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# Kuwait calls to empower women in war-torn areas

## Justice for victims of sexual violence in conflict inseparable part of permanent peace

**NEW YORK:** Deputy of Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the UN Counselor Bader Al-Munayyekh urged world communities to boost UN peacekeeping operations, including women's empowerment in post-conflict situations. It is important to back peacekeeping missions in war-torn countries, particularly with holding sexual assault perpetrators accountable and bringing them to justice, Munayyekh said during a UNSC session Friday night.

Wartime sexual violence is one of the most heinous crimes against humanity, especially since it targets women and children and leads them to a lifetime health, mental, and physical disorder, he noted. The cumulative effects of such violence could expand to generations, rule out any chance of achieving reconciliation and peace, and destabilize societies in the short and long-terms, said Munayyekh. Terrorist organizations such as the so-

called Islamic State (IS) and Boko Haram have used sexual violence to terrorize people and finance their criminal operations, he added. Sexual assault has also been used to target ethnic and religious minorities and displace them from their original homelands, such as the case of the minority Muslim community in Myanmar, said Munayyekh.

The international community and UNSC should bear their responsibilities and do their best to stop these intentional and systematic crimes and violations against humanity, and bring their perpetrators to justice, he stressed. So far, UNSC has succeeded in laying solid standards to thwart sexual assaults in conflict situations, but it has not implemented them fully yet, said Munayyekh.

He recalled UNSC resolution 1820 (2008), which affirmed the council's intention, when establishing and renewing state-specific sanction regimes, to consider imposing "tar-

geted and graduated" measures against warring factions who committed rape and other forms of violence against women and girls. Therefore, it is important to boost cooperation with the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict in order to determine perpetrators of criminal sexual assaults and include their names in regimes' sanction lists, he added.

The state has a primary responsibility to protect its citizens from sexual violence in conflict, Munayyekh said, adding the international community and UN bodies must cooperate toward building states' potentials, boosting their security and judicial systems, and revive their civil societies. State societies also have the responsibility to denounce all forms of violence against women and children, preserve their full rights, build their abilities toward protecting themselves

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**NEW YORK:** Deputy of Kuwait's Permanent Delegate to the UN Counselor Bader Al-Munayyekh addresses the UNSC session. — KUNA

## Quebec mosque shooter gets life, no parole for 40 yrs

**QUEBEC CITY:** A 29-year-old who shot dead six worshippers at a Quebec City mosque in the worst anti-Muslim attack in the West got life in prison Friday. Alexandre Bissonnette will have to wait 40 years - longer than usual - before he can apply for parole. In his decision, Judge Francois Huot rejected a prosecution request for a 150-year sentence, which would have been the longest ever in Canada, saying "subjecting a murder to a sentence that exceeds his life expectancy" would be a cruel and unusual punishment under Canadian law.

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**Alexandre Bissonnette**

## IMF warns of high Arab public debt

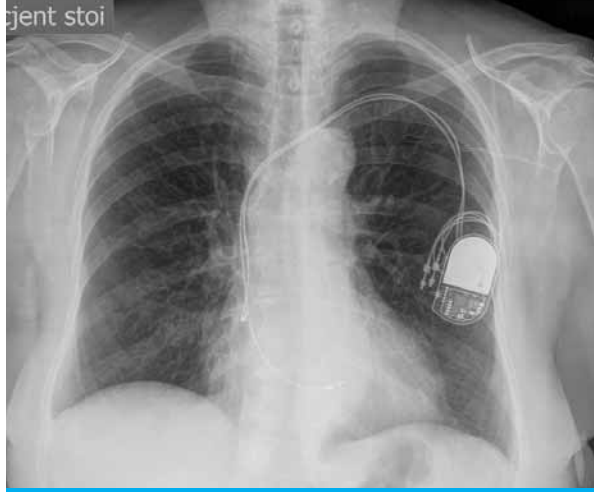
**DUBAI:** Public debt has rapidly increased in many Arab countries since the 2008 global financial crisis, due to persistently high budget deficits, the International Monetary Fund warned yesterday. "Unfortunately, the region has yet to fully recover from the global financial crisis and other big economic dislocations over the

past decade," IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said. "Among oil importers, (economic) growth has picked up, but it is still below pre-crisis levels," she told the Arab Fiscal Forum in Dubai.

Lagarde said public debt among Arab oil importing nations had increased from 64 percent to 85 percent of Gross Domestic Product in the decade since 2008. Nearly half of these countries now have public debt of over 90 percent of GDP, she said. Public debt among oil exporters - including the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council - rose from 13 percent of GDP to 33 percent

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## Central Circle and J&J make medical history in Kuwait



**Chest x-ray showing a permanent pacemaker.**

**KUWAIT:** Just a few days before one of the world's largest health and medical conferences - Arab Health - took place, Kuwait scored an important medical milestone with the first cardiac ablation treatment done in the private sector. Cardiac ablation is a complex cardiac procedure used to treat abnormal electrical activity in the heart.

Given the complex nature of the treatment, cardiac ablation is usually done by only a handful of trained cardiologists in Kuwait's public sector hospitals. But thanks to a collaboration between Kuwait's Central Circle medical company and Johnson &

Johnson Middle East, the cutting-edge treatment is now available in the private health-care sector in Kuwait.

A team of leading doctors including electrophysiologist Dr Fawzia Alkandari performed the groundbreaking and complex procedure at Hadi Hospital. The event is a major leap in the right direction in acknowledging the importance of such treatments, which shouldn't be held from patients in need. The cardiac ablation was covered by insurance. Johnson & Johnson is a top manufacturer of the ablation technology. They have partnered with Central Circle in Kuwait to bring this

innovative treatment to the private sector.

"A vital treatment such as ablation therapy should be made accessible to all those who need it," stated Dr Ziad Al-Alyan, Central Circle CEO. Dr Al-Alyan thanked the great Johnson & Johnson team and the team at Hadi Hospital for making the groundbreaking treatment become a reality. Cardiac arrhythmia is relatively common in Kuwait due to the high prevalence of heart disease in the region. Having the private sector contribute in the treatment availability reduces wait times for patients and results in better outcomes for public health in general.



**(From left) Dr Fawzia Al-Kandari, Dr Moaz Alanbael, Dr Telal Mudawi and Dr Darar Al-Khudair at the Cardiac Cath laboratory.**

### News in brief

#### Morocco recalls envoy to Saudi

**RABAT:** Morocco has recalled its ambassador to Saudi Arabia for consultations, media said on Friday. Ambassador Mustapha Mansouri confirmed the recall to pro-establishment news website Le360. He added that Morocco and Saudi Arabia are bound by strong and longstanding ties that are currently undergoing a "transient crisis". The recall is due to the airing by Saudi TV channel Al Arabiya of a documentary that diverged from the Moroccan position on the Western Sahara issue, Mansouri told Le360. — Reuters

#### \$3.1bn to help Saudi companies

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia's King Salman has approved a scheme to reimburse some of the companies who struggled to pay steadily increasing fees for expatriate work permits in 2017 and 2018 and waive the fee hikes for some who weren't able to pay, the labour minister said. The government is allocating 11.5 billion riyals (\$3.1 billion) for reimbursements under the decision, according to the royal decree. Only companies that had a higher or equal number of Saudi employees versus expats will be eligible for the reimbursement or waiver of fees, according to the decree. Companies with a lower number of Saudis compared to expats will benefit from the initiative only after they hire more locals, it said. — Reuters



**KUWAIT:** Automated jockeys are placed on camels before the 19th International Camel Race at the Kuwait Camel Racing Club yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Sex, plots and blackmail: Toxic politics behind Bezos' claims

**NEW YORK:** The stunning extortion claims made by Amazon and Washington Post owner Jeff Bezos against the Trump-friendly National Enquirer tabloid have spotlighted a fierce behind-the-scenes media feud, taking place in an ever more toxic US political climate. The story recounted by Bezos - the world's richest man - touches on political intrigue, sexual indiscretion, the murder of a Saudi journalist and bitter charges of media bias.

The supermarket tabloid last month reported Bezos had an extramarital affair with a former news anchor, publishing a trove of private text messages. The report appeared days after Bezos and his wife Mackenzie announced their divorce.

That prompted Bezos to launch an investigation into the Enquirer, and how it was able to obtain such intimate material.

In a post on the online platform Medium, Bezos said Enquirer publisher American Media Inc (AMI), led by David Pecker, a friend of President Donald Trump, was now threatening to publish intimate photos of him, if he did not call off the probe. "Rather than capitulate to extortion and blackmail, I've decided to publish exactly

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## Local

# Kuwaiti Prime Minister's visit to Jordan helps take ties to new heights

## Several agreements expected during joint committee meeting

**AMMAN:** Kuwaiti Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's visit to Jordan, due tomorrow at the invitation of Prime Minister Omar Razzaz, reaffirmed deep-rooted multi-faceted relations. The visit coincides with the joint committee meeting, which would be co-chaired by the foreign ministers and is expected to result in a number of economic, trade and investment agreements. His Highness the Prime Minister is also expected to inaugurate Kuwait Embassy's new building in Amman.

Relations between Kuwait and Jordan, established in 1961, have progressed in many domains and the two countries are committed to 57 cooperation agreements covering many areas. The two countries have been coordinating positions over many regional issues, including the Palestinian question where Kuwait and Jordan are staunch supporters of the Palestinian right of freedom and to establish their independent state on the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. Kuwait and Jordan rejected, at the Arab Summit in Saudi Arabia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, the US decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem. Kuwait, through its 2018-19 non-permanent membership in UN Security Council (UNSC) as a representative of the Arab Group, was a solid supporter of the Palestinian cause.

Kuwait believes in the vital role of Jordan in achieving peace and stability in the Middle East, and supported Amman's protection of Jerusalem. Kuwait's parliament played a leading role in supporting the Palestinian cause. Kuwait parliament speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and president of Jordan's House of Nobles Faisal Al-Fayez affirmed, during a meeting in Kuwait last month, the importance of coordination to address challenges facing the region.

### Trade relations

As for trade ties, Kuwait-Jordan trade exchange registered \$270 million in November, 2018, according to ministry of industry and trade. Jordan imports plastic, non-organic chemical materials, steel, copper, fuel and oil. Kuwait imports livestock, vegetables, nuts, eggs, dairy products and some house appliances. The two countries signed many cooperation agreements, including air services in 1975, prevention of dual taxation on income of corporates and airlines in 1985, economic and trade and technical deal in 1986, encouraging and protecting investment in 2001, land transport in 2002 and establishment of a joint committee in 2002. Kuwait and Jordan also signed tourism agreement in 2007, sea transport deal in 2009, the development of industrial exports and organization of exhibitions agreement in 2010 and a protocol to attract foreign direct investment in 2011, among many others. The number of Kuwaitis registered at Amman Chamber of Commerce is 82. They are investing \$330 million in information technology and communications, services and consultations, construction and banking.

### Top investor

Kuwait is the top Arab and foreign investor in Jordan with \$18 billion, distributed on tourism, industry, banks, telecommunication, real estate and transport. Among Kuwaiti investments in Jordan is Al-Abdali Mall of Kuwait Projects Company, KIPCO, Jordan-Kuwait Bank and Noor company. Kuwait is also investing \$1.418 billion in Amman's stock market, the third largest foreign investor, while Kuwaitis own 126 real estates in 2017, the fourth largest amongst non-Jordanians.

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) contributed to 26 economic and social development projects with a value of \$580 million between 1962-2017. KFAED is also responsible for the disbursement of \$1.250 billion, which is Kuwait's share in financing strategic and development project, part of a GCC financial package to Jordan, in sectors of agriculture, energy, minerals, roads, education, health, water and transport.

Kuwait built LNG Port that will address energy crisis, establish wind power farm in Ma'an as well as other infrastructure projects in different governorates that contributed to creation of thousands of jobs. Kuwait also offered a billion dollars for Jordan, part of \$2.5 billion economic package by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in forms of donations and loans. Kuwait deposited \$500 million at Jordan Central Bank and the rest was in forms of loans for five years. Total Kuwaiti deposits at Jordan's Central Bank is \$1.3 billion.

### Refugees' crisis

The Syrian crisis forced millions of people to flee to neighboring countries, including Jordan which is hosting around 1.3 million Syrian refugees. Kuwait rushed to help the Syrians and KFAED offered \$58 million grants in 2014-16 to support the Jordanian government's response plan. Kuwait government and private institutions offered relentless support for the Syrian refugees, either directly or via the government of Amman. Kuwait built two villages named after His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in Za'atari refugee camp, each houses more than 80,000 Syrian refugees. A village consists of 1,000 housing units, a mosque, two schools and a medical center.

On the other hand, Kuwait and Jordan enjoy good military cooperation. The two countries renewed military cooperation agreement during a meeting of the joint higher committee last March. Military cooperation began in 1974 when Kuwait opened an attache in Jordan, paving way for the training of more than 8,000 Kuwaiti servicemen in Jordanian institutions up to date. Hundreds of Kuwaitis register at Jordanian educational institutions, while over 4,200 men and women study at Jordanian universities. Kuwait Health Office in Amman is also following up cases of Kuwaiti patients in the country.

In the meantime, the head of the brotherly Kuwaiti-Jordanian commission in the Jordanian par-



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with King Abdullah II in this file photo. —KUNA



**Kuwaiti Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives an invitation from Jordanian Prime Minister Omar Razzaz to visit Jordan.**



**President of the Jordanian Senate Faisal Al-Fayez seen during a tour at Kuwait's National Assembly during his recent visit to Kuwait.**

liament MP Haitham Al-Zyadeen arrived in Kuwait yesterday. The ranking legislator, accompanied by a delegation, has just begun a four-day official visit to the country. 'Al-Dustoor' news network said the

Jordanian delegation was welcomed at the airport by the head of the mission of honor MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaiee, and the deputy Jordanian ambassador to Kuwait Fadi Al-Abadi. —KUNA

## Kuwait's envoy hands in credentials to Saudi FM

**RIYADH:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah handed in last Thursday his credentials to Saudi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Assaf, said a statement yesterday. The Ambassador met minister Assaf to hand in a copy of his credentials in a meeting in Riyadh. He conveyed greetings from Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to Assaf, added the statement. Sheikh Ali had arrived to Riyadh on Tuesday to start as the appointed Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. —KUNA



**RIYADH:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Saudi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Assaf. —KUNA

## NBK, KRCS distribute winter supplies to families in need

**KUWAIT:** The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed winter supplies for families in different areas in Kuwait including electrical appliances and necessity food items as part of its 'Winter supplies' Campaign.

This campaign aims to offer a warm winter for families facing hard weather conditions in Sulaibiya and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The campaign included distributing electrical appliances, food parcels, blankets, heaters and other home supplies.

Talal Al-Turki, NBK Public Relations Team Leader, who led the NBK field team in Sulaibiya and Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh expressed his sincere appreciation to Kuwait Red Crescent Society for its active and prompt response and efforts to be on call and help families in need.

"We are pleased and proud to be a part of this noble campaign that aims to ensure the provision of much needed aid to the people, especially children and the elderly, who have been displaced in shelters with little infrastructure to protect them from cold winter," he added.

"NBK strives to support the community and various private and public humanitarian missions and aid in meeting their needs and achieving their humanitarian and social goals," Turki noted. "This aid is part of our corporate social responsibility (CSR) pro-



gram, which seeks to support initiatives that make a profound impact on the lives of communities around Kuwait. We thank the Kuwait Red Crescent Society for their noble efforts, and the continued aide they provide to people in need," he stressed.

NBK is the strategic partner of Kuwait Red Crescent Society. NBK also took part in other humanitarian and social initiatives lead by KRCS in Kuwait during Ramadan in addition to a huge campaign targeting education for children in need.

## Kuwait's hosting of 'Al-Fahd' exhibit reflects deep ties: Envoy

**KUWAIT:** Ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al Saud said yesterday that Kuwait's hosting of the exhibition 'Al-Fahd.. Spirit of Leadership' as the first foreign station for him reflects the deep-rooted historical and close relations between the two brotherly countries. Prince Sultan said in a press statement that Kuwait's hosting of this exhibition, which enjoys Kuwaiti praise at the highest level, indicates the strength of fraternal ties between the two peoples under the leadership of the two wise countries. He added that the exhibition, which will start on Monday at the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, will be a Saudi-Kuwaiti cultural, historical and knowledge event that will deepen both countries' bilateral relations and their peoples. He pointed out that the allocation of a special pavilion for Saudi-Kuwaiti relations at the exhibition, which lasts until February 23rd, will allow visitors to see pictures displayed for the first time of kings of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait rulers. He said that the exhibition is aimed at the current generation of Gulf and Arab youth to learn about the biography of the kings and leaders, the circumstances they have lived through and the achievements they have made. He expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and His Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for their keenness to enhance the spirit of cooperation with the brothers in Kuwait in all fields, in addition to supporting the King Fahd Foundation. —KUNA



**Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Prince Sultan bin Saad Al Saud**



## Local

# Kuwait calls for amending IPU's bylaw to penalize members breaching it

## Ghanem meets UN refugee agency's protection chief



GENEVA: Kuwait National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem speaks to reporters after a preparatory meeting for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. — KUNA photos



Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with UN refugee agency's protection chief Volker Turk and the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Gabriela Cuevas Barron.



Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with members of Kuwait's mission to Geneva.

GENEVA: Kuwait National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem Friday called for amending bylaw of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in a way that imposed penalties on any member failing to comply with this bylaw. He was speaking to reporters after a preparatory meeting for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which concluded yesterday. He said they discussed a mechanism to enforce IPU's bylaw to bring about compliance by member countries, including abidance by UN resolutions "which were violated by some countries."

Kuwait therefore called on importance of amending bylaw in a way penalties are enforced on any member country failing to abide by this bylaw, said Ghanem. The preparatory meeting also discussed future of democracies in the world and relations between IPU and the UN, he said. Ghanem and Amal Al-Qubaisi, speaker of the UAE parliament, represented the Arab group in the preparatory meetings. He hoped the conference would have fruitful outcome that would be in interest of the Arab and Islamic affairs.

Meanwhile, Ghanem met with the United Nations refugee agency's protection chief Volker Turk and the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Gabriela Cuevas Barron, in Geneva yesterday. The meeting, which was held on the sidelines of Ghanem's participation in the first meeting

of the Preparatory Committee for the 5th World Conference of Parliaments Speakers, discussed a number of issues related to the Commission work in the Middle East, and how the IPU can play a bigger role by shedding light on it.

Furthermore, Ghanem held talks with his Ugandan counterpart Rebecca Kadaga on the sidelines of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. The



### Ghanem to attend Arab parliamentary meet

talks focused on the parliamentary cooperation between Kuwait and Uganda and coordination of stances of the Arab and African groups of states on the agenda topics of the committee meeting. Ghanem represents the Arab geopolitical group of states at the meeting while Kadaga represents the African one. Separately, Ghanem held a meeting with his Cypriot counterpart Demetris Syllouris, as they discussed coordination of stances on issues that would be addressed at the international convention.

In the meantime, Ghanem visited the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva where he was welcomed by Head of the Mission Jamal Al-Ghunaim and other members of the mission. He appreciated the great efforts being made by the mission to affirm Kuwait's presence at, and effective contribution to, the various activities of the Geneva-based international organizations.

Later yesterday, Ghanem arrived in Cairo to take part in a scheduled joint meeting of the Arab Parliament and chairs of the Arab parliaments, in response to an invitation by the Arab Parliament President Dr Meshaal Al-Salami. His delegation includes MPs Ali Al-Deqbasi, Askar Al-Enezi, Mohammad Al-Huwailah and Khaled Al-Otaibi. They were welcomed upon arrival by the State of Kuwait Ambassador to Egypt Mohammad Al-Dhuwaikh, the Kuwaiti Permanent Delegate at the Arab League Ambassador Ahmad Al-Bakr and a number of diplomats. The speaker flew in from Geneva, where he was seen off by Ghunaim and members of the Kuwaiti mission. The third session of the second legislative term of the Arab Parliament is scheduled on February 10-12. Salami had stated that getting countries in the region on the same page could be



Kuwaiti Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem arrives in Cairo for an Arab parliamentary meet.

achieved through an 'all-encompassing vision' that aims to keep collective security intact. Solidarity among Arab nations is needed to stave off any 'foreign meddling' that can be detrimental to their interests, Salami said amid high-level talks bringing together top lawmakers and officials from around the region. He pinpointed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the most 'perennial concern,' in addition to other Arab countries enmeshed in political and economic turmoil, naming Lebanon as a case in point. On the

challenges facing the region, the Arab world's top lawmaker cited unemployment as a lingering dilemma, besides other crucial sectors such as healthcare and education. He went on to say that a key objective in the talks is to ensure that Arab nations remain a cohesive unit in the face of these growing challenges, particularly at this critical juncture. Some of the Arab region's most notable and influential officials have turned up for the meeting, making the talks all the more significant. — KUNA

## NATO lauds Kuwait's positive role in enhancing NATO-GCC relations



BRUSSELS: Kuwait's Ambassador to NATO, the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg Jassem Al-Budaiwi pose for a group photo with NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy Alejandro Alvargonzalez and Arab ambassadors. — KUNA

BRUSSELS: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has expressed its appreciation for Kuwait's active role in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and for boosting cooperation between the 29-member Alliance and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. "I noted and expressed appreciation for Kuwait's positive and active role in the ICI Partnership, in particular as the generous host of the NATO ICI Regional Center," Alejandro Alvargonzalez, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, said yesterday. He noted that the ICI Regional Center in Kuwait "has been instrumental since its inception in enhancing our practical and political cooperation with all NATO's partner countries in the Arab Gulf."

In similar fashion last Wednesday, Alvargonzalez delivered a speech at the luncheon of Arab Ambassadors based in Brussels, hosted by Kuwait's Ambassador to NATO, the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg Jassem Al-Budaiwi at his residence. "I shared with the Arab Ambassadors present, NATO's partnerships in the MENA (Middle East North Africa) region, under our

Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative," said the top NATO official. "As we celebrate the 15th anniversary of the ICI and 25th anniversary of the MD, I noted that NATO's partnerships have allowed us to progressively enhance our political dialogue and practical cooperation, contributing to improve regional security to the benefit of all countries involved," he said. Alvargonzalez added that his presentation to the Arab ambassadors highlighted the importance of cooperative security for NATO, which is one of its main three core tasks along with collective defense and crisis management.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Budaiwi said that the luncheon came in line with the many activities organized by the Kuwait embassy in Brussels to bring the Arab world in closer connection with the international organizations and European institutions based in the Belgian capital. "Kuwait has a unique and historic relationship with NATO," he said pointing out the Kuwait was the first GCC country to join the ICI. "We are the only country outside the Euro-Atlantic area to host the regional NATO center. We are engaged with

NATO in many activities, such as workshops, training courses that not only benefit Kuwait but the ICI member countries," he said.

Budaiwi noted that the Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah last November inaugurated Kuwait's diplomatic mission inside the NATO premises in Brussels. "We are looking forward to boost and enhance our relations in every aspect," stated Budaiwi and added that Kuwait this year is planning to hold an important event to mark the 15th anniversary of the ICI. The ICI was launched at the summit meeting of NATO leaders in Istanbul in 2004 to foster practical security cooperation with Arab Gulf countries. It currently includes Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE.

In January 2017, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg led the North Atlantic Council, which included the NATO permanent representatives, in celebrating the opening of the NATO-ICI Regional Center in Kuwait. During the inauguration ceremony, the NATO Chief highlighted the Center's potential in strengthening the partnership between NATO and the Arab Gulf countries, including in the fight against terrorism. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Kuwait Martin Dvorak visited Kuwait Times recently and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

## Kuwait Airways staff covered with health insurance

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC) recently signed a contract with Boubyan Takaful Insurance Company to provide health and group insurance for its employees for 2019. The signing ceremony

was held at KAC headquarters, and attended by KAC Board Chairman Yousef Abdul Hameed Al-Jassem, KAC CEO Kamel Al-Awadhi, Boubyan's CEO and administrative affairs manager Waleed Al-Yaqout, Boubyan's executive manager Khalil Al-Shami and deputy Boubyan's CEO Abdullah Al-Towajri. Speaking on the occasion, Jassem stressed KAC's keenness of providing the best services to its staff, and said that the insurance contract was renewed to provide employees and their families with reasonably priced health services in most private hospitals.





## Local

# MP donates \$10,000 for family of Lebanese self-immolation victim

## Kuwait prepares first sustainable development report

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** MP Khalaf Dumaitheer recently donated the sum of \$10,000 plus a monthly salary to the family of Lebanese man George Zreik, who killed himself outside his children's private school in Lebanon. Notably, Zreik self-immolated in protest over depriving his daughter the right to get a score sheet because he had not paid the school fees. He died in hospital with over 90 percent burns on his body.

