win was marred by two more injuries. Second baseman DJ LeMahieu exited in the third due to right knee inflammation, and third baseman Gio Urshela exited two

innings later when he was hit by a pitch on his left hand.

RAYS 5, RED SOX 2

Tyler Glasnow pitched effectively into the seventh inning as Tampa Bay scored early off Chris Sale and beat host Boston. Glasnow (5-0) allowed two runs on six hits in 6 2/3 innings and joined Seattle's Marco Gonzales as the second five-game winner in the majors. The 25-year-old right-hander struck out nine, walked one and threw 102 pitches while his fastball averaged 96.1 mph. Daniel Robertson hit a two-run homer in the first inning, and Yandy Diaz had a two-run triple in the second as the Rays completed the sweep of the rain-shortened two-game series. Sale (0-5) completed seven innings for the first time since July 11, allowing four runs (two earned) and four hits.

BLUE JAYS 5, A'S 4 (11 INNINGS)

Justin Smoak singled in the winning run as Toronto rallied for four runs in the bottom of the 11th to stun visiting Oakland, sweeping the three-game series and the six-game season series. Eric Sogard, a former member of the Athletics, homered to lead off the bottom of the first. It was his third homer of the season and his second homer to lead off the game of the series and of his career. He finished a triple shy of the cycle. Marcus Semien and Khris Davis had two hits apiece for the A's, who blew a 4-1 lead entering the bottom of the 11th inning to lose for the eighth time in 12 games.

ODDGERS 7, PIRATES 6

Cody Bellinger hit a home run, and Max Muncy drove in the tying and go-ahead runs as Los Angeles extended its winning streak to four games by beating visiting Pittsburgh to earn a three-game series sweep. Bellinger hit his 14th home run, matching a major league record before the start of May. The Brewers' Christian Yelich also has 14 home runs. Albert Pujols (2006) and Alex Rodriguez (2007) also share the mark. The Pirates' Melky Cabrera hit home runs in his first two at-bats of the game, the fifth multi-homer game of his career and his first since July of 2015 as a member of the Chicago White Sox. Cabrera entered with just one home run on the season. He finished with four hits.

ASTROS 4, INDIANS 1

Robinson Chirinos walloped a three-run home run to cap a turnaround seventh inning, and Houston earned a split of its four-game series against visiting Cleveland. Chirinos drilled a first-pitch fastball from Indians right-hander Carlos Carrasco (2-3) over the train tracks above left field and out of the park, his 426-foot blast snapping a 1-1 tie the Astros secured just one pitch earlier. Carrasco was dominant through six innings before suddenly coming undone with two outs. Astros left-hander Wade Miley worked 5 2/3 innings and allowed one run on six hits and two walks. Reliever Framber Valdez (1-1) earned the win with two shutout innings, and Ryan Pressly struck out two in the ninth to pick up his second save of the season.

ANGELS 7, ROYALS 3

Matt Harvey pitched seven strong innings, and Albert Pujols passed another legend as Los Angeles defeated host Kansas City. Harvey (1-2) gave up just one run on two hits, and the run scored without the benefit of a hit. It was Harvey's longest outing since Aug. 11, 2018, when he pitched seven innings against Arizona in a no-decision. For the second time in three games, Pujols passed a baseball icon in a career statistic. With a two-run double in the first,



PHOENIX: Kris Bryant #17 of the Chicago Cubs hits a sacrifice fly against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the 15th inning of the MLB game at Chase Field in Phoenix, Arizona. — AFP

Pujols eclipsed Barry Bonds for third place all time with 1,997 RBIs. Pujols had moved into fourth on Friday, passing Lou Gehrig. He passed Babe Ruth on April 20.

WHITE SOX 4, TIGERS 1

Reynaldo Lopez struck out a career-high 14 over six innings to boost host Chicago over Detroit to win for the third time in its past five games en route to sweeping the abbreviated, two-game series. Relievers Jace Fry, Kelvin Herrera and Alex Colome struck out six in three innings of scoreless relief, as White Sox pitching set a franchise record and tied the major league mark for a nine-inning game with 20 strikeouts in the combined two-hitter. Chicago is the seventh team to post 20. Lopez (2-3) dominated the Tigers behind an effective, four-seam fastball. He gave up one unearned run on two hits—including only one for extra bases—and walked three while recording at least two strikeouts in each inning.

TWINS 4, OROLES 1

Max Kepler and Byron Buxton both homered, and Minnesota completed a three-game sweep of visiting Baltimore. The Twins, who smacked five homers in each of the first two games of the series, hit 23 in their six games against Baltimore this season and won them all. This could end the season series between the two teams. One game was postponed because of weather and could be made up, if it has playoff implications. Kepler hit homers in his final two at-bats in Saturday's win and then led off the first with a homer on the first pitch of the game from Baltimore starter Dylan Bundy. Chris Davis homered off Gibson in the seventh for Baltimore's lone run. It was Davis' third of the season.

RANGERS 14, MARINERS 1

Hunter Pence had three hits and four RBIs to lead visiting Texas to a blowout win against Seattle to earn a split of the four-game series. Danny Santana and Shin-Soo

Choo also had three hits each, and Elvis Andrus, Nomar Mazara, and Logan Forsythe had two hits apiece for the Rangers, whose other win in the series was 15-1 on Saturday after getting outscored 19-6 in the first two games. Pence and Andrus hit two-run homers in the third inning. Forsythe hit a three-run blast in the eighth and Choo clubbed a solo shot in the ninth. Daniel Vogelbach and Dee Gordon had two hits each for the Mariners, who committed seven errors in the past two games.

CARDINALS 5, REDS 2

Jack Flaherty allowed four hits over seven shutout innings as host St. Louis secured a series victory over Cincinnati. St. Louis' Yadier Molina had a two-run single in the eighth inning to extend his hitting streak to 15 games. Dexter Fowler ripped an RBI double, and Jose Martinez had a run-scoring single for the Cardinals, who recorded their seventh victory in eight outings. Scott Schebler ripped a two-run double with two outs in the ninth inning for the Reds, who have dropped back-to-back contests to fall to 4-10 on the road. Derek Dietrich was unable to continue the rally, as he lined out to first base to end the game and hand John Gant his second save of the season.

PHILLIES 5, MARLINS 1

Zach Eflin pitched his first complete game since 2016, and Jean Segura, back in the lineup one day after being beamed, had three hits to lead host Philadelphia over Miami. Segura went 3-for-4, including an RBI triple, raising his batting average to .347. He also scored two runs, after being removed from Saturday's game after being hit in the batting helmet by a Trevor Richards 90 mph fastball. Eflin (3-3), who threw 77 of his 107 pitches for strikes, struck out three and walked none. He scattered seven hits—all singles—as the Phillies won for the fourth time in their past five games. Miguel Rojas drove in the lone run for the Marlins, who lost their third in a row. — Reuters

Semenya decision to be announced by CAS tomorrow

CAPE TOWN: The decision on Caster Semenya's challenge to continue competing without any restrictions will be announced by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) at 1000 GMT tomorrow.

The double Olympic 800m champion is challenging the sport's governing body, International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), over its decision to restrict testosterone levels in female runners.

The IAAF wants the South African and other female athletes with differences of sexual development (DSD) to take testosterone blockers. Under the new rules, which will apply to women events between 400 metres to the mile, athletes classed as having DSDs must reduce their blood testosterone level to below five (5) nmol/L for a period of six months before they can compete. They must then maintain it below that level continuously.

Semenya, 28, has been waiting since February following her appeal against an IAAF regulation, which said female athletes classed as having DSDs gain an unfair advantage due to their higher testosterone levels.

Testosterone is a hormone that increases muscle mass, strength and haemoglobin - which affects endurance. CAS had been due to announce its decision in March but postponed it several times.

Semenya's dominance of the middle distances has been labelled unfair by many of her competitors but the proposed restrictions have also been branded as discriminatory. Several expert witnesses were called by both sides during a five-day hearing presided by three judges at CAS's headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland in February. Semenya won 1,500m and 5,000m golds at the South African Athletics Championships over the past few days. Should her appeal be unsuccessful, Semenya would have to meet the IAAF requirements to keep running in the 800 and 1500 metres, but they would not apply were she to step up to 5,000.

Last month, Semenya said in a statement released through her lawyers that she wanted to differentiate her case from those of transgender athletes who were born male. "Ms Semenya is a woman. There is no debate or question about this and the IAAF does not dispute this," the statement said. "She was born a woman, raised a woman, socialised as a woman and has competed as a woman her entire life. Ms Semenya does not wish to undergo medical intervention to change who she is and how she was born. She wants to compete naturally."

The IAAF has previously said it is confident of the legal, scientific and ethical basis for the regulations and expects CAS to reject Semenya's appeal. — Reuters



LOS ANGELES: Minjee Lee of Australia poses with the winner's trophy during the HUGEL-AIR PREMIA LA Open at Wilshire Country Club in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Australia's Lee roars to victory at LA Open

LOS ANGELES: Australia's Minjee Lee pulled away from the field with a closing round of three-under 68 to capture the LA Open by four strokes and earn her fifth career USLPGA Tour title. The 22-year-old from Perth finished at 14-under 270, four strokes ahead of runner-up Kim Sei-young of South Korea. Lee collected \$225,000 in first place prize money and boosted her career earnings to \$5.32 million, making her the third highest winning Australian overall in purse money.

In terms of victories only Karrie Webb, with 41, Jan Stephenson (16) and Rachel Hetherington (eight) have more titles by an Aussie.

Lee started her fourth round on Sunday with a one-stroke lead over Denmark's Nanna Koerstz Madsen who stumbled to a five-over 76. "I was just going to

carry on playing my game," said Lee. "I had a couple of birdies opportunities coming in so I didn't get riled up."

"I have been hitting it solid and playing solid so this one feels pretty good." Kim had one of the best rounds of the day with a 66 but it wasn't enough to catch Lee. Americans Annie Park, with a 67, and Morgan Pressel tied for third at nine-under, five shots adrift of Lee.

Madsen, who was seeking to become the first from Denmark to win on the Tour, finished in a tie for 13th. Lee, who was the only player to shoot all four rounds in the 60s, made two birdies on a bogey-free front nine. She rebounded from a bogey at No. 11 with birdies at the 13th and 18th.

The win comes at a time when she is playing some of her best golf. Lee tied for third in Hawaii last week after consecutive second-place finishes in February. She hadn't won since May of 2018 at the Volvik Championship.

"For the rest of year I want to try and get a couple more wins," she said. South Korea's Amy Yang fired the low round of the day and equalled the low round of the tournament, shooting a bogey-free 64 to finish tied for fifth along with four others, including Park In-bee and world No. 1 Ko Jin-young of South Korea (69). — AFP

Hamilton tells Ferrari to shape up

BAKU: Lewis Hamilton has warned Ferrari to shape up and mount a serious title challenge after his Mercedes team swept the first four races of the season.

The defending five-time world champion, who finished second behind his Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas in Sunday's Azerbaijan Grand Prix, said the Italian team need to fight back hard to stay in contention to avert a similar Mercedes procession in next month's Spanish Grand Prix.