### Replacement plan

The Ministry of Education (MoE) administrative affairs sector urged assistant undersecretaries to prepare and hand over lists of expat teachers, social workers and office porters to be included in the replacement plans so that proper measures could be taken at least three months prior to terminating their contracts. Notably, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) had urged MoE in November to terminate the contracts of 1,186 expat teachers and administrative staff members to replace them with Kuwaitis.

### Vacant positions

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Fahd Al-Shula expressed plans to fill vacant assistant undersecretaries' positions with

ministry staff members, noting that the ministry of awqaf is full of qualified and skilled staff members capable of achieving its vision. Shula added that during his meeting



## Education Ministry urged to hire more Kuwaitis

with the ministry's supreme planning committee, he asked to adjust the charters of official missions and conferences abroad in a way that guarantees staff rights and prevent profiteering and favoritism. "Missions will be restricted to Kuwaiti employees only," he underlined.

### Extra credit

In a proactive measure to handle the state budget



MP Khalaf Dumaitheer

extra credit prior to discussing the government's proposal. Abdulsamad added that with the extra sum, the sum declared by the finance minister as the new budget would increase by KD 1,219,000,000.

### Sustainable development

Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development Khaled Mahdi urged over 20 government bodies to submit the information they have concerning executing sustainable development goals to

accounts and related parliamentary agreements, the government referred two bills to open an extra credit for the oil and health ministries in the fiscal year 2018-2019, which allows them to withdraw KD 1,219,000,000 from the state's general reserves to settle up the two accounts. Head of the parliamentary budgets and final statements committee MP

Adnan Abdulsamad said the committee would consult the State Audit Bureau on this proposal. Abdulsamad added that with the extra sum, the sum declared by the finance minister as the new budget would increase by KD 1,219,000,000.

prepare Kuwait's first report and submit it to the UN in July. Speaking while presiding the sustainable development committee's meeting which included representatives from various government bodies, NGOs, the private sector and state auditing bodies, Mahdi hailed a number of government bodies that have already submitted their data, including the defense, justice and electricity and water ministries, in addition to the National Guard, Central Bank, Kuwait University, the Public Authority for Manpower, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate and the Kuwait Credit Bank.

### List of disabilities

Head of the kinetic disability assessment committee at the Public Authority for the Disabled Dr Salem Ali Al-Kandari said the authority is fully committed to international standards on assessing a disability by specialized doctors who thoroughly examine the patient and their medical reports and tests in addition to their case history. Responding to an inquiry about disabled persons, specifically on requests to list spinal-related problems among the list of disabilities, Kandari added that some disc pains are curable except for those which have an impact on the spinal cord and nerves, as some of those may lead to paralysis and affect the patient's daily routine.

## Anti-corruption strategy

local spotlight



By Muna Al-Fuzal

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**T**he issue of corruption is not a new story or a solo incident of someone who uses his authority to seize state lands or public funds. In a press conference held by Kuwait Transparency Society announcing the results of the global Corruption Perceptions Index 2018 issued by Transparency International, it showed Kuwait ranked 78th in the world, 8th in the Arab world and fifth in the Gulf region on the index.

Of course, corruption is an offense to the country and people, and devastating if not combatted. I heard on the radio about an anti-corruption strategy launched by the Kuwaiti government. The strategy is for a period of five years from 2019 to 2024 and is based on four main axes and objectives, including 13 priorities distributed over 47 initiatives for achieving better rates in sustainable development indicators and combatting corruption.

I think the plan is a step in the right direction, but I wonder how this strategy will be implemented and who is the party that will arrest these corrupt people or agencies, regardless of their social status and positions and insist on bringing them to justice without interventions and wasta? What will be the role of the media on this issue, especially social media? I guess people may rush to voice opinions through social media either to support or reject the measures.

The chairman of the Kuwait Transparency Society said that the reasons for Kuwait's progress in the Corruption Perceptions Index are many, such as the conflict of interest law and the Cabinet decision to form a committee of 16 bodies to review the indicators and prepare the necessary measures to amend the country's ranking in the global Corruption Perceptions Index.

The comparative analysis of data on democracy in the world reveals a correlation between corruption and the level of democracy, as the index showed the weakest rate for authoritarian regimes, which registered only around 30 points in the Corruption Perceptions Index.

The Corruption Perceptions Index is related to the extent of corruption in the public sector, specifically corruption by officials, public servants and politicians. But some aspects are not measured by the index, like perceptions of citizens or their experiences with corruption.

I believe that people's views on the subject of corruption are essential. It is natural that every country in the world wants to be the first in the fight against corruption, so it is necessary to place specific measurements to take into account the experiences of the public and their opinions, and incorporate the changes they notice to be part of the final assessment of each country.

The executive director of Transparency International said the international community should make greater efforts to strengthen democracy and protect the rights of citizens, especially when corruption seeps into democratic systems and ultimately weakens them. I believe that the relationship between democracy and corruption must be studied carefully, because the two must work together to achieve real success.

Transparency International called on all governments to make real progress in fighting corruption and promoting democracy around the world, bridge the gap between the enactment of legislation on corruption, its implementation on the ground and its provisions, which will enhance political participation and control public opinion on government spending. I believe that true success in combating corruption does not come through good speeches and wishes, but practical application as an indicator of success.

## Police storm Amghara garages used to repair 'reckless drivers' cars

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Ahmadi and Jahra traffic department carried out a surprise inspection campaign in Amghara after discovering an industrial land allocated to repair sports cars was used by violators for reckless behavior. Residency violators who were repairing the cars illegally were arrested. The area was raided and 18 vehicles were found, some with Gulf plates, others forged and some without plates. A mechanic who was found without any ID was arrested.

### Ceiling collapse

The kitchen ceiling of an apartment in Salmiya collapsed, prompting Salmiya fire station to respond. They found the cause of the accident was a cooking gas leak that led to an explosion but no fire. Firemen took out the stove and gas cylinder and secured the place. Separately, firemen from the Sulaibkhat and Farwaniya fire station fought a blaze in an Andalus house. The fire, which had started on the second floor, was put out without injuries.

### Gamblers arrested

Ahmadi detectives, in cooperation with Fintas police,



This photo released by the Interior Ministry shows suspects arrested on charges of gambling.



KUWAIT: Sports cars found in a garage busted for offering to repair reckless drivers' vehicles.

sent out patrols to check for persons seen in a video circulated on social media gambling and drinking in Mahboula. Police arrested three persons in an area surrounded by trees and plants. Ahmadi detectives also arrested 14 Asians, including several who appeared in the video clip. The gambling dealer and liquor seller were also arrested.



The collapsed kitchen ceiling of an apartment in Salmiya.



Heavy damage left by a fire in an Andalus house.

## Four candidates apply on 3rd day of nomination

**KUWAIT:** A total of four candidates have submitted their applications in the third day for nomination to run for the upcoming parliamentary by-elections slated for March 16. Elections affairs department received applications of four candidates, two for the second constituency and two for the third constituency, the Interior Ministry said in a statement yesterday. The number of candidates who have so far sub-

mitted their requests stands at 16, including one woman. During an inspecting tour to the department's headquarters, Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Essam Al-Naham stressed the ministry's keenness on employing all potentials to render the balloting process a real success.

Candidates continue submitting their bids until February 16, the ministry said. On February 4, the government assigned the Interior Ministry to prepare for organizing by-elections for 2nd and 3rd constituencies on March 16 after the Court of Cassation slammed prison sentences on two MPs. The two seats became vacant after the Court of Cassation sentenced two MPs, during a session on July 8, 2018, for three and a half years behind bars. — KUNA

## Audit bureau reviews 2017-18 accounts

**KUWAIT:** After reviewing state body accounts and records for the 2017-18 fiscal year, the State Audit Bureau (SAB) advised increasing support for internal oversight bodies, encouraging accountability and corporate governance and issuing deadlines for development projects. This came as SAB discussed its findings with ministers during a meeting chaired by Deputy

Prime Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, according to a SAB statement.

The talks also grouped the minister of finance, minister of commerce and industry, minister of oil and minister of electricity and water and state minister for economic affairs. The results were based on the standards of the Vienna-based International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), a non-governmental organization which provides governments with auditing advice and know-how. Kuwait Transparency Society's report into the reasons behind Kuwait's two-spot leap on the annually-published Corruption Perceptions Index was also raised. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait National Guard celebrated the graduation of beginners that included security, administrative and practical training on shooting and fighting, in addition to physical fitness exercises.



## Local

# Fawziya Mansour Amir Ali named winner of Gulf Bank's Yearly Salary Account Draw

## Gulf Bank launches 2019 Kuwaiti Salary Offer



KUWAIT: A group photo of Gulf Bank's team.



A general view of the audience.



The 'Sons of Yusuf' band performs on stage.

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank unveiled the winner of its yearly draw for Kuwait's largest salary prize live at Al-Murooj, on Thursday February 7, 2019. Fawziya Mansour Amir Ali was announced as the winner of a cash prize of KD 250,000. The draw was held in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce.

The event kicked off at 5:00pm, and saw growing crowds participate in the fun activities on offer, with Gulf Bank's much-loved 'Catch the Cash' game proving to be a crowd favorite. Guests were also treated to a special performance by 'Sons of Yusuf' and enjoyed a selection of delicious food and beverages throughout the evening. The draw was also broadcast live on 88.8 FM Kuwait Pulse radio station.

Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communication, Gulf Bank, said: "Gulf Bank congratulates Fawziya as the winner of another successful year of the Salary Account Draw. We are also proud to announce the launch of the 2019 Kuwaiti Salary Offer, which demonstrates the ongoing com-

mitment of the bank to its customers. The event was a great success, and we would like to thank everyone for attending and taking part, we would also like to thank Sons of Yusuf for treating us to a fantastic performance on the night."

The salary account gives new customers the opportunity to receive either a KD100 cash gift upon transferring their salaries to Gulf Bank or an interest-free loan of up to KD10,000. Customers must have a minimum salary of KD500 and will be eligible for the offer following their first salary transfer to Gulf Bank. Customers can also enjoy additional benefits like a free of charge Visa or MasterCard credit card for a year, as well as a chance to apply for a loan of up to KD70,000, or a consumer loan of up to KD25,000.

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



Gulf Bank's Ahmad Al-Amir, Mohammad Al-Qattan and Lana Al-Drami with the Ministry of Commerce's representative.



## Thousands of bikers join hands to express patriotism before National Day

KUWAIT: Over 2,000 motorcyclists from the country and the wider Gulf region united in Kuwait for a drive along the Arabian Gulf Road as part of Kuwait Riders' ninth bike show, the amateur enthusiast group said on Friday. The bikers began their journey from Kuwait Towers, the country's iconic landmark, days ahead of the February 25-26 National Day celebrations. The event included a competition dedicated to the most striking-looking exterior. More than 100 bikes took part in the event, one of whom was selected to represent the Arab region at Week Bike Euro. —KUNA



## Bespoke Private Tutoring and Educational Consultancy Services for Children Aged 5-18 in Kuwait



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China protests Modi's visit to disputed area

## Instagram curbs self-harm posts after teen suicide

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This handout photo provided by Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) official website via SEPAH News shows the new 'Dezful' missile during its inauguration ceremony at an undisclosed location. — AFP

# Europe not to be trusted: Iran

## Iran celebrates 40th anniversary of Islamic Revolution

**TEHRAN:** Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday that Europe "cannot be trusted", a week after the EU launched a trade mechanism to bypass US sanctions on Tehran. "These days there's talk of the Europeans and their proposals. My advice is that they shouldn't be trusted, just like the Americans," he said at a meeting with air force officials, his website reported.

"I'm not saying we shouldn't have relations with them. This is about trust," he added. Britain, France and Germany last week launched a special payment mechanism called INSTEX to help save the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. It would allow Tehran to keep trading with EU companies in spite of US sanctions renewed after Washington quit the accord last year. Tehran has cautiously welcomed INSTEX as a "first step", but US officials said the new entity would not have any impact on efforts to exert economic pressure on Iran.

Khamenei also accused Europe of hypocrisy over human rights, criticizing France's treatment of protesters in Paris. "They (anti-riot police) attack protesters in Paris streets and blind them, then they have the audacity to make human rights requests of us," he said. Turning to the United States, Khamenei said Iranians would chant "death to America" as long as Washington kept up its hostile policies, but the slogan was not directed at the American people. "Death to

America means death to (President Donald) Trump, (National Security Advisor) John Bolton and (Secretary of State Mike) Pompeo. It means death to America's rulers ... we have nothing against the American people," he said.

**40th anniversary**

Iran celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution's victory tomorrow at a time of heightened tensions with the United States and a sharp economic downturn. On February 11, the state has organised a march to Tehran's Azadi (Freedom) Square to mark the day the monarchy was officially toppled 10 days after the triumphant return from exile of the revolution's leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

It will be a who's who of Iranian politicians and public figures, with President Hassan Rouhani expected to deliver a speech at a rally. Iran has played up this year's anniversary as 40 is symbolic of maturity in the Islamic tradition and the age at which Prophet Mohammed received revelations from God. Despite 10 days of annual celebrations launched on February 1, today's Islamic Republic faces acute economic challenges as it struggles with a mix of domestic hardships and US sanctions.

The rial has sharply devalued against the dollar, driving up prices, while the reimposition of sanctions has blocked foreign investment and limited Iran's oil sales. In response Iranian authorities have warned against "infiltrators" who would threaten the country from within and called for "national unity". Iran is also grappling with an environmental crisis, brought on by a mix of air pollution, soil erosion, drought and desertification. The country has "progressed in many areas in 40 years", its environmental organization head Isa Kalantari has said, singling out the sectors of health, industry, services and education. But its environmental track record is simply "indefensible", he warned.

**Revolution's achievements**

On the military front, a source of pride for Iran, it has timed two arms exhibitions in Tehran to coincide with the

anniversary and showcase its latest equipment and capabilities. At shows dubbed "40 years of defensive achievements", Tehran has unveiled a new made-in-Iran cruise missile which it said had been "successfully" tested. Washington and its allies accuse Tehran of working to enhance its missile capabilities, threatening the whole Middle East, although Iran insists its weaponry is solely for defensive purposes. Billboards boasting of the revolution's achievements have sprouted all across Tehran, ranking Iran first in "peaceful nuclear research in the Middle East", ninth in the world in the number of books published each year, and fifth in "cyberspace security".

In a show of technological progress, Iran last month launched a satellite called Payam (message in Persian) but it failed to reach orbit. Speculation is mounting that Iran could launch another domestically-manufactured satellite during the final phases of the annual celebrations. Iran's supreme leader, the late Khomeini's successor Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has agreed to pardon a "large number" of prisoners for this year's anniversary, according to state television. Judiciary chief Sadegh Amoli Larijani, quoted in the Iranian media, has put at 50,000 the number of prisoners to be released. Iran held over 217,000 prisoners in March 2017, according to official figures from the judiciary. — Agencies



### Khamenei accuses Europe of hypocrisy

## Turkey building collapse death toll rises to 17

**ISTANBUL:** The death toll from the collapse of an apartment building in Istanbul rose to 17 as President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday that authorities have "lessons to learn" from the incident. The eight-storey block in the Kartal district on the Asian side of the city collapsed on Wednesday but the cause is not yet clear. Erdogan yesterday visited the site and said the death toll had risen to 17 with 14 injured. The toll is up from a figure of 15 on Friday with 13 injured. "We have a great number of lessons to learn from this," the president told reporters. "We will take the necessary measures".

Dozens of rescuers worked at the site, as a crane lifted huge blocks of concrete to clear the rubble to search for the remaining victims. The president also went to the hospital to talk to the survivors, and then attended the funeral of the nine members of one family who lost their lives in the disaster. Turkish authorities said 43 people were registered as living in the building. Turkish media said three of the eight floors had been illegally built—a common practice in the metropolis of some 15 million people.

The collapse fanned criticism of a government amnesty granted last year to people accused of illegal building—a measure announced ahead of municipal elections this March. Engineers and architects regularly sound the alarm against illegal additional storeys to buildings which they say weaken the constructions' structure, and put them at greater risk in the event of an earthquake. A four-storey structure in Istanbul crumbled last year following violent thunderstorms. In January 2017, two people died when another building collapsed in a working class part of the city. — AFP

## Severe storm lashes Sydney

**SYDNEY:** Thousands of Sydney homes were without power yesterday after severe storms hit Australia's largest city, causing transport hold-ups, inundating vehicles with floodwater and delaying a national football match. Heavy rains and lightning storms lashed parts of Sydney late Friday, with close to 60 millimeters (nearly two and a half inches) of rain falling in some areas. In Sydney's west, which experienced some flash flooding, one suburb saw nearly 42 millimeters fall in a short downpour lasting just 30 minutes. "It was a slow-moving storm with that warm humid air moving along the coast... that allowed for that increase of moisture," Byron Doyle from the New South Wales Bureau of meteorology said. Images of cars submerged in floodwaters on main roads, broken traffic lights and fallen trees circulated on social media.

Energy companies reported that more than 40,000 customers were affected by power outages at the peak of the storm overnight, with more than 5,000 still without power yesterday. Emergency services fielded over 1,000 requests for assistance, including nine flood rescues in the Sydney area. The rescues were "all for vehicles in flood water," a New South Wales state emergency services spokesperson told AFP. Flights were delayed at Sydney's airport, while the storm caused havoc on some of the city's train lines.

The start of a national Australian rules football women's match was delayed twice, pushed back 45 minutes as heavy rain and lightning pummeled the oval. Several light towers then went out mid-match during the live television broadcast, temporarily



SYDNEY: Photo shows storm clouds gathering over Bondi Junction in Sydney. — AFP

stopping the game during a reported blackout. The Sydney storm comes as recovery efforts continue in Australia's flood-ravaged northeastern state of Queensland, which over the past week has seen record-breaking rainfall, forcing hundreds of evacuations and thousands of requests for help.

Extreme heatwaves during the southern hemisphere summer have also led to temperature records

being broken in some towns. Eastern inland areas have been experiencing a severe drought, while firefighters in the country's southern states have been recently battling bushfires. High temperatures are not unusual in the Australian summer, but climate change has pushed up land and sea temperatures and led to more extremely hot days and severe fire seasons, scientists say. — AFP



## Logistical snafus frustrate potential voters



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- Receptionist
- Tool Keeper
- Auto Technician
- Auto Painter
- Auto Denter
- Polisher
- Warranty Administrator
- Heavy Driver
- Light Driver

Spare Parts

- Sales Executive
- Parts Picker
- Store Keeper
- Demonstrator for Bosch Power Tools (Driving License Required )

Finance

- Cashier
- Filing Clerk
- Budget Accountant

Human Resources

- HR Coordinator
- Recruitment Officer

Administration

- Facilities Maintenance Engineer
- Purchasing Officer

Leasing Department

- Leasing Manager

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- Fleet Sales Consultant (Driving License Required )

CRM

- CRM Coordinator

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# Instagram curbs self-harm posts after teenage suicide

## Britain urges others to join Instagram’s curbs

**LONDON:** Britain has urged all social media platforms to join Instagram and curb self-harm posts after a UK teen who went online to read about suicide took her own life. The Facebook-owned picture sharing platform's ban on "graphic" content was announced following a meeting Thursday between its global chief Adam Mosseri and UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock. British teen Molly Russell took her own life in 2017. The 14-year-old's social media history revealed that she followed accounts about depression and suicide. The case sparked a vigorous debate in Britain about parental control and state regulation of children's social media use. British Prime Minister Theresa May welcomed the move "and encourages other platforms to take the same approach," her spokeswoman said Friday. Molly's parents did not directly blame Instagram for the loss of their daughter. But her father Ian cited the easy access to such posts on Instagram and Pinterest-a newer site also built around images-as a contributing factor that platforms must not ignore. "The more I looked (into her online accounts), the more there was that chill horror that I was getting a glimpse into something that had such profound effects on my

lovely daughter," Ian Russell told The Times last month. He called Instagram's decision Thursday "encouraging". "I hope that the company acts swiftly to implement these plans and make good on their commitments," Ian Russell said.

**Cry for help**  
Instagram's Mosseri said the changes followed a comprehensive review involving experts and academics on children's mental health issues. "I joined the company more than 10 years ago and we were primarily focused on all of the good that came out of connecting people," Mosseri told The Telegraph newspaper. "But if I am honest we were under-focused on the risks of connecting so many people. That's a lesson we have learned over the last few years."

Instagram has never allowed posts that promote or

encourage suicide or self-harm. But it will now ban "graphic self-harm" images and remove references to less explicit posts about people hurting themselves from its searches

### Teen who went read about suicide took her life

people who may be in distress and posting self-harm related content as a cry for help."

**'Careful regulation'**  
Social media platforms are coming under increasing

scrutiny as they expand in reach and cultural influence. Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said last year that he thought more regulation of the industry was "inevitable" because of the internet's size. "My position is not that there should be no regulation," Zuckerberg told an April 2018 US congressional hearing. "But I also think that you have to be careful about regulation you put in place." Instagram's Mosseri told The Telegraph that he supported statutes being considered by the British government "as a concept".

"There is a lot of regulation already," said Mosseri. "We think it's important to collaborate with policymakers so that ... whatever legislation or processes they put in place work, make sense." The UK government will this month publish a "white paper" on harmful online behavior that will be used as guideline for possible oversight rules. "The task is to design a system of oversight that preserves what is best and most innovative about the online companies but which also insists that they do what they can to keep the users of their services safe," Culture Minister Jeremy Wright wrote in The Times. — AFP

### News in brief

#### US Muslim executed

**WASHINGTON:** A US Muslim man has been executed after the Supreme Court denied a request to halt the sentence over his demand to be accompanied by an imam to the death chamber. Domineque Ray, 42, was put to death in the southern state of Alabama for the 1995 rape and murder of Tiffany Harville, 15. "Due to the nature of his crime, the decision of a jury to condemn him to death and because our legal system has worked as designed, Mr Ray's sentence was carried out," Alabama Governor Kay Ivey said in a statement. The execution occurred Thursday after the country's highest court denied a request for a stay of execution. Alabama carries out the death penalty by lethal injection. The Supreme Court's ruling lifted a last-minute stay which Ray had won on Wednesday from a federal appeals court. — AFP

#### 7 Muslim men jailed

**NEW DELHI:** An Indian court has sentenced seven Muslim men to life in prison for the murder of two Hindu men in 2013 in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, an incident that had sparked religious riots killing about 65 people and displacing thousands. The riots began in the district of Muzaffarnagar, 130 km northeast of New Delhi, and spread to other areas in the country's most populous state months before the 2014 election won by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist party. A court in Muzaffarnagar sentenced the men after they were found guilty of killing the two Hindus in the village of Kawal on Aug. 27, 2013, prosecutor Rajeev Sharma said. — Reuters

#### 5 killed in Ukraine

**DONETSK:** Pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine said yesterday that four of their fighters had been killed by Kiev's forces, while Ukraine announced the death of one of its soldiers. The toll in the last 24 hours was the highest since the latest fragile ceasefire entered force in the war-torn region on December 29. The conflict between the Ukrainian government and breakaway Moscow-backed rebels began in 2014 after Moscow annexed Crimea and has already claimed some 13,000 lives. Senior rebel representative Eduard Basurin said that four fighters were killed by Ukrainian forces on Friday in the south of the Donetsk region. He said no civilians were injured. Dmytro Gutsulyak, press secretary of Ukraine's defense ministry, said at a briefing yesterday that "one of our troops was killed" on Friday as rebels carried out nine "provocative shellings" of Ukrainian positions. — AFP

#### Massive drug bust

**SYDNEY:** Australian and US authorities yesterday announced they had seized around a billion dollars worth of methylamphetamine-or "ice"-in a bust that revealed new ties between Mexican cartels and Aussie biker gangs. The Australian Federal Police said that a joint investigation led the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement to uncover 1.7 tonnes of drugs in California last month. US authorities said the illicit cargo-with a street value of A\$1.29 billion, or US\$900 million-was hidden in two shipping containers carrying audio equipment bound for Australia. After a series of raids this month, two US nationals and four Australians were arrested this week in the Melbourne and Sydney areas. They face various charges, including attempting to import illegal drugs, and face maximum sentences of life in prison in Australia if convicted. — AFP

#### Palestinian arrested

**JERUSALEM:** A Palestinian suspected of having killed a young Israeli woman has been arrested in a raid in the West Bank city of Ramallah, an Israeli police spokesman said yesterday. The body of Ori Ansbaher, 19, was found on Thursday evening in the south of Jerusalem, and she was buried on Friday in the Israeli settlement of Tekoa. The suspect comes from the flash-point city of Hebron in the south of the occupied West Bank, police said. All other details of the woman's killing remain the subject of an Israeli gag order. Previous Israeli statements about her murder came only from top diplomats and politicians. Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, accused the UN Security Council of staying silent in the face of what he charged was the complicity of the Palestinian Authority (PA) of president Mahmud Abbas in such attacks. — AFP

## Jihadists get life for deadly 2015 Tunisia attacks

**TUNIS:** A Tunisian court has sentenced seven jihadists to life in prison over attacks at a museum and on a beach in 2015 that killed 60 people, many of them British tourists, prosecutors said yesterday. Dozens of defendants faced two separate trials over the closely linked shootings, which occurred just months apart in Tunis and Sousse, but many were acquitted. Four were sentenced to life in prison for the shooting rampage at a Sousse tourist resort in June 2015, which killed 38 people, mostly British tourists.

Five other defendants in the Sousse case were handed jail terms ranging from six months to six years, while 17 were acquitted, prosecution spokesman Sofiene Sliti said. Three were given life sentences for the earlier attack in March 2015 at the capital's Bardo National Museum, in which two gunmen killed 21 foreign tourists and a Tunisian security guard. Others found guilty of links to the Bardo attack were sentenced to prison terms ranging from one to 16 years, and a dozen defendants were acquitted, Sliti said.

The prosecution will appeal, he added. One of the lawyers for relatives of French victims in the Bardo attack, Gerard Chemla, expressed "enormous bitterness" that the families had not been given more input into the proceedings. He said a live feed of Friday's hearing had brought some degree of comfort but lamented that the relatives of those killed had not been compensated. Chemla said he was "satisfied" that the court had handed down no death sentences, even though Tunisia retains the death penalty for terrorism offences despite carrying out no executions since the 1990s.

**'Duty to IS'**  
The court heard that the two attacks, both claimed by the Islamic State group (IS), were closely linked. Several defendants pointed to the fugitive Chamseddine Sandi as mastermind of both. According to Tunisian media, Sandi was killed in a US air strike in neighboring Libya in February 2016, although there has been no confirmation. Among those who were facing trial were six security personnel accused of failing to provide assistance to people in danger during the Sousse attack. That shooting was carried out by Seifeddine Rezgui, who opened fire on a beach before rampaging into a high-end hotel, where he continued to fire a kalashnikov and throw grenades until being shot dead by police. Four French

## 15 killed in New Year knife rampage and arson attack

**BEIJING:** Fifteen people were killed in China on the night of the Lunar New Year in two family tragedies, after one man started a fire and another went on a knife rampage. As people celebrated to welcome in the Year of the Pig Monday night, a man surnamed Lu set fire to the home of his brother in the northern province of Shaanxi, killing seven, according to police in the town of Baoji. The brother, his wife, their

fathers and their three children died in the blaze, police said on the Twitter-like Weibo platform. A few hours after the incident police arrested the suspect, who had just tried to kill himself. During the same night, a man surnamed Guo, who suspected his wife of adultery, stabbed eight people to death and injured seven in a village in the northwest province of Gansu, according to police in the commune of Baiyin. The man, aged 49, has been arrested. The identities of the victims have not been released. Knife attacks are common in China, where the carrying of firearms is strictly regulated. Violent crime has been on the rise as the economy has boomed in recent decades and the gap between rich and poor has widened rapidly. Studies have also described a rise in the prevalence of mental disorders, some of them linked to stress as the pace of life becomes faster and support systems wither. — AFP



**BEIJING:** People burn incense as they pray for good fortune at the Yonghegong, or Lama Temple in Beijing on the fifth day of the Lunar New Year. — AFP



**TUNIS:** In this file photo, roses are seen on bloodstains in front of the National Bardo Museum in Tunis on March 19, 2015 during a demonstration in solidarity with the victims of an attack on the museum. — AFP

nationals, four Italians, three Japanese and two Spaniards were among those killed in the Bardo attack, before the two gunmen, armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, were themselves shot dead. Investigations showed one of the gunmen, Yassine Laabidi-who was born in 1990 and was from a poor district near Tunis-had amphetamines in his body. His fellow attacker Jaber Khachnaoui, born in 1994 and from Tunisia's deprived Kasserine region, had travelled to Syria in December 2014 via Libya.

One suspect questioned in court, Tunis labourer Mahmoud Kechouri, said he had helped plan the Bardo attack, including preparing mobile phones for Sandi, a neighbor and longtime friend. Kechouri, 33, said he was driven by a "duty to participate in the emergence of the caliphate," that IS supremo Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi proclaimed in June 2014 across swathes of territory the jihadists controlled in Iraq and neighboring Syria. Other defendants accused of helping prepare the attack said they had only discussed ideas with friends. Several alleged they were tortured in detention.

**'Helps turn the page'**  
Survivors and relatives in France and Belgium, who

watched the live feed of Friday's hearing, said it had helped them to turn the page. "It was important for us to see, and especially to hear-to try to understand the role" of each defendant, said one French survivor. "Arriving at the end of the process will help us to turn the page, even if we can never forget." The Sousse attack, which killed 30 Britons, is also the subject of proceedings in front of the Royal Courts of Justice in London, which is seeking to establish what happened. After holding inquests into the British deaths in January and February 2017, judge Nicholas Lorraine-Smith concluded that the response of Tunisian police was "at best shambolic, at worst cowardly".

There have been significant improvements in security at Tunisian tourist resorts since the massacre and, in July 2017, Britain lifted its warning against "all but essential travel" to the North African country. The attacks and resulting travel warnings dealt a devastating blow to Tunisia's vital tourism sector from which it has taken time to recover. Since a 2011 uprising that toppled dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, jihadist attacks in Tunisia have killed dozens of members of the security forces. Thousands of Tunisians have also travelled abroad to join jihadist organizations, according to the United Nations. — AFP

## US in contact with Venezuelan army, urging defections

**WASHINGTON:** The United States is holding direct communications with members of Venezuela's military urging them to abandon President Nicolas Maduro and is also preparing new sanctions aimed at increasing pressure on him, a senior White House official said. The Trump administration expects further military defections from Maduro's side, the official told Reuters in an interview, despite only a few senior officers having done so since opposition leader Juan Guaido declared himself interim president last month, earning the recognition of the United States and dozens of other countries.

"We believe these to be those first couple pebbles before we start really seeing bigger rocks rolling down the hill," the official said this week, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We're still having conversations with members of the former Maduro regime, with military members, although those conversations are very, very limited."

The official declined to provide details on the discussions or the level at which they are being held, and it was unclear whether such contacts could create cracks in the Venezuelan socialist leader's support from the military, which is pivotal to his grip on power. With the Venezuelan military still apparently loyal to Maduro, a source in Washington close to the opposition expressed doubts whether the Trump administration has laid enough groundwork to spur a wider mutiny in the ranks where many officers are suspected of benefiting from corruption and drug trafficking.

Members of the South American country's security forces fear they or their families could be targeted by Maduro if they defect, so the US would need to offer them something that could outweigh those concerns, said Eric Farnsworth, vice president of the Council of the Americas think tank in Washington. "It depends on what they're offering," Farnsworth said. "Are there incentives built into these contacts that will at least cause people to question their loyalty to the regime?" Guaido says the May 2018 vote in which Maduro won a second term as president was a sham and on Jan. 23 invoked a constitutional provision to declare himself president, promising free and fair elections.

The US government also sees European allies as likely to do more to prevent Maduro from transferring or hiding Venezuela government assets held outside the country, the U.S. official said. Major European countries have joined the United States in backing Guaido but they have stopped short of the sweeping oil sanctions and financial measures that Washington has imposed. — Reuters



## International

# Nude protest and black flags greet India's Modi in Assam

## China protests Modi's visit to disputed area

**GUWAHATI:** A second day of protests yesterday tainted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to northeast India where proposals to change a nationality law have sparked outrage. Protesters waved black flags and burned effigies of the Hindu nationalist prime minister while some students staged a nude protest outside the state government complex in the Assam capital of Guwahati. Media reports said the nude protesters were detained while Assam student groups said police baton charged another group of activists.

Black flag protests—considered a strong insult—greeted Modi when he arrived in Guwahati on Friday night to start the tour of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura as he prepares to call a national election. His nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has faced a severe backlash in the region over a proposed change to a 1955 citizenship act which would give Indian nationality to Hindus and other minorities who have fled the neighboring Muslim countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Assam, a state of 33 million, has been plagued by decades of tensions between local tribal and indigenous groups and settlers from outside, including many Muslims and Hindus from nearby Bangladesh. Modi insisted that his government will ensure that the amended law does not harm Assam and neighboring states however. Addressing one public rally,

he said the bill, which still needs approval from India's upper chamber, was a “national commitment” to the minorities.

“The passage of the bill will ensure that those people who... love India more than their lives will be accommodated in India. It is a responsibility of India to accept those people,” he said. Modi said citizenship will only be granted after thorough checks on each applicant. While groups in Assam want to block all outsiders, human rights activists have condemned the government law for not covering Muslims. They say it will be the first time religion has been a criteria for nationality in India, which is officially secular.

Last year the Assam government released the first draft of a state citizens' register that rejected four million mainly Muslim residents who were unable to prove they were living in the state before 1971, when millions fled Bangladesh's war of independence. Modi said that his government was speeding up efforts to seal the India-Bangladesh border. An election is expected to be called for April-May and the BJP's hopes in the northeastern states have been badly damaged by the new law, analysts said.

### China protests

In another development, China yesterday protested the visit by Indian Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, a contested region located on the border between the two countries. “The Chinese government has never recognized the so-called ‘Arunachal Pradesh’ and is firmly opposed to the Indian leader's visit,” Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a statement.

“China urges the Indian side to... refrain from any action that may lead to the escalation of disputes or complicate the boundary question,” added Hua, some hours after Modi's visit to the contested area, during which he inaugurated building work for two airports. Relations between New Delhi and Beijing have been marked by distrust since a brief but bloody 1962 border war, during which the two fought over Arunachal Pradesh, with Chinese troops temporarily capturing part of the Himalayan territory. The dispute remains unresolved, with India considering Arunachal Pradesh one of its northeastern states while China claims about 90,000 square kilometers of the territory.

“Indian leaders visit Arunachal Pradesh from time to time, as they visit other parts of India. This consistent position has been conveyed to the Chinese side on several occasions,” India's foreign ministry said in a statement yesterday. In 2017, the two Asian giants were involved in a high-altitude standoff in Bhutan's Doklam region after the Indian



**NEW DELHI:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi makes remarks at an inauguration event for development projects in Itanagar in northeastern Arunachal Pradesh state. India lost territory in Arunachal Pradesh to China in a 1962 war and tensions remain high between the neighbors as both sides claim parts of the rugged border region. —AFP

army sent troops to stop the construction of a military road by China. After two tense months, the troops from both countries withdrew and last April, Modi met with Xi Jinping in an effort to reset bilateral relations. —Agencies

## India's Jet Airways grounds 4 planes

**MUMBAI:** India's Jet Airways has grounded four planes after failing to pay lessors, the airline said, in the latest evidence of financial distress at the debt-laden carrier. The airline-India's second-largest by market share—is buckling under the weight of debts worth \$1.1 billion and is urgently seeking funds to continue flying.

The Mumbai-based carrier has been badly hit by fluctuating global crude prices, a weak rupee and fierce competition from budget rivals which has sparked price wars. Millions of dollars have been wiped off its market capitalization over the past year. “Four aircraft have been grounded due to non-payment of amounts outstanding to lessors under lease agreements,” the carrier said in a statement to the Bombay Stock Exchange late Thursday.

“The company is actively engaged with all its aircraft lessors and regularly provides them with updates on efforts undertaken by the company to improve its liquidity,” it added. Jet Airways first hit turbulence in August when it failed to report its quarterly earnings or pay its staff, including pilots, on time. Chief executive Vinay Dube later reported a loss of \$178 million for July-September and announced a cost-cutting programme amounting to 20 billion rupees (\$280 million) over the next two years. In January the airline admitted it had failed to meet debt payments to banks as it seeks investment to help turn around its fortunes.

Jet has been in talks with Etihad Airways over an injection of cash that would see the Abu-Dhabi-based airline increase its stake. Jet is also in negotiations with India's biggest lender, the State Bank of India, about turning debt into equity. India's passenger numbers have grown six-fold over the past decade and the country's aviation sector is projected to become the world's third-largest by 2025. But airlines—including India's largest by market share, IndiGo—and loss-making national carrier Air India are struggling to turn demand into profit. —AFP

## Pakistan begins behind-scenes aid to US-Taleban talks

**WASHINGTON:** Pakistan, long at odds with the United States over the war in Afghanistan, has begun to play a behind-the-scenes but central role in supporting US peace talks with the Afghan Taleban, including by facilitating travel to negotiations, US officials and Taleban sources said. The Pakistani assistance, which has not been reported in such detail before, also includes exerting pressure on Taleban leaders who fail to cooperate, including by detaining members of the militants' families, the insurgents say.

Pakistan's role in the peace negotiations is a delicate one, with Islamabad seeking to avoid demonstrating the kind of broad influence over the Taleban that Washington has long accused it of having. Sources caution its help could be temporary. The Taleban also do not want to appear beholden to Islamabad, which has long denied US accusations that it provides safe haven and assistance to insurgents as a way to preserve influence in neighboring Afghanistan throughout its more than 17-year-old war. US President Donald Trump has repeatedly signaled his intention to wind down America's longest conflict, declaring this week in his State of the Union address that “great nations do not fight endless wars.” One senior US official, who declined to be identified, said of Pakistan's role in the talks: “We know it just wouldn't be possible without their support.” “They've facilitated some movement and travel to the discussions in Doha,” the official said.

Trump's administration has accelerated talks for a political

settlement in Afghanistan. US peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad held six days of talks — perhaps the most productive to date — with the Taleban in Doha last month and is due to meet Taleban representatives again on Feb 25. Speaking after Reuters reported the shift, Khalilzad confirmed at a forum in Washington that “there is a positive change in recent times” by Islamabad. “Pakistan has tried to facilitate talks between the Taleban and the United States and also favors inter-Afghan dialogue including between the Taleban and the (Afghan) government,” he said.

Taleban sources said Pakistan's role in bringing the Taleban to the negotiating table was instrumental. In one instance, Islamabad sent a message to the militants through religious leaders that they had to talk to the United States or risk a cut-off in ties. They detained Taleban members' families as a way to pressure them, a Taleban leader said. “I haven't seen Pakistan so serious before,” the senior Taleban leader said. The Taleban leader, who declined to be identified, said Pakistan had kept “unprecedented pressure” on the militants and their close relatives over the past few months.

“They made it clear to us that we (Taleban) have to talk to the US and Afghan government,” the Taleban leader said. To be sure, current and former US officials still are highly skeptical of Islamabad and do not see any steps by Pakistan that could not be easily reversed. Washington appears for now to be sticking to a total freeze in US assistance to Islamabad imposed over a year ago over its suspected support to the Taleban. Trump at the time accused Islamabad of rewarding past US aid with “nothing but lies & deceit.”

“There's some self-interest obviously involved here ... I would be wary of taking that and extrapolating off that and saying they're now on board with the peace process,” said Jason Campbell, who was the Pentagon's Afghanistan country director until last year and is now at the RAND Corporation

think-tank. Afghanistan's envoy to Washington, Roya Rahmani, said that any Pakistani shift in behavior was still not apparent from Kabul, which has yet to participate in the talks. “For us, it still remains to be seen,” she told Reuters in an interview.

### Pullout pressure

Pakistani sources suggest that the driver behind their country's support for the talks is not US aid but growing concerns over the regional economic shockwaves that could follow an abrupt US pullout from Afghanistan. Those concerns have been strengthened by Trump's surprise decision in December to withdraw completely from Syria, despite objections from the Pentagon. There are only about 14,000 US troops in Afghanistan, but their presence ensures a continuous flow of US financial assistance to Afghanistan. Islamabad, running short of foreign exchange reserves and in talks with the International Monetary Fund over what would be its 13th bailout since the 1980s, says it cannot afford to see Afghanistan slide into chaos just as Pakistan is trying to attract foreign investors to shore up its own economy. “That is our main worry in all of this,” said a senior official who is closely involved in cross-border relations. “We have enough economic issues of our own to deal with already.” One of the most notable public signs of Pakistan's willingness to aid the negotiations was the release of Taleban leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar.

Now the newly appointed chief negotiator, Baradar is expected to fly from Pakistan to attend the next round of negotiations in Doha on Feb 25. Dan Feldman, a former US special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, said he believed Washington was still hesitant to become too hopeful about Pakistan's change in posture. “There is cautious appreciation for the fact that Pakistan has seemingly done more than before to be helpful,” Feldman said, before adding that it did not “suggest a sea change in Pakistan's position.” —Reuters

## New Zealand village ‘in hands of God’ as fire threatens

**WELLINGTON:** An entire village of more than 3,000 people was evacuated in New Zealand yesterday as a huge

bushfire threatened houses, and firefighters said they were “in the hands of God”. A state of emergency has been declared around the town of Wakefield as the fire, which has been raging across parched countryside in the Nelson region, at the top of the South Island, moved within 10 kilometres (six miles) of the residential area. It had swept across about 2,100 hectares of

mainly bush and pine forest since erupting in the tinder-dry rural district on Tuesday.

The regional police commander, Zane Hooper, confirmed they had successfully completed “the orderly evacuation of Wakefield”, while fire chief John Sutton said the critical danger point could come today. “I'm worried about tomorrow, to be honest,” Sutton said. “We are in quite

a good place strategically today, but we are in the hands of God when it comes to the wind. If we have winds that are anywhere near 50 kilometres (30 mph) today, we're in trouble.” Helicopters being used to fight the fire have at times been diverted to douse other flare-ups in the region, including one on tree-covered hills bordering Nelson city which is home to about 50,000 people. —AFP



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## Washington Watch

## Events surrounding Pope Francis' UAE visit were important

By Dr James J Zogby

This past week, I delivered one of the opening addresses at a conference in Abu Dhabi dedicated to creating understanding and building relationships and mutual respect among the world's religious leaders. The conference coincided with Pope Francis' historic visit to the United Arab Emirates and his signing with the Sheikh al Azhar, Ahmed Al-Tayyeb, of a document committing them both to working to build "Human Fraternity".

I was pleased to have been there and to have had the opportunity to participate in these events - because if I had to rely on the Washington Post's non-account of the Pope's visit, I would never have understood the significance of what transpired over those three historic days.

The New York Times was the only US daily to cover the visit - and its treatment was mostly fair. The Times did address the importance of the visit, while still insisting on seeing the combination of the Pope and the UAE as convenient pegs for remarks about the UAE's opulence, the war in Yemen, the Catholic church's sex abuse problem, and Pope Francis' conflicts with his conservative opposition.

All of those issues are important and should be covered (or it may be more correct to say "have been covered many times over"), but certainly not at the expense of diluting the enormity of what was unfolding during Francis' short visit.

In the first place, the Pope came to the Arabian Peninsula, to a Wahhabi Muslim country, to celebrate mass in a stadium - with 35,000 in attendance inside the stadium and another 100,000+ assembled outside. This was too big and too historic to be dismissed, as some suggested, as a PR stunt by the UAE to "burnish their image as a tolerant society that promotes religious freedom" or as a way for the Pope distract attention from the church's sex abuse scandal.

How big was it? Just ask the UAE's nearly one million Catholics. For them, it was not only the excitement of seeing their beloved Francis, it was also a validation of their faith and as a clear message as could be ever be sent that their freedom of religion is secure in the UAE. What they found especially heartening was the fact that the UAE government ministers attended the mass and exchanged with others the "kiss of peace" as a gesture of solidarity.

These weren't the first such signs of respect shown by the UAE for the Christian community. In the mid-1960s Sheikh Zayed built the first church for Catholic expats living in Abu Dhabi. There are currently 40 churches (and, in addition to Catholics, there are Protestants, Orthodox, and Evangelicals). And UAE government officials frequently attend services on Christmas and other special events. In the face of growing concerns with extremism and violence against Christians, the Pope's visit and the reaffirmation of official support for the community were deeply affirming.

On the day before the Mass in the Zayed Stadium, Pope Francis and the Sheikh al Azhar cosigned the Abu Dhabi Declaration - entitled a "Document on Human Fraternity". In that document, both clerics call on their co-religionists to "stop using religion to incite hatred, violence, extremism, and blind fanaticism and to refrain from using the name of God to justify acts of murder, exile, terrorism, and oppression".

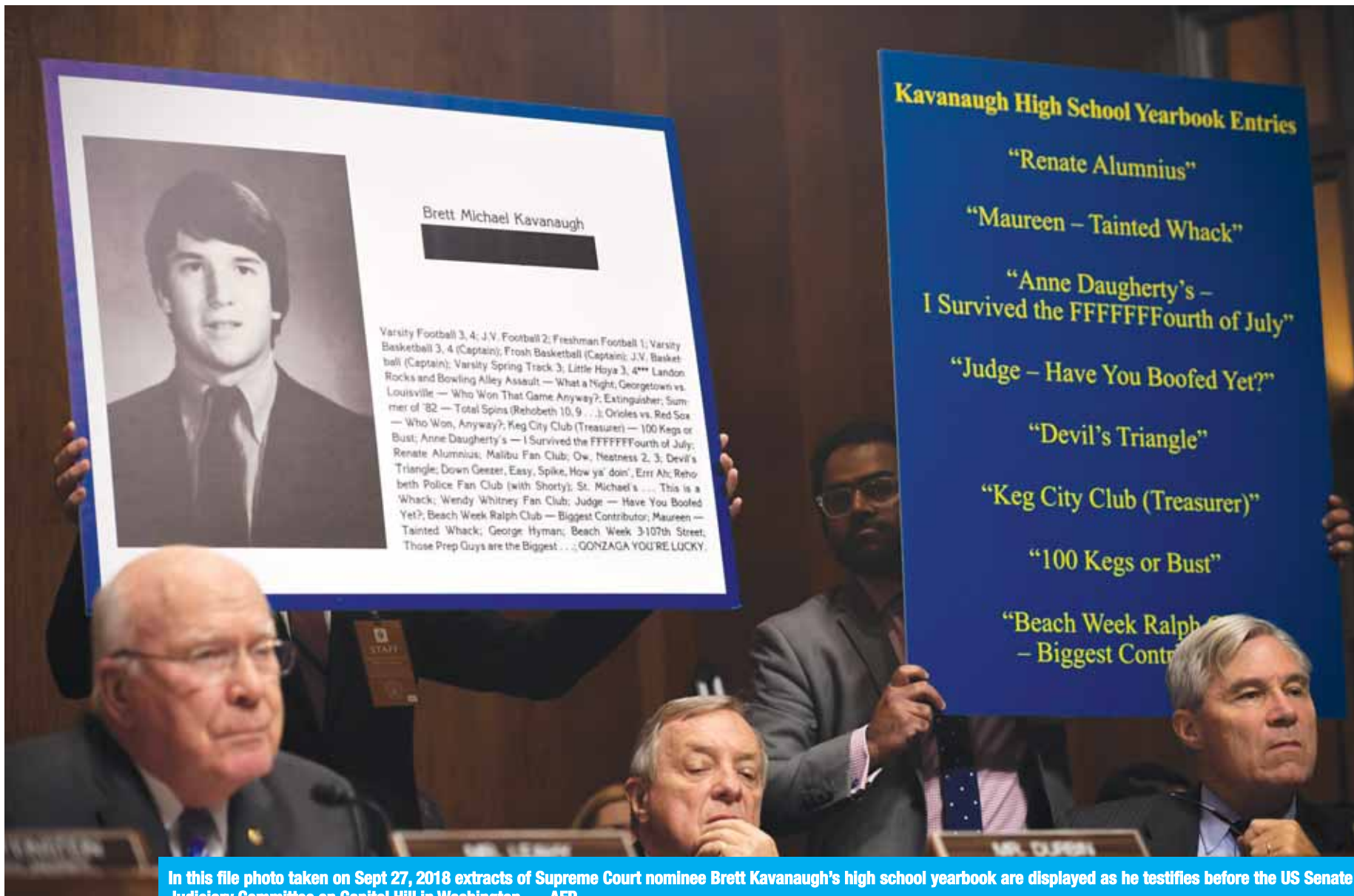
In his statement before signing the Declaration, Tayyeb urged countries in the region to "Continue to embrace your brothers from Christian sects everywhere, as they are our partners in the homeland." Christians, he added should not be viewed as "minorities", but as equal citizens. In his remarks Pope Francis not only spoke out against the scourge of war, specifically mentioning devastating conflicts in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Libya, he also echoed the Imam's call for "societies where people of different beliefs to have the same rights of citizenship."