"Until they start to perform at the level we are now, then this is how it's going to be," said Hamilton, who slipped a point behind championship leader Bottas on Sunday when Mercedes collected a record season-opening fourth straight one-two.

"We definitely didn't expect to have this level of performance, but I am glad we do ... I think the team is out-performing itself. They're going to have to pick it up if they want to fight us."

Ferrari's four-time champion Sebastian Vettel finished third and his team-mate Charles Leclerc fifth.

"He is right," said Vettel, who has not tasted victory since last year's Belgian Grand Prix. "We need to pick it up. We need stronger pace. It is as simple as that. It's like a Rubik's cube where you have to have everything in the right order. We have a good car, but we're not using it to get the results we should be getting."

Ferrari's optimism after dominating pre-season testing in Spain seems a distant memory after Sunday's race and they badly need to rediscover their winning in Catalonia. Hamilton said he also wants a new display unit in his cockpit after losing time in a Virtual Safety Car (VSC) period, falling from two seconds behind Bottas to 3.6 seconds.

"It's all fine margins," said Hamilton. "Valtteri did a better job in qualifying, which put him in pole position. Then, at the start, another fine margin for him, which I will have to work on..." "There's some things to fix on the dash to make sure it doesn't happen again—just technical stuff, nothing major... But again it's all part of the fine margins that make the difference." — AFP

Sports

Pakistan great Wasim not discounting spearhead Amir

Pakistan bowler's dubious catch sparks debate

KARACHI: Legendary paceman Wasim Akram cautioned against discounting Mohammad Amir ahead of next month's World Cup, saying Pakistan's pace spearhead would return to form following a disappointing string of performances at the crease.

The 27-year-old Amir was left off Pakistan's preliminary World Cup squad but has a chance to force his way back into the final 15 if he does well in the five-match one-day international series against England starting from May 8.

All teams have until May 23 to change their World Cup squads. Missing the upcoming World Cup would likely serve as another crippling setback for the young bowler's career after he missed the tournament in both 2011 and 2015 due to an embarrassing five-year ban over match fixing.

Since returning to competition, Amir has fallen into a rut after guiding Pakistan in a dramatic win over India in the Champions trophy final in June 2017 — with just four wickets in 14 matches. However, Wasim said he still believed Amir could stage a comeback.

"We can't discount Amir from the World Cup," Wasim told AFP. "Amir would have been my first choice for the World Cup considering English conditions where he performs well." Wasim went on to say that Amir had both youth and the experience of competing at the highest levels of the sport on his side, including international Tests and English county cricket.

"I am confident that he will do well once his rhythm is back," said Wasim, a veteran of five World Cups in 1987, 1992, 1996, 1999 and 2003. Pakistan's preliminary World Cup squad is largely comprised of young players, with only a handful of veterans—Sarfaraz and Haris Sohail, who played in 2015, as well as Shoaib Malik, who played in 2007, and Mohammad Hafeez, who took

part in the 2007 and 2011 tournaments.

Wasim added that big events are won with a mixture of youth and experience. "I am all for youth but experience has no substitute, so we should mix youth with experience," said Wasim who guided Amir during the Pakistan Super League earlier this year.

"He is a good learner so I hope things will come good for him sooner than later because Pakistan team needs him." Pakistan is set to play three one-day matches against county teams before taking on England in the five-match ODI series from May 5.

The squad will then kick off two warm-up World Cup games against Afghanistan on May 24 and Bangladesh on May 26, before taking on the West Indies in their first World Cup match in Nottingham on May 31. All 10 teams will play each other in the first stage, with the top four playing the semi-finals.

Meanwhile, Pakistan bowler Hasan Ali was at the centre of controversy after he claimed a catch despite apparently dropping the ball in their opening tour match against Kent. The tourists comfortably beat the county side by 100 runs after amassing 358 for seven in their 50 overs on Saturday.

Kent were 176-3 in reply in the 30th over when Alex Blake, on 89, skied a return catch to Ali, who was bowling. Video footage emerged on Monday that showed the seamer appeared to floor the catch.

But Ali continued his celebration as the ball lay on the ground and the batsman was not given a reprieve by the umpire.

The laws of cricket state that a catch is completed only when "a fielder obtains complete control over both the ball and his/her own movement". The image of Pakistani cricket was damaged by a spot-fixing controversy that blighted their England tour in 2010, with



Wasim Akram seen sharing some tips to Sri Lankan players.

three players handed bans from the game.

Pakistan announced yesterday that veteran batsman Shoaib Malik has returned home to deal with a personal issue but is expected to rejoin the team in 10 days' time. "The PCB will not be making any further com-

ments and fully expects all concerned to respect Shoaib's privacy," the Pakistan Cricket Board said in a statement. Pakistan are playing one Twenty20 match and five one-day internationals against England before the start of the World Cup in late May. — AFP

Hales withdrawn from England WCup squad

LONDON: England batsman Alex Hales will not feature at the World Cup after being withdrawn from all international squads following an off-field incident not related to cricket, the England and Wales Cricket Board said yesterday.

Hales was included in the 15-man preliminary World Cup squad for the tournament in England and Wales but it emerged last week that he had been sanctioned under the ECB's disciplinary policy for a second time.

A report in the Guardian newspaper said the hard-hitting batsman was serving a ban from cricket for recreational drug use. A spokesman for Hales on Friday confirmed the Nottinghamshire batsman had been suspended "following an off-field incident last year".

An ECB statement yesterday said: "Alex Hales has been withdrawn from all England squads ahead of the international season." Hales's latest misdemeanour comes just a few months after he was suspended and fined by the ECB for his part in a street brawl in Bristol also involving Ben Stokes in September 2017.