The Declaration affirms this point, saying "The concept of citizenship is based on equality of rights and duties, under which all enjoy justice. It is therefore crucial to establish in our societies the concept of full citizenship and reject the discriminatory use of the term minorities which engenders feelings of isolation and inferiority."

There is no doubt that these two prominent figures meeting and committing to work to promote religious freedom, mutual respect, and full inclusion of all faiths as equal citizens in their countries can have an impact. But the "icing on the cake" was the two day long "Conference on Human Fraternity" - a gathering of 600 religious leaders and opinion shapers that concluded with the meeting of the Pope and Sheikh. Among the participants were Christians, of all denominations, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains.

In recent years, there have been a number of inter-faith sessions in the UAE involving the three Abrahamic faiths. This effort, however, was more expansive and its rhetoric was bolder in scope. It was about finding the common ground and respect necessary to build a human family.

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



## Yearbook: US politicians' ticking time bomb

Hidden away in dusty drawers or stuffed in boxes long forgotten in the attic, a danger lurks for US politicians: their yearbooks. Often featuring the frat boy humor - or worse - of their youthful selves, the collections of old photos and writings are coming back to haunt America's elected leaders. The latest high-profile victim has been Virginia's Democratic Governor Ralph Northam, whose medical school yearbook featured a photograph of a person in blackface next to another dressed in a Ku Klux Klan robe and hood.

As pressure mounted on him to quit, one of the men in line to replace him, Virginia's attorney general Mark Herring, admitted that he too had painted his face black in his school days. The scandal came just months after Brett Kavanaugh almost saw his nomination to the Supreme Court derailed by allegations of sexual assault when he was in high school, a charge that led to his school yearbook being gone over with fine-toothed comb.

Yearbooks - relics of a pre-digital age when people wrote postcards and took photos on actual cameras, rather than posting on social media - feature pictures of classmates and parties, school trips, fraternities and moments of sporting glory. Students usually have a personal page where they pose with their best friends, reminisce about their school days, or feature dedications or verse.

## White coats, white hoods

In the 1984 yearbook of the Eastern Virginia Medical School, there are plenty of pictures of young interns in white doctors' coats, smiling at each others' waiting room

quips. But there are also images of the white robes and pointed hoods used by the KKK, a racist organization that terrorized black communities in the American South. Northam's page features a picture of someone in KKK attire, standing next to another person in blackface, the makeup used once used to mock and belittle African Americans.

After initially admitting he was in the picture, the governor then denied he was one of those in the image. He has resisted mounting pressure from his own party to resign, yet seems unlikely to survive in his post for long. The scandal has prompted a wave of scrutiny of yearbooks from past decades, bringing other similarly racist material to light.

Kavanaugh's high school yearbook was dusted off last September during confirmation hearings after President Donald Trump nominated the conservative judge to the highest court in the land, prompting a California professor to accuse him of having sexually assaulted her when she was 15 and he was 17. The allegations brought his yearbook - from an expensive Catholic school in Bethesda, just outside the capital Washington - under humiliating scrutiny, bringing to light the binge drinking and sexual mockery of female classmates that the wealthy schoolboys indulged in.

The yearbook convinced many critics that he did not have the right character to take a seat on the Supreme Court, and the case split the country before Kavanaugh was finally nominated, after a tearful defense before Congress. He joined eight other justices on the bench, including Sonia Sotomayor, who was herself criticized dur-

ing her confirmation hearings because in her Princeton yearbook, she had quoted Norman Thomas, a former presidential candidate who ran on a Socialist Party ticket.

The exhumation of these yellow-paged mementos has raised the question among political observers: is there an expiry date on the errors of youth, and is a 55-year-old to be held accountable for the actions of their 18-year-old selves?

## A History of Racism

Behavior that today would meet with instant opprobrium would have quite often been unremarkable in the past, noted Philip Cohen, a sociology professor at the University of Maryland. Students in the 1980s "were the children of people raised in the 1940s and 1950s, the era of Jim Crow segregation. They grew up with legal job and housing discrimination," he said. "Outside of the historically black colleges, there was no black president of a major university or college until 1995," he noted, adding that in 1980, "the House of Representatives was four percent black and there were no black US senators. Half of adults opposed the new federal Martin Luther King holiday in 1983."

Back then, Cohen said, a "big difference was the acceptability of racist attitudes and behavior." "If yearbooks were a way for people to show off their 'fun' side, it is not surprising at all that this would include the kind of racist displays that are now coming out," he said. The difference these days, he said, is that now "we can force a politician to resign for being racist. That's progress." — AFP

## Roberts emerges as US Supreme Court swing vote

Pivotal votes cast by US Chief Justice John Roberts in abortion and death penalty cases have underscored his new standing as the Supreme Court's ideological center and the outsized role he may play in major rulings for years to come. Roberts, a genial 64-year-old conservative appointed in 2005 by Republican President George W. Bush, sided with the nine-member court's four liberals on Thursday night in blocking a restrictive Louisiana abortion law from taking effect. He also sided on Thursday night with the four other conservative justices in allowing the execution of a Muslim convicted murderer in Alabama.

His vote in the abortion case was particularly noteworthy because it represented a turnaround from his vote in a 2016 abortion case in which he had joined two other conservatives in dissent when the Supreme Court ruled 5-3 to strike down similar regulations targeting abortion doctors in Texas. The role of Supreme Court swing vote had been filled by Justice Anthony Kennedy, who sided with its liberal bloc on divisive issues including abortion and gay rights before retiring last July. Following Republican President Donald Trump's appointment in the past two years of Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who replaced Kennedy, and Justice Neil Gorsuch, Roberts now appears to be the most centrist of the five conservative justices who make up the court's majority.

"He's now the center, and the center has moved to the right," American Civil Liberties Union lawyer Jennifer Dalven said. Most court-watchers expect Roberts to side with his fellow conservatives on a wide range of issues including business disputes, challenges to Trump's actions and divisive social issues beyond abortion.

Roberts takes his institutional role seriously and is a defender of the federal judiciary at a time when Trump often criticizes judges and accuses the courts of political motives. As chief justice, the federal judiciary's highest-ranking judge, Roberts presides over oral arguments in cases before the court and leads private meetings among the justices. During an appearance on Wednesday at Belmont University College of Law in Tennessee, Roberts spoke of the "great responsibility" that comes with the job. "You do kind of have to keep in mind that it's a



Supreme Court Justices John Roberts (center) attends the State of the Union address at the US Capitol in Washington on Feb 5, 2019. — AFP

modest - important, but modest - role," Roberts added.

## More abortion cases

The court on Thursday granted an emergency application by Shreveport-based abortion provider Hope Medical Group for Women to stop Louisiana's law from taking effect. The justices, however, did not rule on the merits of the case. The Supreme Court is now likely to take up the clinic's appeal of a lower court ruling allowing the law, with a decision on the merits possible in 2020, just months before the U.S. presidential election. Whether Roberts will oppose the Louisiana abortion restrictions as well as others pursued in conservative-leaning states remains an open question.

Trump, seeking re-election next year, has seized on the abortion issue, which appeals to his conservative base and evangelical Christian voters who are among his most ardent supporters. Trump on Tuesday urged US lawmakers in his State of the Union address to pass legislation banning late-term abortions. The court will decide soon whether to hear Indiana's bid to revive a state ban on abortions performed due to the sex or race of the fetus or evidence of disability. Indiana this week asked the Supreme Court to hear another abortion case concerning a law to require fetal ultrasounds before abortions take place.

Those cases do not turn on the 2016 precedent, meaning Roberts may feel less inclined to side with the liberals. "I think it's still quite likely that he will be voting and casting a fifth and decisive vote to uphold a variety of abortion regulations that fall short of outright prohibitions," Cornell Law School professor Michael Dorf said. The court has a handful of major cases during its current term, which ends in June, that will test to what extent Roberts differs from Kennedy on key issues. — Reuters

## For Catalan separatists, trial of leaders is personal

With vigils and concerts outside prisons, Catalan independence supporters for months have shown their backing for 12 separatist leaders who go on trial on Tuesday over their bid to break the region away from Spain. Now that the highly anticipated trial is finally about to get underway at Spain's Supreme Court in Madrid, they have vowed to step up their protests in another show of solidarity. While just 12 leaders will sit in the dock over their role in the failed 2017 independence bid, many Catalan separatists feel they are also being put on trial for having taken part in a banned referendum held on October 1 that year.

"I'm a lifelong separatist and I voted on October 1, it's as if I was being tried," said retired teacher Eugenia Fernandez at a recent vigil held for the detained Catalan leaders at the picturesque Plaza de la Vila de Gracia square in Barcelona. "We're here because of the huge injustice that our government is in jail or exile for doing what we asked them to do - fight to set up a Catalan republic," the 67-year-old said.

The vigil Fernandez took part in has been held every Monday evening for the past 15 months at the square in Gracia, a bohemian district of the Catalan capital which is also its most pro-separatist. People held up large black and white images of the Catalan leaders, as well of those who fled abroad after the failed independence bid, along with the word "freedom" in Catalan and English. Only the chime of a clock on top of an imposing 19th century tower in the center of the square broke the silence. Nine of the leaders have been charged with rebellion, with some also accused of misuse of public funds. They have all been in pre-trial detention for months, some of them for more than a year.

## Unifying cause

"This is a reaction against the brutality of this trial, which is not against a few people but is instead against Catalan political feeling," said award-winning Catalan writer Ramon Solsona, who read some poems at the vigil. Similar events have been held across the northeastern region, where the leaders have obtained near-martyr status among many separatists who see them as "political prisoners". The 12 defendants face prison sentences of between seven and 25 years if convicted, with former Catalan vice president Oriol Junqueras at risk of the longest sentence.

Catalonia's president at the time of the secession bid, Carles Puigdemont, is not among those on trial since he fled to Belgium where he regularly receives visits from top Catalan separatists. With Catalan separatist parties divided over strategy - some calling for more civil disobedience while others favor dialogue with Spain's central government - the cause of the jailed Catalan leaders helps keep them united.

Polls show the region remains split over the issue of independence, and separatist protests - which in the past drew over a million people - appear to have lost strength. Pro-independence groups have responded by holding smaller events to show support for the detained separatist leaders. The defendants were moved from prisons in Madrid to jails in Catalonia shortly after Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez came to power in June in what was seen as a goodwill gesture. Since then separatists have gathered regularly outside of the Catalan jails where they were being held, holding concerts, camping outside overnight and forming human pyramids, called "castells", a Catalan tradition. — AFP



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**12** Kuwait real estate market strength extends into 4Q18**13** KIB reports KD 21 million in net profit for 2018, a growth of 18%**14** NBK-Bahrain reports net profits of KD 95.2m for 2018, up 26% y-o-y

TAIPEI: People stand near a logo of Chinese telecoms giant Huawei at the Syntrend Creative Park in Taipei yesterday. — AFP

# Giant Chinese firms shaping world's industries

## EU defeats bid by Alstom and Siemens to forge industrial champion

**PARIS:** It was fear of being dominated by a Chinese behemoth that sparked an attempt by large French and German rail companies to join forces to create a European industrial champion.

The merger by Alstom and Siemens was vetoed by the EU on Thursday, but concerns about the overwhelming power of vast, often state-backed Chinese companies is not limited to the rail industry. Here are some of areas in which Chinese companies control a large piece of the global market.

### Rail

China's state-backed CRRC is the world's largest train manufacturer, with locomotives and wagons ordered across the globe from Boston to Philadelphia, Cambodia to Colombia, and customers including the iconic London Underground and Germany's Deutsche Bahn. Its annual revenues of 26 billion euros (29 billion dollars) alone out-

weigh the three Western heavyweights Bombardier, Siemens and Alstom, each of which brings in around nine billion a year.

### Agrichemicals

The state-owned ChemChina became one of the world's seeds and pesticide producers when it acquired Swiss pesticide giant Syngenta for \$43 billion in 2017, putting it in competition with Monsanto and DowDupont. It was the biggest overseas acquisition by a Chinese firm yet, ahead of the \$15.1 billion purchase of Canada's Nexen Energy by China's state oil firm CNOOC in 2013. ChemChina also controls Italian tyre-maker Pirelli and German machinery firm KraussMaffei.

### Energy

The state-run China National Nuclear Corp (CNNC) launched its locally developed Hualong One nuclear reactor in 2015

to compete with French and US models, selling to Argentina and Pakistan. Chinese solar panel manufacturers Jinko, Trina and Solar dominate the global market. And Chinese oil companies-CNOOC, CNPC and Sinopec-are investing heavily even as their global rivals cut spending.

### Aviation

China's state-owned plane-maker Comac expects to deliver its first home-made passenger jet to a customer in 2021, as it seeks to challenge the dominance of Boeing and Airbus. The company says it has received a thousand orders for its 168-seater C919 plane.

### Food

The state-owned food giant COFCO is playing an increasing role in world grain trading after purchasing the agricultural arm of Singaporean commodities trader Noble

as well as Dutch Nidera. China's WH Group became the world's largest meat producer in 2013, when it purchased major hot dog producer Smithfield Foods Inc.

### Drones

Founded by a Chinese university student in 2006, DJI has become the world's top civilian drone maker with 70 percent of the market, outpacing its French rival Parrot.

### Smartphones

Chinese smartphone makers are taking a larger slice of the global market, with Huawei at 15 percent, Xiaomi 8.7 percent and Oppo 8.1 percent. Phone sales by Huawei and Oppo surged by 30 percent last year, defying a downward trend that hit rivals Apple and Samsung.

### Home appliances

China's Haier Group is the world's leading

manufacturer of home appliances with around 10 percent of the market, ahead of rivals Whirlpool and Electrolux. Haier even purchased the appliances arm of US giant General Electric in 2016.

### Batteries

Chinese firm CATL, which supplies batteries for car titans Volkswagen, Ford and Daimler, is battling with Japan's Panasonic for the world's lithium electric car battery top spot. Its production capacity will increase fivefold by 2020 due to a mammoth new factory in China, and the firm has announced a huge factory in Germany to supply European customers.

### Freight

The state-owned Cosco Group is the world's third biggest shipping company with 50 container ports across the globe, including Greece's Piraeus and Spain's Bilbao. — AFP

## Al-Nahedh: 92% of KFH's total profits made in 2018... sustainable

**KUWAIT:** The Group Chief Executive Officer at Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh said that KFH's sustainable profits reached 92 percent of the total profits recorded in 2018. This affirms the success of KFH's strategy that focuses on core banking business and reflects the record net profits growth.

Al-Nahedh added during TV interviews to comment on the financial results for 2018 that the profit was mainly driven by revenue increase from the core business. Net financing income increased by 18.5 percent from KD 82.4 million the previous year to KD 527.3 million in 2018. Total operating income increased by 4.6 percent to KD 746 million, while total operating expenses decreased by KD12.6 million or the equivalent of 4.1 percent. Net operating income increased by 11.1 percent to KD 453.5 million.

He further said that the Group's financing portfolio increased by 1.8 percent in 2018, despite the decline in the Turkish currency rate against the Kuwaiti dinar, especially during the third quarter. The drop had an impact on the consolidated balance as of the date of the consolidated financial statements. Excluding this impact, the financing portfolio increased by 7.4 percent, along with the increase of all types of financing, in particular the corporate financing. Retail financing under KFH Kuwait was 3.5 percent, higher than the market's 2.9 percent growth rate, according to the latest data by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK).

As quality of KFH's assets improved, the Group's non per-



Mazin Al-Nahedh

forming debts decreased to 1.99 percent, as per the CBK's accounting principles, compared to 2.65 percent for last year. The coverage ratio of provisions and collaterals for non-performing debts stood at 520.14 percent and 247.07 percent for KFH solo and the Group respectively. At the end of 2018, total provisions reached KD 619.6 million for the Group.

Al-Nahedh pointed out that the contribution of KFH subsidiaries in the net operating income rose to about 39.2 percent, mainly from KFH Turkey with a 34 percent contribution. Despite the decline in the value of the Turkish lira, KFH Turkey continues to maintain strong and sustained growth rates at all levels of its financing portfolio, deposits, total assets and profits. KFH Turkey registered the second lowest non-performing financing ratio in Turkey, at around 1.82 percent.

Al-Nahedh said that all the financial indicators of KFH Turkey exceeded the minimum regulatory requirements and stand at good levels, pointing out that the recent reforms and the improvement of the currency value will help stabilize the financial situation in Turkey.

Al-Nahedh expected KFH to exit non-core assets of nearly KD 150 million in 2019. The bank achieved KD 21.9 million profits of the total exiting deals that reached KD 90 million at the end of 2018, compared to KD 57.6 million in 2017.

Meanwhile, KFH achieved a net profit of KD 227.4 million for the year 2018, in comparison to KD 184.2 million last year, an increase of 23.5 percent. EPS reached 36.36 fils compared to 29.46 fils in 2017, an increase of 23.4 percent.

## Trump's World Bank pick echoes calls for reform from other critics

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump's choice to lead the World Bank is a firebrand critic of the world's largest anti-poverty lender—an institution he has called wasteful, corrupt and overly generous to China. Those criticisms are similar to those expressed by others in the development community. But that does not mean they have found a new ally in David Malpass, the senior US Treasury official who has pledged to reform the bank.

Nancy Pelosi, the newly reinstalled Democratic speaker of the US House of Representatives, says Trump's choice threatens to "undermine the institution's mission."

And Liberia's former minister of public works W. Gyude Moore tweeted that "an incorrigible arsonist will now be our fire chief." Still Malpass's many criticisms of the Washington-based lender echo familiar refrains. Many activists have long called for reforms at the World Bank, citing a litany of



David Malpass

alleged human rights failures and scandals, and saying projects all too often left the world's poorest even worse off, harmed the environment or entrenched the power of oligarchies and despots.

Those critics might well have nodded their heads in accord in 2017 when Malpass said international financial institutions such as the World Bank "spend a lot of money" but are "not very efficient." — AFP



# Kuwait real estate market strength extends into 4Q18

## Investment sector sales reached KD470 million in 4Q18, up 19% Q/Q

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's real estate sales rose to their strongest levels in four years in 4Q2018. Sales were in excess of KD1 billion (up 23 percent q/q, 91 percent y/y), marking the fifth consecutive quarterly rise in sales and reinforcing the positive trend that started to emerge in late 2017. The strength came primarily from the investment (i.e. apartment) sector, helped by rising prices.

The residential sector also saw a rise in prices. Meanwhile, the commercial sector has benefitted from higher demand helped by business-friendly reforms by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, giving rise to better sentiment and renewed demand in this sector. For 2018 overall, all three sectors saw a significant rise in sales from 2017 levels, and NBK real estate price indices (covering land, homes, apartments and multi-unit buildings) have posted year-on-year gains. The improvement was likely driven by a better economic backdrop relative to 2017, higher average oil prices which lifted sentiment, rising employment and slightly faster growth in the expatriate population which may have supported rental demand. At this juncture, the real estate market appears to be in a good state. Volumes and liquidity have been mostly restored to pre-slump levels (2014), while prices have been stable since mid-2018 and are now on a mildly positive trend. Housing rents have also been steady since mid-2018. These positive trends have been consistent for some time, with the market gradually improving since 4Q17. Investment sector sales reached KD470 million in 4Q18, up 19 percent q/q and more than triple the level of 4Q17. Higher sales were driven by a rise in transaction volumes, coupled with an increase in prices. Transactions rose 18 percent q/q and 127 per-

cent y/y, while the NBK investment real estate price indices were up by an average of 1.5 percent q/q and 3.7 percent y/y, led by multi-unit buildings. The rise in investment sector prices was likely helped by more stable rents compared to 2017 and early 2018 when rents were falling. The sector could face headwinds in the near to medium term from new supply in the pipeline, and from a possible increase in interest rates in 2019. But there are potential tailwinds, too: possibly higher government capex and project awards in 2019 may stimulate non-oil growth and boost employment, which could in turn boost demand in the rental market.

The residential sector registered sales of KD368 million, up 16 percent q/q and 33 percent y/y. The rise in sales was driven by a higher number of transactions and a rise in prices. Transactions rose by 26 percent q/q and 46 percent y/y. Prices, slightly negative in 1Q-3Q18, surged by nearly 8 percent q/q in Q4, helping residential prices cross into positive year-on-year territory from November for the first time since 2016. Higher prices were likely helped by improving demand, reflected in much higher activity levels relative to 2017. Downside risk in this sector may emerge in the form of large government housing distributions planned for 2019, coupled with a potential rise in financing costs. Meanwhile, a draft mortgage law is under consideration by the National Assembly. The law, if passed, should boost demand in the residential sector with citizens benefitting from improved access to financing. The law will also help lower the growing backlog of government housing applications.

Commercial sector benefits from business-friendly reforms. The



commercial sector was the scene of a big improvement in activity and sales in 2018. After showing encouraging signs earlier in the year, the sector gained traction, with the fourth quarter being the strongest of the year. Commercial sales in 4Q18 reached KD185 million, the highest in two years, and gained over 50 percent on a quarterly and annual basis. The number of transactions surged 139 percent y/y in 4Q18, but were unchanged from the previous quarter. Higher sales in 4Q18 were driven by a rise in average transac-

tion size, suggesting that relatively larger properties or more prime locations, or higher quality properties were traded in Q4 compared to Q3. For instance, a commercial building of 5,800 sqm was traded in Sharq for a value of KD 45 million, much higher than the sector average. The sector has benefitted from various business friendly reforms by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the latest of which is the launch of an electronic system for the issue of commercial licenses.

## US-China trade tensions could hit African growth: AfDB

**ADDIS ABABA:** Persisting trade tensions between economic superpowers the United States and China could shave 0.7 percent from Africa's GDP in 2019, a senior official at the African Development Bank (AfDB) said on Friday. Hanan Morsy, director of the AfDB's macroeconomic policy department, made the prediction on the sidelines of an African Union meeting in Addis Ababa as fresh doubts emerged over the prospects for US-China trade war negotiations. She was speaking after the release of the bank's African Economic Outlook 2019 report, which said the continent registered growth of 3.5 percent in 2018, and was expected to grow 4 percent in 2019. This is higher than most regions of the world but still insufficient to address persistent fiscal and current account deficits and "unsustainable debt".

Furthermore, the ongoing trade battle between the US and China could "have a negative impact of 0.7 percent of GDP from Africa. This impact will be through lack of trade and investment flows".

"AfDB in particular expects a noticeable impact in the tradeable sectors, including export commodities like minerals, oil and food related products," she added. The United States has threatened to more than double existing tariffs on Chinese goods at the start of March if there is no agreement on measures to reform China's trade practices, which Washington says are deeply unfair.

US President Donald Trump said Thursday he did not expect to meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping before the March 1 deadline, leading to a slump in world stock markets. Top White House economist Larry Kudlow told Fox Business on Thursday that while Trump was "optimistic" about prospects for a deal, there remained a "sizeable distance" separating the two sides.

A lack of a breakthrough could weaken the global economy, with already gloomy growth forecasts from the European Commission on Thursday which predicted lower than expected growth of 1.3 percent in the euro-zone this year. A slowdown in the global economy could lead to a decline in demand for Africa's exports, more than 60 percent of which head to the US, China and Europe, said the AfDB report. The report said that in 2019, 40 percent of African countries are projected to see growth of at least 5 percent. —AFP

## VIVA wins Sharjah Gulf Top 10 Business Award 2018

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced that it has been awarded Sharjah Economic Excellence Network Award to be among the top ten Gulf companies for 2018 at the Sharjah Economic Excellence Network Award of 2018 organized by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry at Expo Center, held in Sharjah on February 6, 2019 under the patronage of HII Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah. This unique honor coincides with VIVA's completion of a decade of success and growth.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem Al-Qassimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and Abdullah Sultan Al-Owais, Chairman of Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), presented the award to VIVA representatives Mishary Abdullah Al-Hamad, Customer Management Director and Wassim Mohammed El-Hayek, Investor Relations and M&A Director.

On this occasion, Eng. Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, VIVA's CEO said: "This honorable honor, which we are proud of by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and under the patronage of Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem Al-Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, is the result of VIVA's keenness to achieve excellence and leadership not only at the operational level but also in the implementation of best practices and professional standards, in all its sectors and departments supporting the



business and plans of the company.

"He added: "VIVA's reaping of the Sharjah Economic Excellence Network Award for 2018 and its position among the top ten Gulf enterprises is a great achievement we are proud of which is reflection of the great effort exerted by the executive management and guidance of the Board of Directors of the company, as well as the implementation of VIVA to the best standards at all levels of operational, financial and quality in customer service, which are all to satisfy our customers and the interest of the shareholders of the company.