The 30-year-old has been stood down from this Friday's one-off one-day interna-



Alex Hales

tional against Ireland in Malahide, the upcoming limited-overs matches against Pakistan and the World Cup.

Ashley Giles, ECB managing director of England Men's Cricket, said: "We have thought long and hard about this decision. "We have worked hard to create the right environment around the England team and need to consider what is in the

best interests of the team, to ensure they are free from any distractions and able to focus on being successful on the pitch. "I want to make it clear this is not the end of Alex's career as an England player." Hales has played 11 Tests, 70 one-day internationals and 60 Twenty20 internationals but is now regarded as a white-ball specialist. —AFP

Bangladesh captain tells fans to ease World Cup 'hype'

DHAKA: Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Mortaza yesterday called on the country's fans to douse their expectations for the World Cup and avoid putting unwanted pressure on the team.

After Bangladesh's appearance at the Champions Trophy semi-finals two years ago and the Asia Cup final last year, national hopes of a winning streak at the World Cup have skyrocketed.

But the 35-year-old captain called for calm ahead of the team's departure for a warm-up tournament in Ireland, before the World Cup starts on May 30 in England and Wales. "You are saying this is our best ever team, but that's not important," said Mashrafe.

"We went to the Asia Cup with the same team but could not win it. We

played in the Champions Trophy semi-final, we had the same team. So there is no need to create hype," he pleaded. "The best team does not always win," added Mashrafe, who said the players do not need the "extra pressure on us" and that he preferred to believe in "luck".

Mashrafe said there should be no public pressure to win or even reach the semi-finals. "If you ask the ex-players and analysts they will tell you we are not among the favourites. If we can do something, people's attitude towards us will change." Bangladesh won 13 one-day internationals last year. Among the World Cup countries, only India and England did better. Bangladesh open their World Cup campaign against South Africa at the Oval, London, on June 2. —AFP

Sharma fined for hitting stumps

KOLKATA: Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma was yesterday docked 15 percent of his match fee for hitting the stumps with his bat following his dismissal in a highly charged Indian Premier League game.

The India batsman smashed three boundaries before being adjudged lbw in Mumbai's mammoth chase of 233 against Kolkata Knight Riders, and vented his frustration on the stumps at the non-striker's end on Sunday.

Sharma, who has led Mumbai to three

IPL titles, believed he had edged the incoming delivery from paceman Harry Gurney and reviewed the umpire's call. But the 'snickometer' technology, which analyses noise, suggested the ball missed the bat and the decision was upheld, with a dejected Sharma having words with the umpire as well as hitting the stumps. Mumbai lost the match by 34 runs despite a 34-ball 91 by Hardik Pandya at Kolkata's Eden Gardens. The world's most popular Twenty20 league ends on May 12 with the final in Hyderabad. — AFP



Rohit Sharma

Premier League top-four contenders limp towards line

LONDON: Tottenham, Chelsea, Arsenal and Manchester United all failed to muster a win for the second consecutive Premier League weekend as the contenders for a place in next season's Champions League stumble towards the finish line.

Spurs, in third place behind runaway pacesetters Manchester City and Liverpool, are best-placed to secure a fourth straight season of Champions League football. Their 1-0 win over Brighton on Tuesday is the only time in the past 10 games involving the four sides that one of them has won.

Chelsea are in pole position for fourth, two points ahead of Arsenal, with United's chances now looking slim—they are a point behind Arsenal with a significantly inferior goal difference. AFP Sports looks at why all four have hit the wall as the season reaches its climax.

Tottenham - 70 points

A first defeat at the club's new stadium, against West Ham on Saturday, means Spurs have now lost 12 times in the league this season. Yet it has still been a campaign of overachievement by Mauricio Pochettino's men. Despite not signing a single player, spending most of the season at their temporary home of Wembley, and losing talismanic striker Harry Kane for two prolonged spells through injury, Spurs are still the best of the rest in the Premier League behind City and Liverpool and have reached the Champions League semi-finals.

"The stress and the fatigue arrived, we are competing with circumstances that

are not the best," admitted Pochettino after a sixth defeat in 10 league games. Spurs' skeleton squad have understandably ran out of gas, but thanks to the profligacy of their rivals, one more win from their final two games against Bournemouth and Everton will guarantee much-needed Champions League cash again next season.

Chelsea - 68 points

Maurizio Sarri launched an uncharacteristically staunch defence of his first season in charge at Stamford Bridge after a 1-1 draw away to United on Sunday consolidated his side's place in the top four.

"We played the final in the League Cup, we are fighting for the top four, we are in the semi-finals of the Europa League. I think we have done a good season."

Sarri has had his troubles this season. He publicly criticised his players' mentality followed capitulations on the road at Arsenal, Bournemouth and Everton, while his demand for the loan signing of Gonzalo Higuain in January has reaped precious little reward.

Worse could come, with Eden Hazard reportedly closing in on a summer move to Real Madrid and the club currently banned from signing any new players to replace the Belgian for the next two transfer windows. Therefore, it is all the more imperative that Chelsea get back in the Champions League next season.

Arsenal - 66 points

Much of the good work done by Unai Emery over nine months to rebuild the

Gunners in the first season since Arsene Wenger's departure has come undone over three defeats to Crystal Palace, Wolves and Leicester in eight days.

The defensive issues that dogged Wenger's final years in charge still need to be resolved, while Emery constantly chops and changes his formation and personnel in midfield and attack.

A three-time Europa League winner with Sevilla, that competition may now prove Arsenal's best route back to the Champions League but a tough tie against Emery's old side Valencia awaits in the semi-finals.