On his part, Mohammed Bin AbdulMohsen Al-Assaf,

VIVA's CFO, said: "This prestigious award reinforces VIVA's position as one of the best financial and operating companies in the GCC. During 2018, the company achieved record financial results and many operational achievements at all levels driven by successful strategic plans. VIVA is committed to implementing the best standards that are consistent with our principles, values and professional principles that lead our business to the benefit of our valued shareholders and to satisfy our valued customers. We always strive to focus our efforts on achieving the desired results through an integrated team in a timely and professional manner."

## URC, Marriott to introduce iconic St Regis brand in Marrakech

**MARRAKECH:** United Real Estate Company (URC) and Marriott International yesterday announced that they have signed a resort that will introduce the iconic St. Regis brand to Marrakech and further expand their luxury portfolios in Morocco. Expected to open in 2024, The St. Regis Marrakech Resort will rise south west of Marrakech, an exclusive enclave in the expansive high-end Assoufid mixed-use develop-

ment surrounded by captivating views of the Atlas Mountains. The resort is owned by Assoufid Properties Development SA and developed by URC, part of the Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) group of companies.

"The signing of The St. Regis Marrakech Resort underscores the demand and opportunity for luxury properties across Morocco and North Africa," said Jerome Briet, Chief Development Officer, Middle East & Africa for Marriott International. "With its growing portfolio, the St. Regis brand continues to welcome a new generation of luxury travelers into the region and Morocco as a destination in particular is a great fit for the brand as it enchants luxury travellers with its rich heritage and cultural legacy."

The St. Regis Marrakech Resort,

which will form a part of the Assoufid Golf Resort, will include 80 luxuriously-appointed guestrooms and villas, all offering spectacular views of the Atlas Mountains. It will also feature hallmarks of the renowned brand, including the signature St. Regis Butler Service.

"We are delighted to start our relationship with Marriott International by working together on The St. Regis Marrakech Resort. The property will tie in seamlessly with the rich cultural identity of Marrakech and charming natural surroundings, all while offering guests the exceptional St. Regis experience that the brand is renowned for globally," said Tariq Abdulsalam, Chairman of Assoufid Properties Development SA.

Offering the ideal escape from the city, the resort will be located near the award-winning, 18-hole Assoufid Golf

Club, which has established itself as one of the best courses in Africa. For guests to experience all that the vibrant destination has to offer, the resort will be just a short drive to the Medina of Marrakech, The Berber Market and Jemaa el-Fnaa and is easily accessible from the Marrakech Menara International Airport. With leisure facilities such as a spa, pool, and a state-of-the-art fitness center, The St. Regis Marrakech Resort will also feature six distinct culinary experiences, including two specialty restaurants and the iconic St. Regis Bar, inspired by the King Cole Bar at the brand's flagship property in New York. Meeting planners will also find ample options for events, whether corporate gatherings, special events or weddings, with a 400-square-meter ballroom.

## EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.250
Euro	348.520
Sterling Pound	397.200
Canadian dollar	231.100
Turkish lira	59.080
Swiss Franc	306.860
US Dollar Buying	296.950
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.774
Indian Rupees	4.276
Pakistani Rupees	2.220
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.706
Nepali Rupees	2.663
Singapore Dollar	225.960
Hongkong Dollar	38.775
Bangladesh Taka	3.576
Philippine Peso	5.839
Thai Baht	9.700
Malaysian ringgit	77.813
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.187
Qatari Riyal	83.620
Omani Riyal	790.773
Bahraini Dinar	808.420
UAE Dirham	82.891
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.850
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.167

Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.220
Tunisian Dinar	103.630
Jordanian Dinar	428.370
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.022
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.372

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.740
Canadian Dollar	231.700
Sterling Pound	396.045
Euro	348.870
Swiss Frank	306.235
Bahrain Dinar	807.755
UAE Dirhams	83.100
Qatari Riyals	84.335
Saudi Riyals	81.895
Jordanian Dinar	429.690
Egyptian Pound	17.187
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.705
Indian Rupees	4.245
Pakistani Rupees	2.195
Bangladesh Taka	3.620
Philippines Peso	5.806
Cyprus pound	18.070
Japanese Yen	3.765
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.659
Malaysian Ringgit	75.350
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.510
Thai Bhat	10.705

Turkish Lira	58.835
Singapore dollars	224.696

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.387417	0.401317
Czech Korune	0.005377	0.014677
Danish Krone	0.042174	0.047174
Euro	0.337924	0.351624
Georgian Lari	0.131976	0.131979
Hungarian	0.001147	0.001337
Norwegian Krone	0.031367	0.036587
Romanian Leu	0.065191	0.082041
Russian ruble	0.004641	0.004641
Slovakia	0.009092	0.019092
Slovenia	0.028852	0.033852
Swedish Krona	0.298158	0.303915
Swiss Franc		
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.207824	0.219824
New Zealand Dollar	0.199503	0.209003
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224094	0.233094
US Dollars	0.300150	0.305450
US Dollars Mint	0.300650	0.305450
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003051	0.003852

Chinese Yuan	0.043604	0.047104
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037017	0.039767
Indian Rupee	0.003726	0.004498
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002589	0.002869
Korean Won	0.000261	0.000276
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070951	0.076951
Nepalese Rupee	0.002608	0.002948
Pakistani Rupee	0.001567	0.002337
Philippine Peso	0.005780	0.006080
Singapore Dollar	0.219139	0.229138
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001340	0.001920
Taiwan	0.010155	0.010335
Thai Baht	0.009352	0.009902
Vietnamese Dong	0.000013	0.000013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.792459	0.808959
Egyptian Pound	0.017108	0.019708
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000021	0.000021
Jordanian Dinar	0.424827	0.433827
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000157	0.000257
Moroccan Dirhams	0.021728	0.045728
Omani Riyal	0.783942	0.789622
Qatar Riyal	0.079280	0.084220
audi Riyal	0.080047	0.081347
Syrian Pound	0.001290	0.001610
Tunisian Dinar	0.095680	0.103680
Turkish Lira	0.051375	0.062875
UAE Dirhams	0.081411	0.083111
Yemeni Riyal	0.000989	0.001069



## Business

# KIB reports KD 21 million in net profit for 2018, a growth of 18 %

## Deputy CEO: Performance reflects KIB's improvement in key business areas

KUWAIT: KIB's Deputy Chief Executive Officer Mohamed Said El Saka, stated during the 2018 earnings call for the listed companies classified under the category "Premier Market" in Boursa Kuwait, which was held at 2:00pm on Wednesday February 6th 2019, that KIB reported a net profit of approximately KD 21 million for the year 2018: a growth of 18 percent compared to 2017.

In addition, financing income registered a growth of 20 percent reaching KD 89.5 million compared to KD 74.6 million in 2017. KIB's total assets increased by KD 253 million to reach KD 2.2 billion, a growth of 13 percent compared to 2017.

Regarding the strategy update, El Saka pointed out that KIB's strong financial performance reflects its significant improvement in a number of business areas, in line with its newly implemented strategy. KIB's strategy implementation is forging ahead, taking the customer

banking experience to the next level and delivering much more than just 'banking' in the traditional sense. KIB always strive to meet the ever-changing needs of our customers.

El Saka stated that, KIB's asset quality matrices have improved significantly in 2018 mainly due to continuous efforts in monitoring of existing and new portfolio. NPL ratio stood below 1 percent, which is one of the lowest among peers while total coverage ratio at 343 percent in 2018 is one of the highest in the region.

Also, KIB plans to increase its distribution to shareholders as the Bank's Board of Directors recommended cash dividends of 11 percent i.e. 11 fils per share and bonus shares of 4 percent i.e. 4 shares for every 100 shares; which is subject to the approval by the Bank's shareholders' general assembly and regulatory authorities.

Furthermore, General Manager Financial Control and Planning / CFO, Mr. Ajai Thomas, shed light on KIB's strong set of numbers for the financial year ended 31 December 2018 as bearing testament to successful progression of the strategy KIB adopted and is looking to continue to 2019. He also presented the results in detail, pointing out that KIB reported stellar bottom line growth of 18 percent to reach around KD 21 million for the year 2018 as compared to KD 17.7 million in 2017, mainly driven by the topline growth of financing income (20 percent), to reach KD 89.5 million as compared to KD 74.6 million in 2017. The strengthening of the Bank's core business has helped KIB achieve this remarkable performance during the year.

Net financing income comprised of 81 percent of the total operating income during the year, as compared to

76 percent a year ago, reflecting the strengthening of core business activities as KIB does not operate an active investment trading book as per its conservative risk appetite.

Thomas added that KIB continued its investments in new branding and IT infrastructure in 2018 through upgrades for enhanced digital banking experience while controlling its other costs. Operating expenses registered a marginal increase to support the business growth.

Thomas also highlighted that In terms of core assets/liabilities' growth, KIB achieved growth in total assets by 13 percent to reach KD 2.2 billion in 2018, as compared to KD 1.9 billion in 2017; achieved through growth in financing receivables, which reached KD 1.6 billion in 2018 a growth of 23 percent as compared to KD 1.3 billion as at 31 December 2017.

KIB's investment portfolio increased by 14 percent to reach KD 166 million primarily through increased exposure towards high quality sukuku, compared to KD 145.7 million by end 2017. Investment income was lower compared to 2017 due to certain one off offloads of non-core investments during 2017.

Customer deposit growth has been sustained due to KIB's various successful product launches/campaigns supported by attractive profit rates; resulting in an increase of KD 115 million or 10 percent to reach KD 1.3 billion compared to KD 1.2 billion by end 2017.

With regards to the response to the inquiries from participating analysts, Thomas explained on the outlook for retail deposit growth: "At KIB, we are continuing our efforts to become the "Bank for Life" in line with our strategy, and as part of that, we provide our customer with a better banking experience. Customer deposits

registered a growth of 10 percent in 2018 compared to 2017, largely due to our success in improving retail base, acquiring higher volumes through our innovative deposit products launches and various promotional campaigns supported by better profit rates. In equation, this mainly contributed to higher customer trust and better brand visibility within the market".

With regards to the significant improvements in asset quality, Thomas stated: "We are pleased to report a significant improvement in our asset quality as reflected in lower NPL ratio and higher total coverage ratio. Asset quality matrices have improved significantly in 2018 due to our continuous monitoring and follow up of existing loan book and new exposures resulting in one of the lowest NPL ratios in the region; which was below 1 percent".

Furthermore, regarding the loan growth expectation for 2019, El Saka noted that KIB registered an impressive growth in the financing portfolio, in excess of 23 percent compared to 2017. KIB's financing portfolio grew in excess of KD 300 Million (23 percent) compared to previous year. KIB also actively participated in high quality syndications locally and in GCC region with focus on oil & gas, telecom and hospitality sectors, and expect a similar trend to continue.



Mohamed Said El Saka

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 18% growth in net profit
- 20% growth in financing income
- 13% growth in total assets
- 23% increase in financing receivables
- NPL ratio stood below 1%
- The total coverage ratio at 343%
- 11% cash dividend and
- 4% bonus shares for YE 2018

## EU states adopt French-German formula on Russia gas pipeline

BRUSSELS: European Union member states adopted a Franco-German compromise on Friday allowing Berlin to remain the lead negotiator with Russia on the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Europe.

France, a pivotal player in the EU gas talks, had said earlier it would support European Union oversight of new offshore energy pipelines. This had raised concerns in Berlin that resistance from other EU members could undermine plans for the undersea pipeline between Russia and Germany.

But Paris and Berlin now agree that chief responsibility lies with Germany, the "territory and territorial sea of the member state where the first interconnection point is located," according to a text seen by AFP. The pipeline is due to emerge at the German Baltic port of Greifswald, from where gas will be distributed to other EU countries. "There was indeed an agreement which was only possible thanks to close cooperation between France and Germany," German Chancellor Angela Merkel told reporters in Berlin when asked about Nord Stream 2.

The compromise text replaces older wording stipulating the EU rules on gas imports will be applied by "the territory of the member states" and or the "territorial sea of the member states".

The new text was adopted as part of reforms for gas market rules at a meeting of EU ambassadors in Brussels. "The French-German compromise was adopted pretty much unanimously," one diplomat said. Romania, current holder of the rotating EU presidency, said it "was given the mandate... to enter negotiations with the European Parliament on the amendment of the EU gas directive."

France's earlier support for giving EU countries more say in the pipeline project appeared likely to shift the balance away from Germany. Nord Stream 2 faces opposition from many countries in eastern and central Europe, the United States and particularly Ukraine because it risks increasing Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas.

### 'Enormous pressure' from US

Combined with the planned TurkStream pipeline across the Black Sea, Nord Stream 2 would mean Russia could bypass Ukraine in providing gas to Europe, robbing Moscow's new foe of transit fees and a major strategic asset. A EU diplomat said US officials lobbied their European counterparts until just before the start of Friday's meeting in a bid to block the gas pipeline.

"Washington has put enormous pressure on EU capitals in recent days to prevent Nord Stream 2," the diplomat said on condition of anonymity. "The fact that the gas directive was then almost passed by consensus is also due to the growing displeasure among the EU states over the attempted US influence."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in Moscow that Washington was spearheading efforts to undermine fair competition. "This international project is necessary for Russia and the EU, but it is constantly attacked by third countries, more specifically by the United States," Peskov said.

Peskov accused Washington of "underhanded competition" by trying to encourage Europeans "to buy more expensive American gas".

Russia will "follow developments very closely", Peskov said, adding "we hope that the EU member countries will know how to settle this issue themselves".

### 'Purely economic project'

French President Emmanuel Macron's office said the compromise puts Nord Stream under "European oversight". "It will challenge a certain number of project parameters which will have to provide transit guarantees via Ukraine as well as transit through Slovakia," an official said.

The draft compromise sought to tackle concerns over Ukraine saying: "We consider a (gas rules) directive in this spirit indispensable for a fruitful discussion on the future gas transit through Ukraine."

Merkel has so far insisted that the pipeline is a "purely economic project" that will ensure cheaper, more reliable gas supplies. She has said there will be no dependence on Russia if Europe diversifies at the same time. Construction has already begun, involving companies such as Germany's Wintershall and Uniper, Dutch-British Shell, France's Engie and Austria's OMV. Gas is due to start arriving in Germany by the end of the year. —AFP

## Pakistan slashes 2017/18 growth estimate to 5.2 %

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has revised its economic growth figures for the last financial year to 5.2 percent from a previously reported figure of 5.8 percent, after a sharp cut in the figure for large-scale manufacturing, the statistics office said.

The revision of figures reported by the previous government

underlines the economic headwinds facing Pakistan which is holding discussions over a possible bailout from the International Monetary Fund. When the original estimate was reported in April by the government of Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, it was hailed as the strongest growth in 13 years.

The office, in a statement issued after a meeting of the national accounts committee late on Friday, said gross domestic product in the 2017/18 financial year to June rose 5.22 percent compared with a previously reported 5.79 percent. Growth in the industrial sector was revised to 5.01 percent from a previously reported 5.8 percent in the provisional estimate. The biggest change came in the large-scale manufacturing segment, which saw growth revised to 5.01 percent from 6.13 percent previously. —Reuters

*Hear the ideas and meet the people shaping the future of Kuwait.*

"Our role within this organization is to look at ways to use **nuclear energy** for food and agriculture, as well as the environment. We use isotopes and radiation to **enhance wheat production**, for example, and record acidification for climate change assessment."

**Dr. Samira A. S. Omar,**  
Director General,  
Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR)

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## UK suffers Brexit reality check as US sails on despite trade war

BRUSSELS: The two best performers among the Group of Seven economies in the third quarter almost certainly took separate paths in the fourth, as Britain suffered a Brexit reality check, while the United States sailed on despite the trade war it has sparked. The world's largest economy is expected to have grown by an annualized 2.6 percent in the final three months of 2018. Even if that is down from the 3.4 percent of the third quarter, it is still a healthy clip. A first estimate should have been released by now, but the US Bureau of Economic Analysis said on Thursday the release had been pushed back to Feb. 28 due to the government shutdown.

Forecasts though equate to a quarterly 0.6 percent, triple the growth rate of the eurozone in the same period. Growth in China, while far higher, cooled to a 28-year low in 2018. Japan, the world's third largest economy has yo-yoed between contraction and expansion throughout the year, with a 0.4 percent growth reading seen for Thursday.

Harm Bandholz, chief US economist at UniCredit, says that despite unstable politics in Washington, two

factors explain why the US economy is one of very few holding up well in recent months - massive stimulus mainly from tax cuts and the fact that it is relatively closed and not dependent on foreign trade. In the very short term, the government shutdown, which could resume next Friday, and the polar vortex of late January could rein in first quarter expansion. Longer term though, even the Federal Reserve has become more hesitant, signalling last month at least a pause to its monetary policy tightening due to a cloudier outlook and growing risks.

The labor market is still glowing, but the impact of tax cuts will fade and the nation will hit a debt ceiling in March, which could ultimately lead to a debt default. UniCredit's Bandholz says slower growth could expose the very high debt of corporates, weakening investment spending and possibly spilling over into other parts of the economy.

"All these factors combined will be enough to push the US economy into a mild recession in 2020," he said. For now, US strength in the face of economic slowdowns elsewhere may well be helping President Donald Trump's trade push.

Trump said on Thursday he did not plan to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping before a March 1 deadline set by the two countries to achieve a trade deal. Other countries, notably Germany, are awaiting a Commerce Department report due Feb. 17 on whether auto imports are security risk. Bank of America Merrill Lynch wrote on Friday that this should not in the end lead to tariffs, although believes "some brinkmanship" is likely. —Reuters



## Business

# NBK-Bahrain reports net profits of KD 95.2m for 2018, up 26% y-o-y

## Al-Sager: NBK-Bahrain's solid performance affirms success of Group's expansion strategy

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait-Bahrain (NBK Bahrain), reported net profits of BHD 118 million (equivalent to KD 95.2 million) for the year 2018 compared with BHD 93.5 million (equivalent to KD 75.3 million) in 2017, a growth of 26 percent year-on-year.

As of end of 2018, NBK-Bahrain's total assets increased by 9 percent y-o-y to BHD 6.3 billion, compared with BHD 5.8 billion in 2017. While total shareholders' equity increased by 14 percent y-o-y to BHD 683.3 million. Customer deposits increased by 7 percent y-o-y to BHD 3.2 billion. Isam Al-Sager, NBK Group Chief Executive Officer said "The Bank's strong results affirm the success of NBK Group's regional expansion strategy that is built on a culture of prudence and strict risk management practices." Al-Sager pointed out that the strength of NBK-Bahrain's profits stems primarily from being operationally.

Al-Sager added: "the strong growth achieved by

NBK-Bahrain is a testament to the success of its vision aimed at affirming its position in the Bahraini market, which is one of the main growth markets for NBK Group, given its promising growth opportunities and positive prospects".

"Our diversification extends to the product and service offering, growth in existing geographies, our approach to new business opportunities, and our commitment to a digital transformation that will position the Bank for future growth," Al-Sager added.

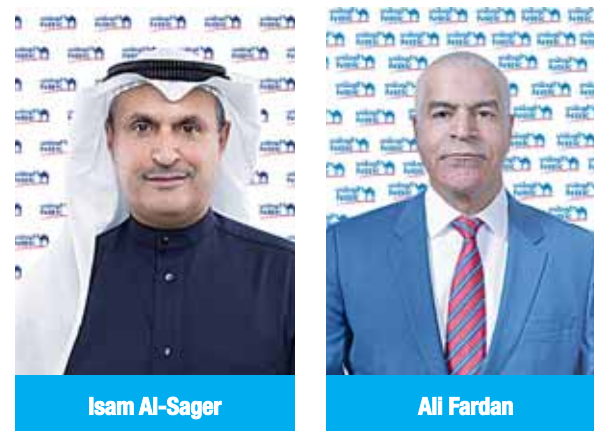
Ali Fardan, NBK-Bahrain General Manager, said "This strong performance reflects our conservative management as we have consistently focused on our core business and ways to diversify sources of income. We continue to grow our operations locally by developing new products to serve our customers benefiting from the support of NBK Group."

NBK has been present in Bahrain since 1977 and

enjoys strong and historical relationships with the major Bahraini and international companies, Al-Fardan added.

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

NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York,



Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).

## Warba Bank announces 5 winners of Sunbula draw

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank, "the Best investment Bank" and "Best Corporate Bank" in Kuwait, held its weekly Sunbula draw number 6. The draw announced the 5 lucky winners in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and bank officials. The bank proudly announced the lucky five winners of the KD 1000 prize: Humoud Jassim Mohammad Al-Falah, Sayed Mohammad Faleh Al-Rasheedi, Helail Sanad Helail Al-Harbi, Amr Atef Sayyah Masoud, and Khaled Mohammad Khaled Al-Mutairi.

Al-Sunbula both account and fixed deposits are the perfect choices for customers who wish to save money and achieve steady returns while at the same time have the opportunity to win cash prizes throughout the year. In line with the bank's mission to develop and differentiate its offerings, Warba Bank has enhanced its Sunbula campaign for 2019 with more cash and prizes reaching more than KD 1 million.

Warba Bank will continue its weekly draws for five winners of KD 1,000 each. What's new in 2019 are the "Mega Draws" which will be held every quarter to reveal five winners, the 1st winner will get KD 100,000! The four winners thereafter will each get the latest Land Cruiser VXR. Furthermore, the final Mega draw held in January 2020 will feature 2 more Land Cruiser VXRs!

As for the chances for winning, each customer is eligible to enter the draw against each KD 10 in the Sunbula Account. Nevertheless, Sunbula Fixed Deposit investors also get chances in the Sunbula draws along with high expected returns that reach up to 3.5 percent distributed either monthly or at maturity upon the customer's preference.

## The Port Fund secures release of \$496 million frozen in Dubai

**KUWAIT:** The Port Fund is pleased to announce that it has finally secured the release of \$496 million in investor funds that have been frozen at Noor Bank in Dubai for over 14 months, allowing the fund to immediately begin repaying its investors.

The money consists of proceeds earned by The Port Fund through the 2017 sale of a development project in the Philippines. In November 2017, as the proceeds of that sale were being transferred to the Port Fund's account at Noor Bank, they were frozen, leaving investors empty handed.

Dubai subsequently cleared the money of any legal

concerns, however, Kuwait which was the largest investor in The Port Fund, continued to block its release. On December 30, 2018, the Kuwait Attorney General, Dherar Ali Al-Asousi, submitted a letter to Dubai Attorney General, Essam Issa Al-Humaidan, formally requesting the money's release to allow the fund to pay its investors and other beneficiaries.

"It has taken over a year of diligent effort, but we are pleased that both Kuwait and Dubai have recognized the lawful nature of our successful management of The Port Fund," said Mark Williams, investment director of the fund. "The Port Fund nearly doubled our investors' original capital before the money was frozen, ranking it in the top quartile of private equity funds started before the global recession. We can now distribute the benefits of our hard work and start to mitigate the significant financial damage caused by freezing those funds. We thank our investors and stakeholders for their patience and trust in our management team."

Kuwait has also been prosecuting two Port Fund executives for over a year, under charges that they misappropriated the public funds invested by the State of



Kuwait, the same funds that had been frozen at Noor Bank when the fund was attempting to pay investors.

"Now that the Kuwait government investors in The Port Fund have been paid, we look forward to Kuwait's immediate dismissal of all the false charges filed against Marsha Lazareva and Saeed Dashti," added Williams. "Payment of the Kuwait investors clearly exonerates our colleagues, although it has always been obvious that the funds were never misappropriated, but frozen in Dubai. The two executives should be thanked for their successful stewardship over these public funds rather unjustly prosecuted by Kuwait."

## Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya salary account draw

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

The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and other major currencies and can access account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards, and benefit from the discounts and offers throughout the year.



## Dell EMC expands data protection capabilities

**HOPKINTON, MA:** Dell EMC announced new and enhanced capabilities to the Dell EMC Data Domain and Integrated Data Protection Appliance (IDPA) portfolio of backup storage appliances designed to offer organizations real-world flexibility and value with expanded multi-cloud capabilities and improved performance. The enhancements also provide mid-sized organizations and remote offices of larger organizations with more choice and options in obtaining enterprise-level data protection.

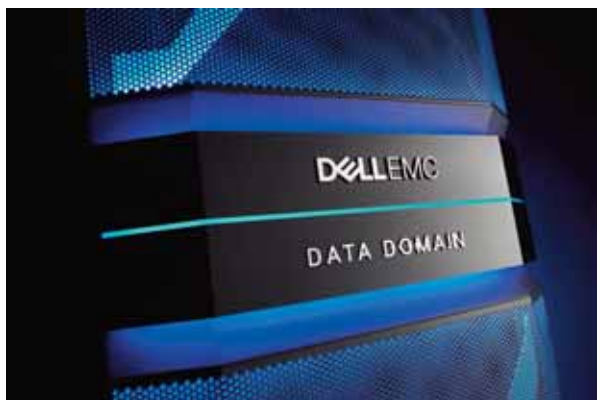
According to IDC, 92 percent of organizations have adopted a cloud environment with 64 percent adopting a multi-cloud approach. With a mix of different clouds, protecting data across workloads while meeting compliance and security requirements is a critical challenge for many organizations.