Manchester United - 65 points

Despite a run of seven defeats in nine games, United remarkably still had a good chance of hauling themselves into the top four had they held onto an early lead against Chelsea on Sunday.

However, United's current malaise is personified by a dramatic dip in form for goalkeeper David de Gea, who has so often been his side's saviour in recent seasons. The Spaniard was at fault for Marcos Alonso's equaliser, which secured Chelsea a point and left Ole Gunnar Solskjaer admitting his side now have a "mountain to climb". A trip to hapless Huddersfield and Cardiff's visit to Old Trafford on the final day of the season at least offer an excellent chance to lift the mood heading into the summer.

"We need to focus on our two games, win games again," said Solskjaer, but a big rebuilding job remains ahead for the Norwegian. — AFP

Sports

Bayern survive penalty drama as Nuremberg keep Dortmund in title hunt

Late penalty miss from Tim Leibold spared Bayern from humiliating defeat

BERLIN: Bayern Munich coach Niko Kovac hailed a "crazy" Bundesliga title race after his side missed the chance to pull away from rivals Borussia Dortmund with a dramatic 1-1 draw at lowly Nuremberg on Sunday.

A late penalty miss from Tim Leibold spared Bayern from a humiliating defeat, before Kingsley Coman missed a golden opportunity to win the game at the other end. "It is amazing what happened in the last five minutes there," Kovac told Sky.

"The Bundesliga is just crazy, we saw that yesterday and today." Bayern had the chance to go four points clear at the top of the table with three games to go after title rivals Borussia Dortmund lost 4-2 to Schalke on Saturday.

Yet there was another twist in the tale on Sunday, as a disciplined Nuremberg side kept Bayern at bay for long periods to earn a well-deserved point and keep Dortmund's title hopes alive. "We knew that we had a big chance today, so the atmosphere wasn't that great in the dressing room after the game, but it is still all to play for," Bayern's David Alaba told Sky.

Bayern looked nervous from the outset, and nearly went behind when goalkeeper Sven Ulreich misjudged a back-pass from Mats Hummels in the first half. Mathus Pereira put Nuremberg ahead with a brilliant strike from the edge of the area in the 48th minute.

Serge Gnabry grabbed a scrappy equaliser with 15 minutes to go, scuffing the ball over the goalkeeper Christian Mathenia at the far post.

Kovac denied that there had been a disagreement with Colombian midfielder James Rodriguez, who was substituted off just 15 minutes after being brought on in the sec-

ond half. The Bayern coach said that Rodriguez, with whom he has had a rocky relationship in the past, had picked up a calf strain.

It was Rodriguez's replacement Alphonso Davies who gave away the late penalty with a handball. Yet Leibold struck the ball against the post to deny Nuremberg an unlikely and valuable win in the relegation fight.

Bayern are now two points ahead of Dortmund with three games to go. They face a tough trip to RB Leipzig in two weeks' time before hosting top-four side Eintracht Frankfurt on the last day of the season.

"We are one more point ahead now, but the situation hasn't really changed. We need to pick up seven points from the last three games," said Kovac. In Sunday's earlier game, Hoffenheim goalkeeper Oliver Baumann fluffed two routine saves as his side lost 4-1 to Wolfsburg and missed the chance to move within a point of the top four.

The usually reliable Baumann was beaten at his near post by Wout Weghorst and Maximilian Arnold as Wolfsburg came from behind to win. Hoffenheim's Andrej Kramaric missed a penalty after Adam Szalai had given them the lead, and Wolfsburg's William curled in a superb equaliser.

Baumann's mistakes, and a late second goal for Weghorst sealed the win for Wolfsburg, which brings them to within a point of Hoffenheim in eighth. "It is really annoying because I saved pretty much everything else," Baumann told Sky.

Julian Nagelsmann's side remain on course for a Europa League berth in seventh, but are four points adrift of the top four. — AFP



NUREMBERG: Bayern Munich's midfielder Serge Gnabry (R) scores past Nuremberg's defender Robert Bauer during the German first division Bundesliga football match Nuremberg v FC Bayern Munich in Nuremberg, southern Germany. — AFP

Ajax fear no-one as they hunt unlikely European glory: Onana

AMSTERDAM: Ajax goalkeeper Andre Onana says that the flamboyant European dreamers aren't afraid of anyone as they prepare to continue their wild ride in the Champions League with the first leg of their semi-final at Tottenham Hotspur today.

Four times European champions Ajax are hunting their first major continental triumph since Patrick Kluivert downed AC Milan in the 1995 final and have warmed hearts with a thrilling run to the last four that has recalled the glory days of Johan Cruyff and Total Football.

Next up are Spurs, who Ajax meet after dispatching reigning European champions Real Madrid and Juventus-tipped by many to win the whole thing after signing Cristiano Ronaldo with thrilling displays that enchanted football fans across the continent.

"After beating Juventus and Real Madrid you're not afraid of anyone," Onana said in an

interview with AFP. "They (Spurs) are a very good team. They have very good players, especially on the counter where they can create problems for us. But it's up to us to handle these situations."

Cameron international Onana has been a fixture between the sticks as the Dutch giants hunt a historic treble that Ajax have not completed since Cruyff's 1972 heyday, when they won the second of three consecutive European Cups and combined that with the Dutch Cup and league title.

They are also top of the Eredivisie, although level on points with PSV Eindhoven, and take on Willem II in next month's domestic cup final. Asked by AFP if he expected Ajax to go so far in Europe, Onana said: "To be honest no! It's my first season in the Champions League, and when we qualified for the group stage it was already like 'wow!'"

Ajax's continental campaign kicked off against Austrians Sturm Graz way back in July, the first of three qualifying rounds they had to negotiate before making the groups. "We said to ourselves, there are six matches, let's see if we can hang on to the Europa League!"

Instead Ajax finished comfortably second in Group E, unbeaten and only two points behind eventual group winner Bayern Munich, and now have a realistic chance of joining the Bavarians on five European Cups after turning on the style

in the knockout rounds. "It's the philosophy of the club and it's important for us to stay true to it: control the game, keep possession... it's clear that fans have been enjoying watching it, and we have fun playing it," says Onana.

Ajax have extra motivation going into their clash at the new Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, as they know that this is the last chance for this group of players to shock everyone and snatch the biggest prize in football.

Star midfielder Frenkie De Jong will leave for Barcelona in the summer for an initial 75 million euros (\$89 million), while centre-back Matthijs de Ligt, who sent Juventus packing with a bullet header in the quarter finals, could follow his teammate to Catalonia.

After knocking out Real, coach Franck De Boer admitted that forwards Hakim Ziyech and David Neres and Onana would also all be targeted by Europe's biggest clubs come the end of the season, and the stopper wants to sign off this era with the perfect parting gift after missing out on the Europa League to Manchester United in 2017.

"It's clear that this is our objective. Not just for the goal in and of itself, but for us, because after this season, there will be a lot of players who will leave," says Onana. "It is important for us to do something big. If that means winning the treble, well that will be simply beautiful." — AFP

Zidane apologises after Madrid lose to struggling Rayo

MADRID: Zinedine Zidane apologised and said he wished Real Madrid's miserable season would end now after they were beaten by 19th-placed Rayo Vallecano on Sunday. Madrid's response to Barcelona winning the title on Saturday night was to slip to a 1-0 defeat at Vallecas and fall 18 points behind La Liga's newly-crowned champions.

Zidane took over knowing Madrid's title challenge was all-but extinguished but the difference on Barca then was 12 points while catching Atletico Madrid, now nine ahead, seemed achievable.

Adri Embarba's penalty, given after consultation with VAR, was enough for Rayo, who move to within six points of survival, with three games left to play. "Today we did nothing," Zidane said. "From minute one until the end, at all levels. Sometimes you cannot score but today we did not even create chances, did not play at all."

"We must be very angry. I am angry, because the image we gave off today was bad. I am responsible for this as well, not just the players. But we have to apologise for our performance today, all of us."

The gap widens between them and Barcelona, whose players had been dancing on the pitch at Camp Nou the night before and posing for photos with their children after wrapping up a fourth La Liga title in five years.

Asked if he would like the season to end now, Zidane said: "Yes, but we have to play these three games and do something different. We cannot end like this. It is about me as well, today what I did in the shape of the

team, it didn't work at all. We must respect football and what this club represents."

Not since March 31 has anyone except Karim Benzema, out with a hamstring injury, scored for Madrid, who created precious few chances against a Rayo side that have conceded 62 goals this term. No side in the division has shipped more.

Zidane said last week that the league would be the club's first priority from August but, even with new signings and fresh motivation, it could prove difficult to flick the switch. Madrid's winning habit has long-been lost.

Rayo's last victory over Real at Vallecas was in 1997, by the same scoreline, and this time they were without their top scorer too, Raul de Tomas, who is on loan from Madrid and ineligible to face his parent club.

Zidane handed Gareth Bale another chance but he struggled to impress while Thibaut Courtois made his first start under the Frenchman, in ahead of Keylor Navas. Rayo won their penalty in the 23rd minute as referee Pablo Gonzalez took advice from VAR before judging Jesus Vallejo to have hauled down Javi Guerra in the box. Embarba made no mistake.

Madrid wanted their own spot-kick when Mariano Diaz took a tumble from a corner but Gonzalez was unmoved, and the second half was surprisingly comfortable for Rayo. Bale's free-kick was palmed away by Garcia while Zidane threw on Brahim Diaz, Lucas Vazquez and Isco in search of some inspiration. It never came.

Beneath Madrid, La Liga's last Champions League spot remains up for grabs after Valencia, Sevilla and Getafe all endured surprise defeats earlier on Sunday. Valencia lost 1-0 at home to Eibar while Sevilla were beaten by the same scoreline away to struggling Girona, whose victory could prove crucial in their fight against relegation. — AFP

Barrie helps Avs down Sharks to even series

SAN JOSE: Tyson Barrie netted one goal and two assists, while Nathan MacKinnon and Gabriel Landeskog both collected one goal and one assist as the visiting Colorado Avalanche evened their second-round Stanley Cup playoff series with a 4-3 win over the San Jose Sharks on Sunday.

Avalanche goalie Philipp Grubauer made 31 saves to backstop his team to a victory that left the best-of-seven series tied at one win apiece. Game 3 will be in Denver today.

With his team trailing 1-0 after the first period, Landeskog pulled the Avalanche even with a nifty deflection at 8:21 of the second frame. Shortly after his team killed a penalty, Barrie used his great skating ability to elude a check before sending a point shot that Landeskog deflected from the doorstep.

Then it was Barrie's turn to light the lamp with his first NHL playoff goal and put his team ahead for good. Sharks goalie Martin Jones stopped a point shot, but the rebound caromed all the way to Barrie at the right circle, and he just got enough with his one-timer into the top corner to put the Avs ahead 2-1 at 16:31 of the second period.

That set the stage for a thrilling third period. Former Shark Matt Nieto scored for the Avalanche to make it 3-1 just past the midway point of the final period, pushing the puck over the line as Brenden Dillon thought he'd pulled it from harm's way off the goal line behind Jones. It was Nieto's third goal of the playoffs.