In fact, according to a study conducted by IDC for Dell EMC, cross-cloud support was the highest recognized data protection deficiency for IT transformation. Dell EMC recognizes this challenge and continues to enhance its data protection appliances to help customers mitigate risk and protect their most valuable asset - their data - in multi-cloud environments.

### Multi-cloud capabilities

Data Domain OS 6.2 and IDPA 2.3 software now provide customers with even more choice to extend their data protection to public clouds with expanded Cloud Tier support to Google Cloud Platform and Alibaba Cloud, thereby, enabling more flexibility for long-term retention. This is in addition to support already offered across AWS, Microsoft Azure, Dell EMC Elastic Cloud Storage, Virtustream, Ceph, IBM Cloud Open Storage, AWS Infrequent Access, Azure Cool Blob Storage and Azure Government Cloud. Also, a new Free-space Estimator Tool for Cloud Tier helps enable more efficient capacity management to help reduce on-premises and cloud storage costs.

Dell EMC also expanded its ecosystem of supported public cloud providers for Data Domain Virtual Edition (DD VE), which provides software defined data protection on-premises and in public clouds, to AWS GovCloud, Azure Government Cloud and Google Cloud Platform. This adds to the already supported platforms AWS S3 and Azure Hot Blob. The expanded cloud ecosystem combined



with the previously announced increased capacity for DD VE - up to 96TB per instance - ensures customers will receive the same level of protection within their growing cloud environments as they receive from their on-premises Dell EMC appliances.

Additionally, Native Cloud Disaster Recovery is now available across the entire IDPA family, enabling customers to cost-effectively failover to a cloud environment with end-to-end orchestration. Customers no longer have to bear the expense and management of setting up and maintaining a secondary site for disaster recovery and can failover to public clouds with ease in case of a disaster event and fallback when the issues are resolved. With this expansion, all Data Domain and IDPA models support AWS, including VMware Cloud on AWS, and Microsoft Azure for Cloud Disaster Recovery.

Organizations will also find peace of mind in that all Dell EMC data protection appliances provide modern, simple-to-manage user interfaces. Also, administrators can easily manage multiple Data Domain and DD VE appliances - on-premises or in public clouds - from a single user interface with the Data Domain Management Center.

### Enhanced performance

Updates to the IDPA family now provide more performance for Instant Access and Restore with an enhanced data cache that results in up to four times more inputs/outputs per second (IOPS), providing up to 40,000 IOPS with as little as 20 milliseconds latency.

Also, Data Domain appliances provide faster restores from an on-premises appliance and faster recalls from public clouds. Given these enhancements, organizations can now restore their data up to two-and-a-half times faster from a Data Domain appliance and recall their data up to four times faster from the cloud to a Data Domain appliance, allowing them to meet more stringent SLAs.

## Malabar Gold & Diamonds opens its 13th showroom in Al-Balad, Jeddah

**JEDDAH:** Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one among the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong retail network of 250 outlets spread across 10 countries has launched its new store in KSA. The 13th Showroom in Saudi Arabia was inaugurated on 06th Feb, Wednesday by MP Ahmed, Chairman, Malabar Group in the presence of Dr. PA Ibrahim Haji, Co-Chairman, Malabar Group, Wasim Mohammed Al-Qahtani, Partner Malabar Gold & Diamonds, KSA, Shamal Ahmed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Abdul Salam KP, Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, Gaffoor Edakkuni, Regional Director, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other Directors, management team members, media and well-wishers in Gold Souk Al-Balad, Jeddah.

The new showroom in Jeddah which is conveniently located at Al-Balad Building, Gold Souk, Al-Balad is the 2nd showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Al-Balad and the 3rd showroom in Jeddah City. Malabar

Gold & Diamonds also operates in Lulu Hypermarket, Amir Fawaz in Jeddah.

Already having a showroom in the holy city of Mecca, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is all set to open their new showroom in the holy city of Madina at Al-Munawara on 07th Feb, 2019. The new showroom is located in the holy shrine of Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi, near Gate #17. This is the 14th showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in KSA.

Both the outlets unveil a significantly large collection of traditional as well as contemporary designer jewellery. The new showrooms showcases the exquisite collection of gold jewellery in 18K, 22K and 24K alongside Diamond, Uncut diamond and precious gem jewellery handpicked for the jewellery lovers in KSA. To celebrate the launch of 2 new stores, company has announced some amazing inaugural offers. Customers who make diamond jewellery purchase for every SAR 3,000 will get 1 gm gold coin absolutely free. Not only that, customers can avail Zero Deduction on 22K (GCC) gold jewellery exchange as well. These inaugural offers are only valid at the Jeddah Al-Balad stores and Madina Munawara store until 23rd February, 2019 only.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds also offers exquisite and beautiful jewelry as a part of various brands presented at Malabar Gold & Diamonds' namely Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewellery, Era - Uncut Diamond Jewellery, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine- Indian Heritage Jewellery, Precia - Gem Jewellery and Starlet - Kids Jewellery.



**JEDDAH:** The 13th showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Saudi Arabia is being inaugurated in Gold Souk Al-Balad, Jeddah.



## What's On



# Kuwait Towers offers a flavorful experience of genuine Kuwaiti Cuisine at Horizon Restaurant

In celebration of Kuwait's rich heritage, the Touristic Enterprises Company announces the launch of an exclusive Kuwaiti buffet at Horizon Restaurant at the Kuwait Towers. Offering a menu of authentic traditional cuisine, the special lunch and dinner buffets will be available to diners every Monday starting from 11 February 2019 (tomorrow).

Making its debut ahead of Kuwait's Independence and Liberation Day festivities, the restaurant will celebrate the country's local culture, reflected in its dishes, decor and service. Complete with an Arabic coffee and dates station, customers can indulge in the original taste of local culinary delights and breathtaking views of Kuwait City.

Commenting on the new initiative, the General Manager of Kuwait Towers, Jarrah Al Omani said: "We are delighted to launch our national themed buffets as the country prepares to welcome the joyous occasion of National and Liberation days. This new concept seeks to celebrate the Kuwaiti culinary traditions beyond the national holidays and provide our local and

international customers with a first-of-its-kind fine dining destination, while ensuring an exceptional experience from 82 meters above sea level." A delectable infusion of flavors, Horizon restaurant will serve traditional sumptuous Kuwaiti dishes such as, Machbous, Jireesh and Quzi cooked in the traditional Kuwaiti style, every Monday from 1:00pm to 11:30pm.

## GUST to host philosophy conference with 23 international scholars



Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) is set to host a two day philosophy conference on its campus on the 7th, 8th and 9th of February, organized by the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. The conference will bring together over 20 leading figures from the realm of philosophy, such as Prof Elizabeth Susanne Kassab from the Doha institute for Graduate Studies, and Professor Michal J. Sauter, from CIDE in Mexico, under one roof to discuss and deliberate various topics which fall under the conference theme: "The Concept of 'unity' between East and West."

The conference, the first of which to be hosted by GUST will reflect upon and debate how the idea of "unity" or "totality" has a natural link to smaller related ideas. The conference will also shed light on how starting in the 20th century, these innate links were wholly neglected, even in fields such as biology, which made distinct separations between macro and micro biology.

Another modern concept that will be discussed at the conference is "cosmopolitanism", which references how an individual citizen lives in accordance with the law of the city as a whole, but the individual also helps creating the whole. Starting this century, scientists have revisited these links, and a new slant is now beginning to form, and this is what the conference aims to shed light on through a series of seminars and panel discussions over the two days.

GUST Associate Professor in the Humanities & Social Sciences Department and Event Organizer, Dr Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, said, "We have to understand that certain ideas and concepts are fluid, and need to be revisited periodically in order to gain a more thorough and well-rounded understanding of them. By bringing together such notable minds, we continue to realize GUST's vision of becoming a true knowledge-hub."

Presenting findings on behalf of GUST will be Thorsten Botz-Bornstein, with his seminar on "The Return of Organic Unity in Contemporary Philosophy", Mohammed Habib, with his discussion on "Hegel and the Divine Unity in Islam", Dr Gavin Wilson who will lead a seminar on "Immediacy and (dis)unity out of the later life of Abduh: The shifting focus of the filmic ECU", and finally Dr. Martha Tryzna, who will discuss "Language as a Tool for Totalitarian Control: A Sociolinguistic Perspective".

The philosophy conference at GUST is the second to take place at the university, with the previous one having taken place in 2012, and follows the footsteps of other leading conferences recently hosted by the university, such as the International Federation for Information Processing Conference which assembled approximately 75 scholars from around the globe to present their research findings.



## ACK students hosted for internship at Think Tank Management Consulting

Four Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) students were hosted for an internship by Think Tank Management Consulting and Dr Manal Al-Hasawi at their company's premise. During the internship the students were tasked with the planning and hosting of different events at Think Tank Management Consulting.

The experience provided valuable insight for the trainees in event planning and management. According to the interns, the value of the experience was further strengthened by the positive work environment at Think Tank Management Consulting. The interns remarked that the work environment enabled flexibility and the art of thinking

outside the box, which helped them refine their skill-sets and learn more effectively during their internship.

The comradely between the company's employees also left a positive impact on the interns, who appreciated the good relationship between the employees and their managers. "Overall I really liked working there, the workplace is like a family between the employees and managers," said Abdullah Al Shammari, one of the interns. ACK strives to increase opportunities for students to take part in vocational training in order to better develop their professional skills. It offers many opportunities for students in different majors to get hands-on practice in their field before they graduate.

## International day celebrated at KNES



Students in Secondary celebrated International Day on the 4th of February 2019. The event organized by the student council aimed to create intercultural understanding. The event turned out to be a splendid one with students and staff all involved. Every form class from years 7 to 12 represented a country and had colorful and attractive stalls displaying important facts about the countries. Students were dressed in traditional costumes of the countries they were representing. A wide variety of culinary delights from all over the world were also on offer. Some of the countries represented included Italy, Ireland, Spain, Mexico, India, Japan, France, Kuwait and the USA. Competitions were held for the best costume, best performance and the best display. The winners were Best costume: 11 A (India) Best Display/Stall: 7 C (USA) Best Performance: 11 B (Japan)

The highlight of the day was a taekwondo performance by Pouya Masjedi, Soaud Al Kashthi and Mohammed Hashem of 11 B which entertained the audience and impressed the judges. Trophies and medals were then given out to the winners.





# Miracle treatment or risky drug? Indonesia cashes in on Kratom

## Compounds found in Kratom are opioids

**PONTIANAK:** The sweltering backwaters of Indonesian Borneo have become the unlikely ground zero for the global production and export of Kratom, a tree leaf hailed by some as a miracle cure for everything from opioid addiction to anxiety. Part of the coffee family, the leaf has been used for centuries in Southeast Asia and Papua New Guinea for its pain-relieving and mildly stimulating effects but it is now sold in powder form and exported worldwide — alarming some health regulators who have raised concerns about safety.

Kratom stimulates the same brain receptors as morphine, although it produces much milder effects. "I take Kratom and have had no problems. Every strain has its benefits - some help you relax, others can treat insomnia or treat drug addiction. Some help increase stamina," grower Faisal Perdana said. Fellow farmer Gusti Prabu, who now exports 10 tonnes of the drug a month, agreed. "Our ancestors used Kratom and there were no negative side effects. It can help eliminate drug addiction and help people detox," he explained.

But its popularity is causing concern — the drug is unregulated, and has had little clinical testing to assess its safety or side effects. Kratom is already banned for domestic consumption in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, though the former allows its export in unprocessed form. Health authorities in the United States — now the drug's top importer — have linked

consumption of the plant and its derivatives to dozens of deaths, warning it could aggravate a deadly opioid epidemic gripping parts of the country.

Compounds found in Kratom are opioids, which expose users to the same risks of addiction and death as illicit opiates, according to the US Food and Drug Administration. But for farmers in Kapuas Hulu, West Kalimantan — the centre of production — demand for Kratom is such that they have moved away from traditional commodities such as rubber and palm oil to start growing the tree, turning it into a major cash crop.

And at the main post office in Pontianak, the key trading post for this part of Indonesian Borneo, it's clear the health warnings have done little to dampen interest. "Around 90 percent of our shipments from West Kalimantan province are Kratom that's been sold to the United States," post office head Zaenal Hamid said.

As many as five million Americans use the drug and that number is growing, according to the American Kratom Association. Data from 2016 showed that the region was shipping some 400 tons abroad every month — worth about \$130 million annually at current global prices of some \$30 a kilogram. Most Kratom customers are reached through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Chinese e-marketplace Alibaba. The trend for alternative medicine has been credited with increasing interest in Kratom from

Europe and America, where it is usually consumed as a tea or in capsules.

The US is struggling with an opioid epidemic, fueled by addiction to prescription painkillers as well as street drugs like heroin and synthetic versions such as fentanyl. Kratom is legal in 43 states, but the FDA is pushing for greater restrictions and has already put an import alert on it, which means shipments entering the US can be confiscated.

In a statement, the organization warned consumers not to use the drug and said it was "concerned that Kratom appears to have properties that expose users to the risks of addiction, abuse, and dependence." Scientists say that while Kratom may have positive attributes, very little research has been done into the drug. "It has great potential as a remedy for pain and opioid addiction given its pharmacology and its potential accessibility," Michael White, head of the department of pharmacy practice at the University of Connecticut, said. "It is promising and not proven," he added. Advocates insist it's a safe alternative to prescription drugs and can actually help opioid addicts.

"Of the 44 deaths on record involving Kratom, they all involve poly-drug use," said Ryan Leung, a spokesman from kratom lobby group Botanical Education Alliance (BEA). "The FDA health warnings... (have) proven to be misguided by multiple experts," he added. For now, Indonesian producers are waiting to



**PONTIANAK:** This picture taken on December 25, 2018 shows Indonesian kratom grower Gusti Prabu tending to his plants at a farm. — AFP

see how the regulatory battle in the US unfolds. And while bad weather and a salmonella scare dented exports in 2017, provisional data showed Kratom shipments bounced back strongly last year. Kratom farmer Prabu insisted: "The Kratom market has been very good over the past decade and it still has potential in the years ahead." He added: "People will see its usefulness, sooner or later." — AFP

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Dar Al Shifa Hospital  
Tele:1802 555

**daralshifa**

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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**Member of many prestigious surgical societies.**

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

**Dr. Hani Haider**  
General Surgery Consultant

<http://www.international-clinic.com> **Tel: 1886677** **ic\_kwt**

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

- ◆ General & Laparoscopic Surgery
- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, Including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
- ◆ Treatment of Perianal Fistula & Complex Perianal Fistula (complications)
- ◆ VAAFI 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

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**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  
Laparoscopic and Bariatric Surgery

**Academic Certificates - Training**

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

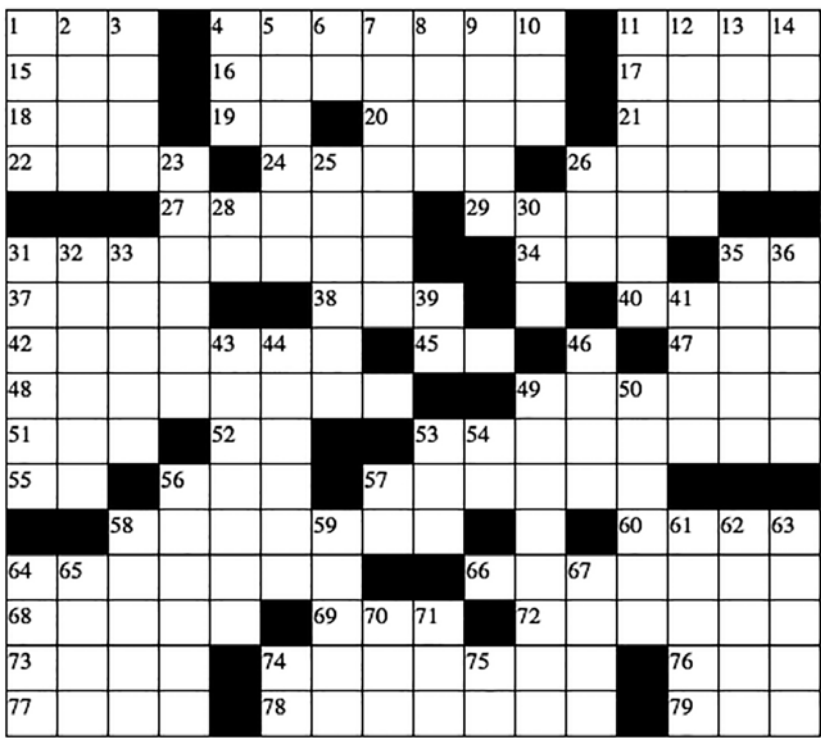
**Scope of clinical Practice.**

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

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



CROSSWORD 2132



ACROSS

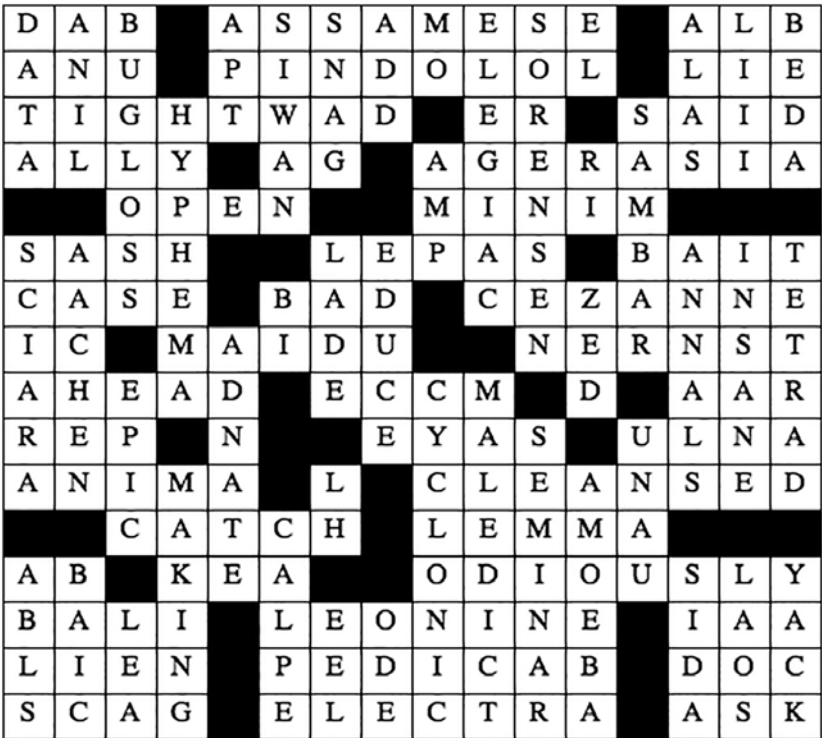
- 1. (computer science) The rate at which data is transferred (as by a modem).
- 4. Capable of being acted.
- 11. Informal terms for a mother.
- 15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
- 16. An Irish girl.
- 17. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- 18. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- 19. Military action involving the use of electromagnetic energy to determine or exploit or reduce or prevent hostile use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
- 20. An unofficial association of people or groups.
- 21. A hardy cabbage with coarse curly leaves that do not form a head.
- 22. A small cake leavened with yeast.
- 24. A person who makes deceitful pretenses.
- 27. A cry or shout of approval.
- 29. A mountain peak in the Andes in Argentina (20,997 feet high).
- 31. Someone who lives at a particular place for a prolonged period or who was born there.
- 34. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- 37. The season when the leaves fall from the trees.
- 38. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- 40. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- 42. (British) An old shabby movie theater.
- 45. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
- 47. A decree that prohibits something.
- 48. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- 51. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- 52. An uproarious party.
- 55. A crystalline metallic element not found in nature.
- 60. A Scottish word.
- 64. Be earlier in time.
- 66. Any of various plants of the genus Ursinia grown for their yellow- or orange- or white-rayed flowers.
- 68. Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
- 69. (folklore) Fairies that are somewhat mischievous.
- 72. A marine turtle.
- 73. Toward the mouth or oral region.
- 76. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
- 77. Being nothing more than specified.
- 78. Dried bark of the cascara buckthorn used as a laxative.
- 79. Being one more than nine.

DOWN

- 1. Divulge information or secrets.
- 2. A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
- 3. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- 4. (informal) Of the highest quality.
- 5. Fruit or seed of the cowpea plant.

- 6. A soft gray malleable metallic element that resembles tin but discolors on exposure to air.
- 7. One of the three prairie provinces in western Canada.
- 8. A man who is the lover of a girl or young woman.
- 9. United States tennis player (born in Czechoslovakia) who won several singles championships.
- 10. Either extremity of something that has length.
- 11. Covered with paving material.
- 12. (Philippine) A dish of marinated vegetables and meat or fish.
- 13. The arch of bone beneath the eye that forms the prominence of the cheek.
- 14. Chief port of Yemen.
- 23. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade names Acular and Toradol) that is administered only intramuscularly.
- 25. 100 seniti equal 1 pa'anga.
- 26. (Irish) Ancient Irish god (probably a god of the sun).
- 28. A unit of power equal to 746 watts.
- 30. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 32. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
- 33. Clear to the mind.
- 35. A soft whitish calcite.
- 36. An island of central Hawaii.
- 39. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- 41. A bachelor's degree in library science.
- 43. A person who rides a pedal-driven vehicle (as a bicycle).
- 44. (of linens or clothes) Smoothed with a hot iron.
- 46. A monocotyledonous genus of the family Iridaceae.
- 49. A signer of a 1679 address to Charles II in which those who petitioned for the reconvening of Parliament were condemned and abhorred.
- 50. Adorned by inlays.
- 53. Any of numerous hairy-bodied insects including social and solitary species.
- 54. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- 56. The face or front of a building.
- 57. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
- 58. Any of numerous trees of the family Cupressaceae that resemble cedars.
- 59. Tropical American trees with palmately compound leaves and showy bell-shaped flowers.
- 61. Not set afire or burning.
- 62. Owing or owed feudal allegiance and service.
- 63. Israeli general and statesman (1915-1981).
- 65. Not widely known.
- 67. Large genus of tropical subshrubs or herbs some of which yield fibers of mucilaginous substances.
- 70. A form of address for a married woman.
- 71. Committee formed by a special-interest group to raise money for their favorite political candidates.
- 74. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
- 75. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.

Friday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Though you're thinking with clear-headedness, you may find yourself at odds with someone in authority. This is because you're not sure you want to give in today but this would be the day to do it. Aries. "Pride goes before the fall" or so they say although you're not in the mood for any of those old colloquialisms now. Keep your tongue and your pride flexible today because you don't want to bite off more than you can chew. Give yourself a breather here and ready yourself for tomorrow or in other words live for today.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

There is a lot of mental pressure weighing on you today but you aren't thinking as clearly as you generally do. And to top that, you have work and home pushing you to get more done. A vacation day would be good but you can't always take one when this intellectual heaviness strikes. Though all of these issues mean a great deal to you today, Taurus, be careful that you make the best decision you can under the circumstances. Better yet, try to put off any important conclusions to work you answered today.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gemini today is a day for being with friends and not just any friends, your best friend whether that's your lover or another. You need the emotional understanding that only a best friend can bring. You're still in the process of examining your life and you need an impartial observer who has your best interest at heart. Because you might become hurt by words today, it's best if it comes from someone you love and know isn't trying to hurt you on purpose. Wear black to keep your energy in and feel secure. This psychic thinks you may need it today but tomorrow will get better.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Free yourself of letting others get on your nerves today. They may not mean to but you find yourself thinking differently from others when it comes to thoughts and ideas. Know that you can have your opinions without others being able to infringe upon them just because you believed as they did yesterday. It's a new day. Tell those that want a confrontation to back off and seek out your own friends for comfort. Cancer. They're the ones you can trust most often. You're appreciated by those that know you for your practical outlook on life and living. Take time for you tonight.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Friends need you today. You may help someone you care for with their resume or in working manually such as around the house, in the yard or with coaching a team outdoors. Whatever you do, you approach the task with a more conservative style which may mean you're not sure of what you're working on but you be sure that you'll give it your best. Someone you love may need a shoulder to cry on and since you've been thinking about your own life's issues, you may give just the right advice, Leo. You shine in a practical way today.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You've got a knack for putting just the right person in the right job at work. You could become someone who facilitates new jobs for others. You even feel like a wheeler and a dealer. There's excitement in your work life you haven't noticed in a while. It feels good, Virgo, and you love it. You'll hate for this day to end but all good things come to a close but that doesn't mean it has to go forever. Meet with friends tonight and continue your good times over dinner or a beverage. Romance can be in the air too.

Wordsearch Puzzle

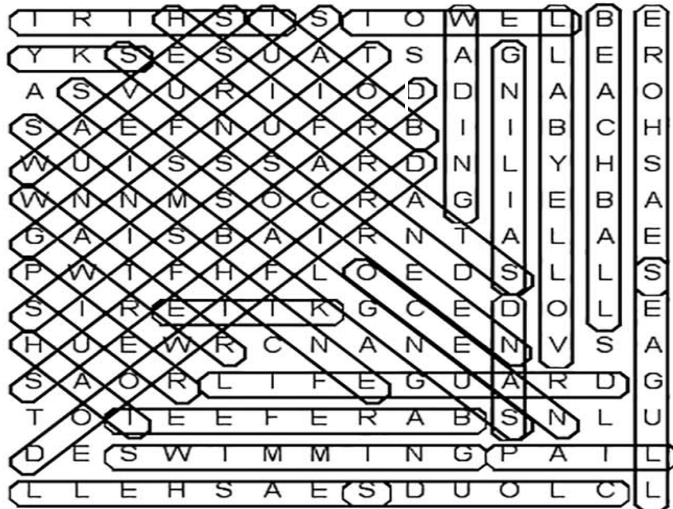
The Raven

Find and circle all of the words from the poem "The Raven" that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Edgar Allan Poe quotation.



- |           |          |            |           |          |
|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|
| ANGELS    | DOOR     | GRIM       | NAPPING   | QUOTH    |
| BEAK      | DREAMS   | HEART      | NEPENTHE  | RADIANT  |
| BEGUILING | DREARY   | HORROR     | NEVERMORE | RAPPING  |
| BIRD      | EBONY    | LATTICE    | OMINOUS   | RAVEN    |
| BLACK     | ENTRANCE | LENORE     | PALLAS    | RUSTLING |
| BLEAK     | EYES     | LORE       | PALLID    | SHADOW   |
| BURNING   | FEATHER  | MAIDEN     | PERCHED   | SHUTTER  |
| BUST      | FIEND    | MELANCHOLY | PLACID    | SOUL     |
| CHAMBER   | FLITTING | MIDNIGHT   | PLUME     | TAPPING  |
| CROAKING  | FLUTTER  | MORTAL     | PLUTONIAN | VISITOR  |
| DARKNESS  | FOWL     | MYSTERY    | PROPHET   | WEARY    |
| DECEMBER  | GHASTLY  | NAMELESS   | QUAFF     | WIND     |

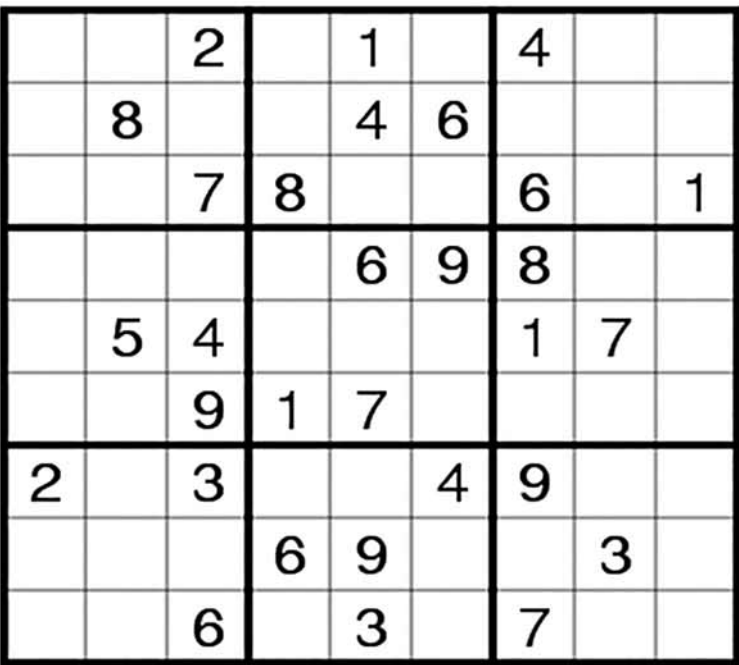
The Beach



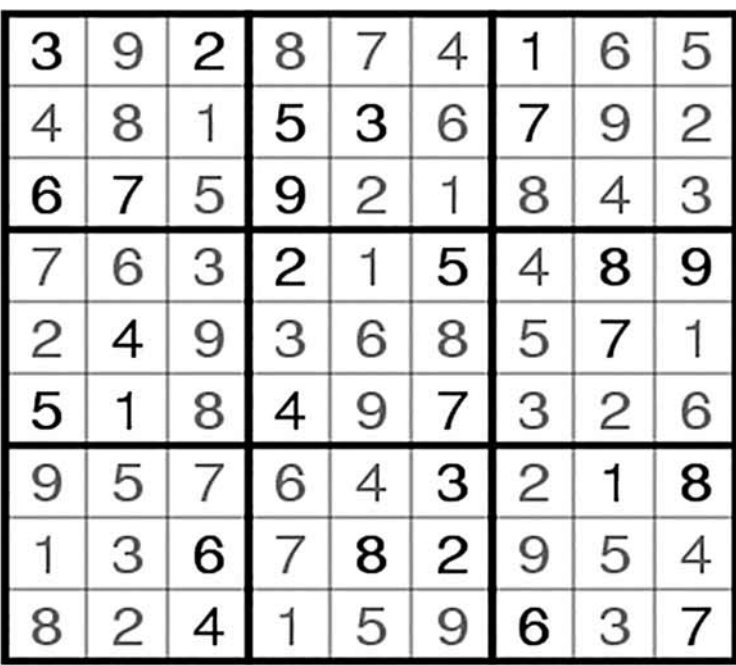
- |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|
| BARE FEET  | SAILING    | SURFBOARD  |
| BEACH BALL | SAND       | SURFING    |
| BOAT       | SEAGULL    | SWIMMING   |
| CLOUDS     | SEASHELL   | SWIMSUIT   |
| DRIFTWOOD  | SEASHORE   | T SHIRT    |
| HAT        | SKY        | TOWEL      |
| KITE       | STARFISH   | VOLLEYBALL |
| LIFEGUARD  | SUNGLASSES | WADING     |
| OCEAN      | SUNSCREEN  | WATER      |
| PAIL       | SUNSHINE   | WAVES      |
| PIER       |            |            |

The hidden message is: SANDCASTLE

Daily SuDoku



Friday's Solution





# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2019



Malaysian indigenous Mah Meri tribesmen wear a traditionally crafted mask gather before heading to the sea during the “Puja Pantai” ritual, a thanksgiving ritual praying to the spirits of the seas, in Pulau Carey on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. — AFP

Pop superstar  
*Ariana Grande*  
drops album  
amid Grammys spat

**R**eigning pop queen Ariana Grande dropped her highly anticipated album overnight Friday after slamming the producer of the Grammys for “lying” about her decision not to perform at music’s biggest night. The chart topper released her fifth album “Thank U, Next” before lashing out at Ken Ehrlich after the Grammys boss told US media the woman of the moment “felt it was too late for her to pull something together.”

“I’ve kept my mouth shut but now you’re lying about me,” tweeted Grande with a screenshot of an Associated Press article. “I can pull together a performance over night and you know that, Ken. It was when my creativity & self expression was stifled by you, that I decided not to attend.” “I hope the show is exactly what you want it to be and more. <3”

Grande, 26, then said she “offered 3 different songs” before axing the performance. “It’s about collaboration. It’s about feeling supported. It’s about art and honesty. Not politics. Not doing favors or playing games,” she continued. “It’s just a game y’all.. and I’m sorry but that’s not what music is to me.” Images of the record-smashing singer have featured on billboards in Los Angeles promoting the gala, which will air Sunday from 5:00 pm (0100 GMT Monday).

Grande’s smash hit “thank u, next”—the lead single off her just-released album—came out after this year’s nomination deadline. She did receive two nominations in the pop categories, however: Grande’s album “Sweetener” is up for best pop vocal album, while the sultry jam “God is a Woman” is nominated for best pop solo performance.

The pop princess’s fifth album sees the star sharpen her brand of bubblegum pop with a biting personal edge. Several songs allude to her tumultuous past year of love that saw her break up with rapper Mac Miller—who died age 26 in September—and end a brief but heavily publicized engagement with comedian Pete Davidson.

In “Ghostin” Grande gets raw on mourning lost love, appearing to reference Miller: “Though I wish he were here instead/Don’t want that living in your head/He just comes to visit me/When I’m dreaming every now and then.” In the bouncier bop “Bloodline” she turns hardheaded, likely referring to Davidson: “Don’t want you in my bloodline, yeah/Just wanna have a good time.”—AFP

## Rappers, women aim big at Grammys after past snubs

**M**usic’s biggest stars gather in Los Angeles today for the Grammy Awards, and this year observers are hoping the hip-hop and women artists leading the pack will get their due. The industry’s annual gala draws eye rolls every year from critics who say the winners are too white and too male, but for the second consecutive year black hip-hop artists dominated the nominations across the board.

Rapper Kendrick Lamar—who won a Pulitzer Prize for his album “DAMN.” but not a Grammy for Album of the Year—earned eight nominations, while Canadian rapper Drake snagged seven. Women artists scored nods in all of the top categories after being largely snubbed a year ago, with rapper Cardi B, pop diva Lady Gaga, pop futurist Janelle Monae and folk rocker Brandi Carlile among the frontrunners.

In the Best New Artist category, six of the eight nominees are women. But skepticism lingers that nods will actually translate into wins, after rap mogul Jay-Z left empty-handed last year despite eight nominations. That show sparked a major backlash—even retro-funk star Bruno Mars’s surprise sweep in the top categories was divisive, as it was seen as somewhat out of touch with the more groundbreaking work on offer.

In response, the Recording Academy—which organizes the gala—created a diversity task force and expanded the four top categories from five nominees to eight. “The industry and the Recording Academy do understand that they have a problem on their hands,” Murray Forman, who studies pop music at Boston’s Northeastern University, told AFP.

### ‘It has to start with us’

As the gala approached, controversy was brewing, with a slate of superstars declining to perform at the Staples Centre. Drake, Lamar and Childish Gambino have all reportedly turned down offers to perform, while Ariana Grande withdrew from the show over creative difference with organizers. Even Grammys producer Ken Ehrlich has admitted the “problem” over hip-hop artists who feel undervalued by the Academy, which includes more than 13,000 music professionals. Lamar once again has a chance to win the prestigious Album of the Year award after three prior losses—this time for masterminding the soundtrack for the blockbuster superhero film “Black Panther.” The lead song off the soundtrack—“All the Stars”, which he performed with R&B singer SZA—is in the running for both Record of the Year, which honors best overall song, and Song of the Year, which awards songwriting.

Drake, who has sparred with the Recording Academy in past years, nabbed nominations across the top categories for his album “Scorpion” and inescapable 2018 hit “God’s Plan.” Women snagged five of the eight Album of the Year nominations: Cardi B, Carlile, Monae, R&B prodigy H.E.R. and country star Kacey Musgraves are in the running. Lady Gaga boasts five nominations including for both Record and Song of the Year for her heart-pounding hit “Shallow,” which she performed in the film “A Star Is Born” with co-star Bradley Cooper. Carlile—this year’s most-nominated woman—said women must promote each other to bring about change. “We can blame men, and we can blame the industry and we can blame commerce, but it has to start with us,” the 37-year-old told Variety.

### Radicalized categories

Despite rap’s strong number of nominations, most experts are not expecting a quick revolution, saying successful black artists have long been restricted to wins in categories like Best Rap Album. “It’s not so much that black people are invisible or not innovating—it’s about those innovations being contained to radicalized categories,” said Guthrie Ramsey, a musicologist at the University of Pennsylvania.

After last year’s shutout, Jay-Z dissed the Academy in “APES\*\*T”—his track with wife Beyoncé—vying on Sunday for Best Music Video, along with four other boundary-pushing black nominees. But for others, part of rap’s appeal is that it remains non-conformist. “So much of rap music history has been about resistance and counterculture—a win also means the approval of mainstream culture,” said Akil Houston, a hip-hop scholar at Ohio University. “In a way, then you lose that outsider edge.”

### Representation is everything

Today’s ceremony, hosted by songstress Alicia Keys, will feature performances by Gaga, Cardi B, Carlile and Monae. “Representation is everything,” Carlile said at a pre-Grammy gala honoring country legend Dolly Parton. “If there’s a little girl waiting up late to see me sing on the Grammys, then I’m happy I’m here.” A tribute to the late Aretha Franklin is also planned. The Grammys gala will air today from 5:00 pm.—AFP



In this file photo US rapper Cardi B performs on stage during the Z100's iHeartRadio Jingle Ball show at Madison Square Garden in New York City. — AFP photos



In this file photo Childish Gambino performs on stage during the iHeartRadio Music Festival at the T-Mobile arena in Las Vegas, Nevada.



# Contested film on church abuse scandal moves Berlin film fest

One of France's most acclaimed directors presented a wrenching new drama Friday based on real-life victims of rampant sexual abuse in the Catholic church, as an accused priest tried to block the picture's release later this month. Francois Ozon, 51, worked for years in secret on "By the Grace of God", which was warmly applauded at a press preview at the Berlin film festival ahead of its gala premiere. It is the most-high profile dramatization of the systematic cover-up of widespread sexual molestation by clergy since the Oscar-winning "Spotlight", set in Boston and released in 2015.

But even before the premiere, a priest accused of molesting more than 80 boys, Bernard Preynat, has gone to court to demand that the film not be shown in France until after his trial, which is due to start later this year. A lay voluntary worker for the Lyon diocese, Regine Maire, has also issued a legal challenge to have her name removed from the picture.

The movie's premiere comes as Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, the archbishop of Lyon, and five others including Maire await a verdict on charges of covering up the abuse. Ozon—best known for "Swimming Pool" and "8 femmes"—told AFP he had hoped the tortuous series of cases would have finished by now, but the film should be shown for "the public good".

## Breaking the silence

"When you try to break the silence, there is

always resistance," he said. "I don't think this is happening by accident, because it is a film which is trying to break an omerta, and which deals with the silence." The scandal first broke in 2015 when a former scout, Francois Devaux, went public with allegations that Preynat had abused him as a child 25 years earlier. Preynat was suspended by the church later that year and it eventually emerged that the cardinal had confronted him about "the rumors" in 2010 but the priest claimed he had changed.

Four years later Barbarin went to the Vatican about him without contacting the police. The film traces those events but sticks close to their emotional impact on three victims-turned-activists, who begin to confront their trauma publicly with the generally strong support of their families. Ozon said he had consulted several members of the survivors' group, La Parole Liberee (Freed Speech), Devaux set up, which has gathered the testimony of 85 people who claim to have been abused by Preynat in Lyon.

But the director said he tried to be "as even-handed and objective as possible. It is not a film of goodies and baddies, it is much more complex than that for the affected families and the institution itself, and I tried to show that". "By the Grace of God" centers on Devaux and Alexandre Dussot-Hezez, "a fervent Catholic who discovers at the age of 40 that a priest who abused him is still alive and has access to children" through the church.

Devaux said that Ozon's approach to the victims' painful experiences had been "very humane and very passionate" given the fact that for them and their families, they had been like "time bombs" waiting to go off.

## Painful revelations

Ozon said he wanted to show the "negative repercussions (victims can suffer) and the distressing boomerang effects on their partners, children, families and friends". Asked about Preynat's bid for an injunction, Ozon insisted there were no major factual revelations in the film for anyone who has been following the case. "We are facing some pressure regarding the release of the film but everything in it is already well-known in France," he told reporters in Berlin.

"Most of the people attacking us haven't seen the film yet." The filmmaker hopes his intimate portrait of the victims' fight for justice will spark greater understanding of a difficult subject that mainstream cinema has rarely confronted. Ozon said the reaction from several French bishops and senior clergy who have seen the film had been positive, adding that he hoped it would provoke debate beyond France. "The church seems to be changing its stance on the scourge of pedophilia and the silence hanging over it," he said.—AFP



(Left to right) French actor Melvil Poupaud, French producer Eric Altmayer, French actor Denis Menochet, French director Francois Ozon, French actor Swann Arlaud, French producer Nicolas Altmayer, Berlinale Director Dieter Kosslick and French actress Aurelia Petit pose as they arrive on the red carpet for the premiere of the film *Grace a Dieu* (By the Grace of God) during the 69th Berlinale film festival in Berlin. — AFP



Film Festival director Dieter Kosslick signs gender equality pledge on behalf of the Berlinale at the 69th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin. — Reuters

## Berlin festival aims for gender equality with half of films by women

The Berlin Film Festival has made a pledge to promote gender equality, taking the first step toward that goal by screening almost an equal number of movies directed by women as by men. Out of the 400 films to be screened at this year's Berlinale, almost half have female directors. "We still have a lot to do to achieve gender equality," said festival chief Dieter Kosslick, who on Saturday signed the pledge to promote more women in the film industry.

The festival will aim to have more women in its jury, film line-up and staff. Of the 17 films competing for the Golden Bear award this year, seven have female directors. "We never had this in our history, and it proves that it was the right decision," said Kosslick. Gale Anne Hurd, producer of hits like "Terminator," "Aliens" and "The Walking Dead" said the gender equality pledge sends a signal that the film industry needs to change so that successful female directors and producers are no longer exceptions.

"The Berlin festival is actually doing much better than let's say Venice or Cannes," said Hurd, the special guest at this year's event. "Sometimes you have to shame people into doing the right thing. I don't necessarily believe that that's the best thing, which is why this initiative is encouraging people," she said.—Reuters



(Left to right) Producer Teddy Schwarzman, actress Anna Pniowsky and US actor and director Casey Affleck walk over the red carpet as they arrive for the premiere of the film 'Light of My Life' during the 69th Berlinale film festival in Berlin. — AFP

## Casey Affleck's new film explores fatherhood in world without women

A new film about a father-daughter relationship in a world without women was shaped by Casey Affleck's own struggles with becoming a single parent, the Oscar-winning actor said at the Berlin Film Festival where "Light Of My Life" is premiering. In the movie, which Affleck directs, he plays a father who isolates his daughter from society in a desperate attempt to protect her from a pandemic that has wiped out most women.

In this dystopia, the father and daughter - dressed as a boy - fear discovery and plan escape routes wherever they stop. They trek through rain and snow, camping in woodland and seeking shelter in an abandoned house, a church and a home with three religious men. Affleck, who won the best actor Oscar in 2017 for his performance in the family drama "Manchester by the Sea", said some ideas in the new film could be considered feminist but his goal had not been to make a film with a political message.

"It's certainly about a young woman sort of asserting herself as the storyteller and beginning to define herself with the narrative that she chooses to tell," Affleck told a news conference. Anna Pniowsky, who played the daughter - the only female in the movie other than her mother,

who features solely in flashbacks - said: "I think it is partially about showing that women are critical in this world."

Affleck, who divorced his wife Summer Phoenix in 2017, said he was finding it hard to adjust to life as a single parent when working on the movie and got the idea for it from stories he had told his children and conversations he had with them. Affleck - the younger brother of actor and director Ben Affleck - has been accused of sexual harassment by female crew members on an earlier film. Two lawsuits alleging unwanted advances were settled out of court for undisclosed sums. An attorney for Affleck denied the accusations at the time.

He said "Light of My Life" had been conceived before the #MeToo movement that took off in 2017 in response to accusations of sexual assault and harassment in the entertainment industry. But he added: "I think everyone out there has had to do some sort of self-reckoning and think about culturally what part they play and how they can play a positive role no matter how much they like to think of themselves as one of the good guys."

Asked whether the movie reflected difficult times in his own life, Affleck said that as an actor, "your private life has been sort of invaded", and he had wondered whether to wait until his children were older to pursue his career. "It's definitely difficult sometimes - you know I've developed a pretty thick skin but then you have kids and they don't have such thick skin and you have to do a lot of explaining to them about the world prematurely," he said.—Reuters

## Mongolian expanse inspires Berlinale meditation on mortality

Could humans go the way of the dinosaurs? The empty expanse of the Mongolian steppe caused Chinese director Wang Quan'an to meditate on such existential questions in *Ondog*, which premieres at the Berlinale on Friday. The first Mongolian work in the Berlin Film Festival's main competition section came from the desire of a citizen of the world's most populous country to test the limits of his creativity in one of the emptiest corners on Earth, Wang told reporters.

"Like a lot of city people I have a fascination with the natural environment," he said, adding that the vastness of the Central Asian prairie-lands had helped him reflect on the fleeting span of the human race. "The film says mankind will have its time and then go again," said Wang, who said he made the film as a "farewell gift" for Dieter Kosslick, the Berlinale's outgoing director. "What's more important is how to coexist with nature."

Starring amateur actors recruited by Wang from traditional nomadic communities, the film stars a herdsman (Dulamjav Enkhtaivan) who lives alone in the emptiness tending a flock of sheep. Her interactions - with the young policeman (Norovsambuu Batmunkh) she tends through the chilly night he spends watching over the corpse of a woman found dead on the steppe, and a neighbouring herdsman who wants to start a family with her - are the core of the film.



Director and screenwriter Wang Quan'an and actors Dulamjav Enkhtaivan and Norovsambuu Batmunkh pose during a photocall to promote the movie *Ondog* at the 69th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin. — Reuters

Filed with wide shots that are often reminiscent of classic Westerns by Mandarin-speaking French cinematographer Aymerick Pilarski, the film is unafraid to let ant-sized characters inch across the landscape for minutes at a time. The *Ondog* of the title - supposedly Mongolian for dinosaur egg - is the fertility symbol that shapes the film, looming in the background as a cow goes into labor and at the end of the film, when Wang hints that the herdsman's solitary existence might be coming to an end.—Reuters

## 'Angry Young Man' actor Albert Finney dies aged 82

Veteran actor Albert Finney, who found fame as one of Britain's "Angry Young Men" of the 1950s and 60s and went on to star in films including "Murder on the Orient Express" and "Erin Brockovich", has died at the age of 82, a family spokesman said Friday. Finney, who received four best actor Oscar nominations and won three Golden Globes, "passed away peacefully after a short illness with those closest to him by his side", the spokesman said.

A Shakespearean actor, he mixed his movie career with television roles and acclaimed stage performances. He made his name in the gritty kitchen-sink drama "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" in 1960, becoming part of the wave of working-class actors and writers who revolutionised British film and television at the time known as the "Angry Young Men".

He gave memorable portrayals of Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, British prime minister Winston Churchill, Charles Dickens' miser Ebenezer Scrooge and pope John Paul II. Finney's more recent films included "The Bourne Ultimatum" (2007), "The Bourne Legacy" (2012), and the James Bond film "Skyfall", out the same year.

His four best actor Academy Award nominations were for "Tom Jones" (1963), as Poirot in "Murder on the Orient Express" (1974), "The Dresser" (1983) and "Under the Volcano" (1984). He was also Oscar-nominated for best supporting actor for his performance as a gruff lawyer in "Erin Brockovich" (2000).

## Staple of stage and screen

Born in 1936, Finney, a bookmaker's son, grew up in Manchester, northwest England and graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1955. He started out in Shakespeare plays before portraying the titular hero in the Oscar-winning adventure-comedy "Tom Jones", which made him a major film star. Shortly before his "Tom Jones" breakthrough, he turned down the title role in the epic "Lawrence of Arabia", which went to Peter O'Toole.

Finney appeared and sang in "Scrooge" (1970) and "Annie" (1982), in which he played tycoon Oliver "Daddy" Warbucks.

He was a regular at London's Old Vic theatre, which said Friday: "His performances in plays by Shakespeare, Chekhov and other iconic playwrights throughout the 60s, 70s and 80s stand apart as some of the greatest in our 200-year history." He was honored by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts with the BAFTA Fellowship lifetime achievement award in 2001.

Finney racked up 13 BAFTA nominations-nine for film and four for television. He won two: most promising newcomer for "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" in 1960, and in 2002 for his portrayal of Churchill in "The Gathering Storm". BAFTA said it was "deeply saddened" to hear of his passing.

## Bond swansong

His Golden Globes were awarded for "Tom Jones", "Scrooge" and "The Gathering Storm", which also earned him an Emmy Award. At the London stage Olivier Awards, he won the best actor gong in 1986 for "Orphans". In "Skyfall", Finney played the Bond family's gamekeeper Kincade. Daniel Craig, who played Bond, said: "The world has lost a giant. 'Wherever Albert is now, I hope there are horses and good company,'" he added, referencing the film.