But Brent Burns pulled the Sharks within one with 4:34 left in regulation, sending a shot that ricocheted off Barrie's stick and into the Colorado goal. The tally came moments after Burns' point shot hit Alexander Kerfoot's skate, knocking the blade off and leaving the Avalanche temporarily with only four able skaters.

MacKinnon's empty netter with 62 seconds on the clock made it a 4-2 game and eventually became the game winner, because Burns scored with 10 seconds remaining to round out the scoring and cap a three-point game.

MacKinnon and Rantanen have each collected at least one point in six straight playoff games. Evander Kane also scored for the Sharks, who received a 28-save performance from Jones.

Warren Foegele and Nino Niederreiter



SAN JOSE: Goalie Martin Jones #31 of the San Jose Sharks makes a save with his pad against the Colorado Avalanche in Game Two of the Western Conference Second Round during the 2019 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at SAP Center. — AFP

scored 48 seconds apart in the opening moments of the third period of Game 2 of the Eastern Conference semifinals Sunday afternoon for the visiting Carolina Hurricanes, who beat the New York Islanders 2-1 to take a 2-0 series lead at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Hurricanes, who won 1-0 in overtime of Game 1 on Friday, have won four straight playoff games since falling behind the Washington Capitals 3-2 in the first round. Carolina returns home to host Game 3 Wednesday night in Raleigh, N.C.

Foegele took a long pass from Lucas Wallmark and fired a shot past Robin Lehner and off the far post just 17 seconds into the third. Niederreiter, a former member of the Islanders, redirected Teuvo Teravainen's shot just 48 seconds later.

Curtis McElhinney, playing for the first time since Apr. 6, earned the win by stopping all 17 shots he faced in relief of Petr Mrazek, who left with a lower-body injury early in the second period. Mrazek made nine saves.

Mathew Barzal scored in the first for the Islanders. Lehner recorded 16 saves.

The Islanders scored their first goal of the series in unusual fashion during a power play in the first. Barzal was credited with the goal when his pass across the crease, which was intended for Josh Bailey, ticked off the skate of Hurricanes defenseman Jacob Slavin and skittered past Mrazek with 6:43 remaining. The

Hurricanes had 1:25 of 5-on-3 action early in the second, when Jordan Eberle and Scott Mayfield were each whistled for slashing. But Carolina recorded just three shots during the power play.

The Hurricanes, who lost defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk when he took a hit from Islanders right winger Cal Clutterbuck during the game's first series, absorbed another big loss when Mrazek left 6:27 into the second. Mrazek, who appeared to be hurt lunging for a save on a shot by Leo Komarov a little more than two minutes into the period, smashed his stick against the boards as he left the ice.

McElhinney was tested immediately by the Islanders, who had the first five shots following Mrazek's exit. He turned back consecutive point-blank opportunities by Matt Martin and Mayfield shortly before the midway point of the period.

The Islanders, who had two goals waved off in Friday's loss, had another waved off with 14:22 left in the second, when Devon Toews had his shot deflected by McElhinney before kicking the puck into the net as he skated behind the cage.

The Islanders suffered another near-miss with 7:32 left in the third, when Eberle's shot banged off the crossbar and bounced into the crease but never crossed the goal line. Ryan Pulock hit the post with about a minute remaining. — Reuters

Pogba's World Cup winning boots sell for 30,000 euros

PARIS: The football boots with which Paul Pogba effectively won the World Cup for France last year were sold for 30,000 euros (\$33,470) at a Paris auction yesterday. The Manchester United midfielder, who scored France's third goal in the 4-2 victory over Croatia, had donated them to a French charity which helps high school students from tough areas.

Christie's auction house had hoped that the boots would go for between 35,000 and 50,000 euros. Pogba, who grew up on a deprived estate in the Paris suburbs, also donated the France shirt he wore during the team's victory over Iceland in the Euro 2016 quarter

final, in which he also scored. It sold for 4,000 euros—four times the estimation. And another shirt which he wore in a 2017 World Cup qualification game against Holland went for three times its estimate at 3,000 euros.

The gifted midfielder's uneven form for Manchester United has made him a target for criticism, which may explain why a shirt he wore for the club in a game against West Ham in 2017 only sold for 400 euros.

And a number of other shirts did not sell at all, including one he wore for the Italian club Juventus in their Champions League victory over Manchester City in 2015. — AFP



PARIS: A pair of shoes worn by French midfielder Paul Pogba on July 15, 2018 during the World Cup 2018 final match is displayed at Christie's auction house in Paris, three days before being auctioned to benefit "Les Etoiles de la Source", a charitable organization working towards better integration for underprivileged children. — AFP

25 Australia's Lee roars to victory at LA Open



26 Hales withdrawn from England WCup squad



27 Bayern survive penalty drama as Nuremberg keep Dortmund in title hunt



OAKLAND: Andre Iguodala #9 of the Golden State Warriors goes for jumpball James Harden #13 of the Houston Rockets during Game One of the Western Conference Semi-Finals of the 2019 NBA Playoffs at ORACLE Arena in Oakland, California. — AFP

Warriors edge Rockets 104-100

Celtics baffle Bucks in NBA playoffs

WASHINGTON: Kevin Durant scored 35 points to lead the defending champion Golden State Warriors over Houston 104-100 Sunday while Boston ripped Milwaukee in the openers of their NBA second-round playoff matchups.

Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson, each playing despite right ankle injuries, scored 18 and 13 points respectively while Andre Iguodala and Draymond Green each added 14 as the Warriors jumped ahead in the best-of-seven Western Conference playoff series.

James Harden led Houston with 35 points while Eric Gordon added 27 and Chris Paul contributed 17 in a losing cause, the Rockets hitting only 41.9 percent from the floor.

"We just made them shoot tough shots," Durant said. "I think our defense won this game."

At Milwaukee, Kyrie Irving and Al Horford sparked the Boston Celtics to a 112-90 victory. Irving had game highs

of 26 points and 11 assists while Horford scored 20 points, grabbed 11 rebounds and blocked three shots.

The Warriors had lost their two prior playoff home games to the Los Angeles Clippers before escaping the first round, but hung on down the stretch to halt that unwanted streak. Curry sank a 3-pointer to give the Warriors a five-point lead with 25 seconds remaining, but Harden answered with a dunk with lift the Rockets within 103-100 with 21 seconds remaining. Houston forced a turnover but Harden missed a 3-pointer and Paul got the rebound but then made a turnover and was ejected after a technical foul with four seconds remaining, Curry sinking a free throw to create the final victory margin.

"Just getting more opportunities," Durant said of his performance. "We've got to win every matchup. We'll bring the focus again Tuesday (for game two)."

HORFORD QUIETS GIANNIS

Boston's Horford led a solid Celtics defensive effort that shut down Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo.

"We came out and made a statement," Irving said. "We guarded Giannis really tough. We stayed very physical with him. He's so good around the rim, that mid-range area, we had to keep him out of there. I think we did a great job." Antetokounmpo led the Bucks with 22 points and grabbed eight rebounds, but much of his production came late when Milwaukee was already in a 20-point hole.

The Celtics, seeded fourth in the Eastern Conference against the club with the NBA's best record at 60-22, shot 54 percent against the league's toughest defensive squad.

Boston unleashed a 32-9 run in the third quarter, Horford scoring 11 in the spurt, to seize an 86-65 lead.

While the host Bucks made one unsuccessful run early

in the fourth quarter, they never threatened to erase that lead as they had done with a 15-point deficit in the first half. "Just coming out playing very aggressive, playing poised, understanding they are very tough to beat on their home floor," Irving said when asked about the key to Boston's success.

"It's our preparation, our focus and being there for one another. This is the time you show why you go through the ups and downs of the regular season."

The Bucks, the NBA's third-best scoring club, shot only 34.8 percent for the game. Antetokounmpo went 7-for-21 from the floor but was denied inside position by Boston's varied defensive schemes. The Greek star's teammates could not step up and offset his lost production when asked by the Celtics, who dropped two of three regular-season meetings with Milwaukee. — AFP

Van Dijk wins PFA player of year award

LONDON: Liverpool centre-back Virgil van Dijk was named as England's PFA Player of the Year for 2019 on Sunday. Van Dijk succeeded Liverpool team-mate Mohamed Salah in winning the award, voted for by his fellow players and saw off competition from Manchester City striker Raheem Sterling.

But Sterling, 24, was named the Professional Footballers' Association Young Player of the Year, following on from City colleague Leroy Sane. Van Dijk joined Liverpool from Southampton for £75 million (\$97 million, 87 million euros) in January 2018. The 27-year-old Dutchman has been an ever-present for Liverpool in their bid to dethrone City as Premier League champions this season, with Sterling's side one point clear of the Reds at the top of the table with just two games left to play. Van Dijk has starred in a hugely improved Liverpool defence that has kept 20 clean sheets and conceded a mere 20 goals in the current campaign.

"It's pretty difficult to put into words," said Van Dijk, the first defender to win the award since Chelsea's John Terry 14 years ago. "I think it's the highest honour you can get as a player to get voted player

of the year by the players you play against every week. It's special. I'm very proud and honoured to receive it."

Van Dijk, who also has a Champions League semi-final against Barcelona to look forward to this week, added: "If you see the standard of strikers or playmakers we have in the league, it's unbelievable."

England international Sterling has been praised both for his on-field performances and a willingness to speak out about football's continuing problems with racism. Arsenal Women forward Vivianne Miedema won the Women's Player of the Year award after scoring 22 times to lead the Gunners to their first title since 2012, with her and Van Dijk completing a Dutch double.

The north London side were crowned champions with a 4-0 win away to Brighton on Sunday. Miedema was also nominated for the Young Player of the Year award won by Manchester City forward Georgia Stanway.

Miedema said: "I'm obviously really proud to represent my team here. I think we've had an amazing year, especially with winning the league today." Meanwhile, the PFA's special achievement award went to Manchester City and England captain Steph Houghton.

The 31-year-old defender is set to skipper the Lionesses at this year's World Cup in France. But Houghton has said she could miss the tournament in order to care for her husband, former Liverpool midfielder Stephen Darby, who was diagnosed with motor neurone disease last year. Darby, however, is determined Houghton takes her place in manager Phil Neville's squad. — AFP



Virgil van Dijk

Raheem Sterling named player of the season by football writers

LONDON: Raheem Sterling was named the 2019 footballer of the year by the Football Writers' Association yesterday hours after missing out on the players' player of the year award. The Manchester City and England forward topped the poll of the 400-strong FWA membership as a clear winner, with 62 percent of the votes, more than 100 ahead of Liverpool defender Virgil Van Dijk.

Sterling's team-mate Sergio Aguero was in third place. On Sunday, Sterling, 24, lost out to Van Dijk in the battle for the Professional Footballers' Association award but was announced PFA young player of the year.

Sterling has been a key man in Pep Guardiola's side as they battle with Liverpool for the Premier League title and has received praise for the strong stance he has taken against racism in the game, having himself been subjected to abuse.

Sterling has scored 29 goals for club and country, including a hat-trick for England in the opening Euro 2020 qualifier against the Czech Republic at Wembley, while also helping Gareth Southgate's young squad reach this summer's Nations League Finals. Manchester City's England forward Nikita Parris won the women's footballer of the year award. — AFP