The movie's director Sam Mendes added: "He really was one of the greats: a brilliant, beautiful, big-hearted, life loving delight of a man. He will be terribly missed." Bond producers Michael G Wilson and Barbara Broccoli added that were "heartbroken". A tweet on the official James Bond account quoted them as saying: "We are heartbroken at the loss of Albert Finney. It was a privilege to work with him and an honor to have had him as part of our Bond family."

Finney had a son, Simon, with his first wife, actress Jane Wenham. His second wife in the 1970s was the French actress Anouk Aimee. His son and his third wife Pene Delmage were at his bedside in London's Royal Marsden Hospital, where he had been for the past month. Finney's funeral will be held in private.—AFP



In this file photo British actor Albert Finney arrives to attend the premiere of his new film 'Erin Brockovich' in Los Angeles. — AFP



# Models walk the New York runway to fight LGBT+ suicide

Models strut the runway during New York's semi-annual Fashion Week to help prevent suicide among LGBT+ teens, taking advantage of the crowds and attention to raise awareness of the risk to more than 1 million young people. Dubbed #YOLO: You Only Live Once, the show yesterday is aimed at raising money for the anti-suicide cause, organizers said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly a third of LGBT+ high school students seriously considered suicide in 2015 compared to 6 percent of heterosexual youth. On Saturday, the show by Supermodels Unlimited Magazine, a beauty industry publication for women, hopes to reach the upscale and trendsetting crowd to talk about stopping suicide.

"As a society, we don't talk about it," Kimberly Clark, Supermodel Unlimited's editor in chief said. "It's OK to be sad. It's OK to not be OK. Let's break the stigma." Clark described suicide as an epidemic that has touched everyone in the industry in some way. Even industry leaders like Kate Spade, who took her life in June, feel they cannot talk about their pain, Clark said.

"If somebody like Kate Spade can't talk about what she's going through, how can we teach these kids to talk about it: All the proceeds of the show go to The Trevor

Project, a suicide-prevention group for LGBT+ people under age 25. The funds raised will contribute to the organization's daily operations, which include multiple emergency phone banks and chat systems that youth considering suicide can call for help, Trevor Project leader Amit Paley said.

"I think it's really important and will help save lives," Paley said. Paley started working at the Trevor Project as a volunteer on the phone lines, the organization's first line of defense, and said he was surprised by the effectiveness a conversation can have in preventing suicide. "In many cases, it is the first time that they are hearing someone say, I see you for who you are. I am proud of you for being who you are," said Paley.

This weekend's event has already garnered support from models, musicians and reality TV stars personally affected by suicide and allies of the LGBT+ community. Fashion photographer and reality star Erika Barker will walk the runway to honor transgender military members. America's Next Top Model contestant Jeana Turner will also walk, and singer and American Idol contestant Effie Passero will close the show.—Reuters



(Left to right) Kiki Layne, Sadie Sink, Julia Garner, and Maggie Gyllenhaal attend the Kate Spade AW19 Collection at Cipriani 25 Broadway during New York Fashion Week in New York City. — AFP photos



Models walk the runway at the Kate Spade AW19 Collection at Cipriani 25 Broadway in New York City.



Kate Spade Creative Director Nicola Glass walks the runway at the Kate Spade AW19 Collection at Cipriani 25 Broadway in New York City.



## Joyalukkas unveils exciting jewellery designs under 'Be Mine', for Valentine's Day celebration

Dubai: The world's favourite jeweller, Joyalukkas, has unveiled its exclusive & exciting Be Mine Valentine collection for Valentine's Day celebration. The limited-edition collection features intimate heart-themed jewellery including pendants, rings and bracelets in certified diamonds, rose and yellow gold. To make the celebration of love all the more special, free gold coin offer has also been announced for purchases above KD 250.

Mr. Joy Alukkas, Chairman & MD, Joyalukkas Group quoted during the occasion "Love is the most powerful emotion and the highest form of happiness; our Be Mine collection is crafted with passion to reflect that everlasting love. Our Be Mine collection has been well received by our patrons over the years; and this year, we have added more style, patterns and designs based on current trends, and we are sure it will appeal to people from all generations of life."



During the promotion period, customers will get 1 gram of Gold Coin free on purchase of Diamond, Polki and Pearl Jewellery worth KD 250. Similarly, customers will get 2 grams of Gold Coin free on purchase of Diamond, Polki and Pearl Jewellery worth KD 400. Apart from that, customers can also enjoy 0% deduction on Gold Exchange. Exclusive gift boxes with the Valentine's Day theme has been designed for the new collection, making it an ideal choice to gift your loved ones. The offer is valid till 16th February 2019 at all Joyalukkas branches across the world.



Lifestyle | Features

Basic black tuxes are out: A-list men experiment on red carpet

The basic black tux is a thing of the past. Bring on the flowery harnesses, patterned jackets and brightly colored hats. The men of Hollywood and the music biz are no longer letting their female peers grab all the attention on the red carpet. The more experimental sartorial statements by entertainers and athletes at high-profile events is a sign of a new age in men's fashion, one that is free of stereotypes.

New age in men's fashion

A decade ago, at the 2009 Oscars, the men on the red carpet looked like a colony of penguins-white shirts and black tuxedos, all in a row. But at the Golden Globes in January 2019, change was everywhere: from Timothee Chalamet's sparking Louis Vuitton harness to Idris Elba's bright green jacket and Bradley Cooper's white suit. Then at the Screen Actors Guild awards, "Black Panther" stars Chadwick Boseman (brown Zegna leaf print jacket) and Michael B. Jordan (floral Vuitton harness over a blue suit) took it up a notch.

The Grammys are on Sunday and the Oscars are on February 24, so the men of showbiz have a few more key moments this awards season to strut their stuff. "There have always been some men who have dressed outside the box, but only within the past two years or so has this become more accepted in mainstream media," says Andrew Gelwicks, a stylist to young celebrities. For Sascha Lilic, who has worked with Lenny Kravitz and Adrien Brody, men "sort of speak to the theme, but you

can see a guy in a tuxedo with sneakers, or with a sweat-shirt under a tuxedo." "It just shows that they're more in touch with their creative side," Lilic added.

Singer and music producer Pharrell Williams and Oscar-winning actor Jared Leto were among the first to adopt a looser, more evocative style. And of course, the fashion OGs are Spike Lee and Mickey Rourke. At the Golden Globes, Lee rocked an all-purple look. "We now live amongst a generation who thrive to see what new trends male celebrities bring to the red carpet," said stylist Danyul Brown, who has notably worked with singer John Legend and rapper Tyga. "It's just as competitive today to get 'Best Dressed' for a man, as it is for a woman."

Evolving societal norms

This men's liberation movement on the red carpet signifies a wider societal trend-a redefinition of masculinity and the blurring of boundaries between the sexes. "People now have the ability to express their gender, however they identify, in broader terms," said Gelwicks. "The way we dress is a huge part of how express our identity." Attitudes are quickly changing, industry experts say. "Women are allowing men to get more in touch with their creativity without thinking, 'He stole something from my closet' or 'It's very feminine,'" Lilic explains.

Another factor is the culture of working out, and the "skinny" trouser trend pioneered by Hedi Slimane. "Men are looking after themselves more and more," Lilic says. And the explosion of social media has inspired men and women to adopt a more personal style-to stand out from the rest of the people posting their outfit of the day on Instagram. "Men want attention-they want to be recognized and written about," says Brown. "They enjoy it when they are complimented on their appearance."

The revolution on the red carpet has taken these changes up to the next level-well beyond a small group of



In this file photo Spike Lee arrives for the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton hotel in Beverly Hills, California.



In this file photo Darren Criss arrives for the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards, at the Beverly Hilton hotel in Beverly Hills, California.



In this file photo Mahershala Ali poses in the press room during the 25th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. — AFP photos

celebrities with fashion labels clamoring for them to wear their fun creations. "The red carpet-and not forgetting the designers and stylists that work behind the scenes-are at the forefront of inspiring the rest of us when choosing what to wear," Brown says. Stylists-who were long searching for the coolest basic tux, even though most of them looked similar-say their business has totally changed.

"I'm now able to experiment with so many other options," says Gelwicks. "Certain clients are of course more open to pushing the boundaries than others, but even men I work with who want to do a suit and tie will

opt for a more 'out-there' tie or shoe." Lilic says that stylists dressing men now must "put the same work and thought into it as we do for women."

"You can't just come with a tuxedo. You have to think about the person that he is, that he wants to be and what story he wants to tell at this very moment by expressing himself through his clothes," he says. "Yes, it is more work for us but it is actually very nice because we get to do our work-we get to play with the clothes."—AFP



An Inuit artisan sews a parka coat for Canada Goose's new collection. — Reuters

From parkas to luxury silk, businesses tackle cultural appropriation

One of the fashion's most enduring trends is to draw inspiration from other cultures' traditional arts and crafts. But the extent to which fashion houses profit from these designs without acknowledging their origins has sparked accusations of cultural appropriation in recent years. Amid this growing backlash, luxury outdoor brand Canada Goose is paying homage to the Inuit, who originally created the fur-lined cold-weather parka coat that the company has become famous for selling.

This week it launched a new business venture, Project Atigi, which aims to acknowledge and support Inuit communities in Northern Canada. Canada Goose commissioned 14 Inuit seamstresses to each make a coat of their own design, using fabrics selected by the company. The seamstresses own the copyright for their coats, rather than Canada Goose. "As we're moving forward into modern times, indigenous cultures are being acknowledged for their ingenuity and their craft," Mishaël Gordon, one of the Project Atigi seamstresses, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I felt like this was an example of appreciation of indigenous culture, not appropriation," she said. Canada Goose set up Project Atigi as a social enterprise, which is a business that seeks to do good as well as make profit, so it would benefit the Inuit directly. The seamstresses were paid for their work and all the profits will go to a charity that works to improve the health and wellbeing of Inuit in Canada.

\$900 coats

Dani Reiss, president and chief executive of Canada Goose, said the company had a responsibility to help the northern region of Canada, where the company originates from, to prosper. "We know that 'the north is open for business' and this is our way to create social entrepreneurship in the region," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an email. Canada Goose, which was founded in Toronto 62 years ago, sells coats for about \$900. The Inuit designs are on display in its New York store and will be sold online this month at between \$5,000 and \$7,500.

It is the company's first foray into social enterprise and-follows protests by animal rights activists over the use of furand duck feathers in its coats. Gordon explained animal fur was still widely used in Inuit culture to protect them from the cold. She said she believed Project Atigi was not motivated solely by good publicity and would benefit the Inuit people. "They are making themselves look great, but they are making Inuit seamstresses look great as well, because they are showcasing our artwork," she said. But Riley Kucheran, an expert on indigenous fashion design, said the contribution to charity amounted to "a drop in a very large bucket". "The partnership does some good work in bringing attention to the brilliancy of Inuit design, but I think Canada Goose could do more," said Kucheran, who is studying for a PhD at Ryerson University in Toronto, in an email. "We'll have to wait and see if it's truly a reciprocal relationship."

Beg, borrow or steal?

Awareness of cultural appropriation is growing, but big brands still trip up. Designer Isabel Marant was accused of copying an indigenous Mexican design for a dress in 2015. Two years later, Chanel was accused of appropriating Aboriginal culture when it started selling at luxury boomerang for \$1,930. Because social enterprises typically reinvest profits back into the business or a cause, they are in a position to address this wrongdoing by directly giving back to the workers or communities that build them. —Reuters

Louboutin wins Dutch court battle over red-soled shoes

French luxury shoe designer Christian Louboutin said Friday he has won a long-running legal battle against a Dutch company that copied his signature red-soled high-heeled shoes. A court in The Hague ruled that Dutch shoe maker Van Haren must stop selling the look-alike footwear, which went on the market in 2012, and pay damages to Paris-based Louboutin.

The Dutch court ruling follows a general decision last year by the European Court of Justice that Louboutin could trademark the soles and their use of a red pigment

called Pantone 18 1663TP. "Christian Louboutin warmly welcomes this new judgment, which further strengthens the favorable decisions regarding the validity of the red sole trademark already issued in many countries," the company said in a statement.

The Hague district court said in an order issued on Wednesday that Van Haren's 2012 shoe model Fifth Avenue by Halle Berry "infringes the trademark rights of the French designer." It ordered the Dutch firm to destroy all existing copies of the shoe and to provide details of all outlets in which they were sold. The Hague court had asked the ECJ, the European Union's highest court, to decide on the principle of whether Louboutin's 2010 trademark for the soles was valid.

In a case that vexed the EU's top legal minds, Van Haren had argued that it was impossible to trademark a shape. Louboutin argued, and the ECJ agreed, that the

trademark referred mainly to the color. Louboutin has marketed the red-bottomed shoes for more than a quarter of a century and the glam footwear was featured on the consumerism-worshipping television series "Sex and the City".

Louboutin has faced a series of legal battles over the distinctive soles. A Paris appeals court in May 2018 ordered the French shoe company Kesslord to pay Louboutin damages after it sold red-bottomed shoes. In 2012 a US court also said that Louboutin could trademark the red soles, reversing an earlier ruling that would have allowed rival Yves Saint Laurent to paint its outsoles scarlet. But one year before that Louboutin lost a separate case in France against the Spanish clothing chain Zara.—AFP

Mandela's life and legacy celebrated in London exhibition

For a man who spent nearly three decades in prison, the passage of time was no doubt important to Nelson Mandela. So it is perhaps fitting that an exhibition opening in London on Friday about his life and legacy features his watch, which was always kept on South African time wherever he travelled in the world as the country's first black president.

The interactive exhibition takes a journey though Mandela's life including his upbringing in rural Eastern Cape as the son of a chief, his 27-year incarceration and the end of apartheid when he became president in 1994. Mandela died in 2013 aged 95. It features previously unseen footage alongside more than 150 artifacts such as clothes, campaign posters and travel documents on loan from the family of the Nobel Peace Prizewinner

and museums and archives worldwide.

"My grandfather, during his presidential years, he wore a watch, a Philippe Patek watch, and I've made that watch available because he gave me that watch and I think because he was such a committed person and always on time," grandson Mandela Mandela told Reuters. "Even when he travelled abroad his watch remained on South African time which we found hilarious as a family, but that watch is also here on display."

London is the first city to host the touring show "Mandela: The Official Exhibition" before it is permanently mounted in Mandela's birthplace Mvezo. "It's our generation's responsibility to ensure that we record history for generations to come to understand the character and to understand the glorious human achievement of Nelson Mandela," Zelda La Grange, his personal presidential aide and the exhibition's guest curator, said. — Reuters

Mini mice architecture draws crowds in Sweden

With a grin spreading across his face, a man bends down to take a photo of a miniature rubbish bin and street sign at the foot of a building in the southern Swedish town of Malmö. Lost items from a dollhouse? No, the Lilliputian objects are the latest installation from the artist's collective Anonymouse, known for its urban architecture for mice with intricate decor worthy of an animated film like "Ratatouille".

"One morning, there was a crowd of people outside the building and we couldn't understand why," says 74-year-old resident Irene Bengtsson. "We came down to the street and we saw this little installation," she told AFP, visibly tickled by the creative initiative. Built into the building's air vent at pavement level are two little pastel-colored storefronts that would fit into a shoebox. There's a dance school for mice on the top floor, over a barbershop and a shelter for "lost and travelling" mice.

As is their custom, Anonymouse installed the piece in utmost secret. The collective presented their first artwork-a restaurant and nut shop-in December 2016. "We were a group of friends sitting and talking about our shared love of tales where animals live in a world parallel to ours, where they take care of things we lose," an Anonymouse member who pre-

sented themselves as Yasha Mousekewitz told AFP in an email. They wanted to try to reproduce a microcosm of that world.

"We thought it would spread joy among passersby. But it took on even bigger proportions, so we decided to continue," Mousekewitz said. "I like to see unexpected things in the city, well thought-out, funny things. I like it," said passerby Jenny Berg. Even under a glacial rain, pedestrians stop to admire the details inside the "Paw to Paw" shelter, the chair at the "Hair and Forever" barbershop, and Mama Mousekewitz dance studio.

Anonymouse have set up more than 10 installations so far, including an amusement park, travel agency and antiques shop, with three to seven artists involved depending on the project. The group has also done other installations in other cities in Sweden, as well as in Bayonne in south-western France and the Isle of Man. The installations use materials the artists find or have collected. "Then we try to think, 'What would a mouse be able to use this for?'," Mousekewitz said. The artworks are occasionally vandalized, and if that happens, "then we take them down." The Malmö project was unveiled in mid-December.—AFP



Christian believers pray over the Stone of the Anointing, inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that is traditionally believed to be the site of Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection, in Jerusalem's Old City. — AFP photos

'Prison of Christ' reopens in Jerusalem's Holy Sepulchre

A chapel built on a site where Christians believe Jesus was imprisoned by Roman soldiers ahead of his crucifixion has reopened after repairs, a Church official said Friday. The site-in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre-was repaired over a period of several years after a fire caused major damage. "It is in this prison that Jesus was detained after he carried the cross along the Via Dolorosa," a senior Greek Orthodox official said Friday, asking not to be named. "Since the end of January, it has once again become a place of prayer and contemplation", the official said.

The chapel houses two holes dug into rock that were used, according to tradition, to bind the feet of Jesus. The two holes are protected by a window and are adorned by an icon representing Jesus' hobbled feet and hands. The chapel is under the sovereignty of the Greek Orthodox Church. The site is also revered by the Armenian Church, as well as by representatives of the Catholic Church. According to tradition, the Holy Sepulchre stands on the site of Jesus' crucifixion and burial. The site is in the old city of Israeli annexed east Jerusalem.—AFP



A picture shows Jesus' pillory inside the church of the Holy Sepulchre.



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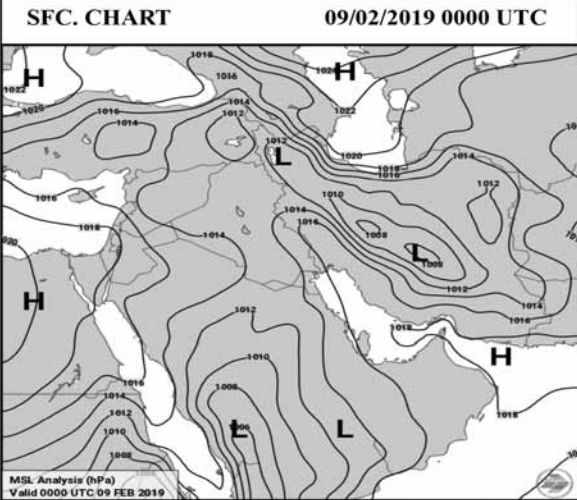
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## Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 42 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times.

**BY NIGHT:** Cool and Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly wind to wind, with speed of 08 - 35 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	<div>SFC. CHART09/02/2019 0000 UTC</div>	
KUWAIT CITY	21 °C	17 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	20 °C	15 °C		
ABDALY	20 °C	14 °C		
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C		
JAHRA	21 °C	15 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	20 °C	17 °C		
SALMIYAH	17 °C	16 °C		
AHMADI	18 °C	17 °C		
NUWAISIB	22 °C	15 °C		
WAFRA	23 °C	14 °C		
SALMY	20 °C	13 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	02/10	Fair and some scattered clouds will appear	21 °C	12 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 28 km/h
Monday	02/11	Cool and Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for rain that might be thundery	17 °C	13 °C	NW	12 - 45 km/h
Tuesday	02/12	Fair with a chance for rising dust over open areas	20 °C	11 °C	NW	15 - 45 km/h
Wednesday	02/13	Fair	20 °C	11 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 28 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:12
Sunrise	06:33
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:10
Sunset	17:33
Isha	18:51

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	00 °C
MIN. Temp.	00 °C
MAX. RH	00 %
MIN. RH	00 %
MAX. Wind	N 00 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	
0 mm	

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
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## EMERGENCY

112

## Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
Jet Airways	22924455
FlyDubai	22414400
Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306
Middle East Airlines`	22423073
Lufthansa	22422493
PIA	22421044
Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Indian Airlines	22456700
Oman Air	22958787
Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Aeroflot	22404838/9



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

## DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 10/2/2019				Departure Flights on Sunday 10/2/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	254	Amman	00:05	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:15	JZR	113	Doha	13:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	JZR	123	Dubai	13:40
JZR	734	Cairo	00:50	MSR	611	Cairo	14:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:50	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:00	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
DLH	625	Dammam	01:25	JZR	103	Bahrain	14:40
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	QTR	1079	Doha	15:00
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
IGO	1757	Kochi	01:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
JZR	722	Alexandria	02:15	KAC	673	Dubai	15:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	SVB	501	Jeddah	15:45
RBG	551	Alexandria	02:25	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	16:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
RJA	648	Amman	02:55	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KKK	1268	Istanbul	03:05	KAC	283	Dhaka	16:30
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:10	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:40
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:45
JZR	1736	Cairo	03:30	SAW	706	Damascus	17:00
KAC	414	Bangkok	04:00	KAC	675	Dubai	17:05
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1073	Doha	17:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:00
JZR	406	Kochi	04:45	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	382	Delhi	05:05	JZR	733	Cairo	18:10
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:10	SVB	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	404	Hyderabad	05:10	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	KAC	621	Doha	18:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	05:15	JZR	127	Dubai	18:35
JZR	112	Doha	05:25	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:40
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	JZR	501	Lahore	18:40
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	KAC	381	Delhi	18:55
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:05	JZR	253	Amman	19:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:25	FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
QTR	8511	Doha	06:40	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:55	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
BAW	157	London	07:05	QTR	1081	Doha	19:55
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	RJA	641	Amman	20:00
JZR	708	Luxor	07:15	SYR	342	Damascus	20:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:35	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	304	Mumbai	08:20	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	301	Mumbai	20:35
JZR	408	Ahmedabad	08:45	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	20:40
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:55
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:55
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	357	Kochi	21:00
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	DLH	624	Dammam	21:30
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	QTR	1089	Doha	22:00
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
SVB	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	1543	Cairo	22:15
JZR	702	Asyut	11:05	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
JZR	122	Dubai	11:10	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
JZR	116	Doha	11:10	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
QTR	1074	Jeddah	11:35	KAC	383	Delhi	22:30
JZR	216	Jeddah	11:45	KAC	303	Mumbai	22:30
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:25	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	JAI	573	Mumbai	23:00
JZR	714	Sohag	12:35	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:25



# Thai princess premiership bid scuttled as party obeys king

**BANGKOK:** Thai Princess Ubolratana's unprecedented attempt to become the country's next prime minister was abruptly nixed yesterday after her party agreed to comply with a command from the king opposing the plan. The party's announcement effectively blocking Ubolratana's candidacy came after an extraordinary rebuke by her brother King Maha Vajiralongkorn, and removes a hurdle for the ruling junta to hold onto power after the March 24 vote - the first since a 2014 coup.

The Thai Raksa Chart party, affiliated with the powerful Shinawatra political clan, had announced the princess as their candidate Friday morning. The move rattled the status quo and threatened the ambitions of the generals who have controlled Thailand since they toppled the administration of Yingluck Shinawatra almost five years ago. But the Thai king torpedoed his sister's bid in a sharply worded statement the same day that said bringing senior royal family members into politics was against tradition and "highly inappropriate".

Thai Raksa Chart responded swiftly, cancelling a campaign event yesterday and issuing a statement saying it "complies with the royal command". Thailand has some of the most severe lese majeste laws in the world and the king's word is seldom challenged. Royalist Thais and celebrities praised the intervention on social media after the order, writing "long live the king".

Others expressed unhappiness with groups such as Thai Raksa Chart linked to Yingluck and her brother Thaksin, who was ousted in a 2006 coup. An activist who called himself Champ 1984 said he was "disappointed" with the idea of a pro-democracy party enlisting a royal family member and would now vote for a different party.

Analysts say the events of the past day will help the military to consolidate power and tilt the odds in favor of junta chief Prayut Chan-O-Cha. Prayut is standing as premier for the Phalang Pracharat party, a group aligned with the regime. The military has "gained the upper hand", said professor Anusorn Unno from Thammasat University, adding that it is poised to perform well in the vote.

Even before Thai Raksa Chart's reversal, many warned the palace statement had ended the princess' chances. "The palace disapproval invalidates her candidacy," said Puangthong Pawakapan, professor of political science at Chulalongkorn University. An Election Commission official said it is reviewing all candidate applications and will finish the process this week, though few expect it to divert from the royal order.

Historian Chris Baker said that while he could not predict what would happen next, the language in the palace statement was strong and "very firm". Thailand

is a constitutional monarchy and has not had a royal run for frontline office since 1932. The 67-year-old princess has yet to address the rebuke head on. She thanked supporters yesterday on her widely followed Instagram account, saying vaguely that she wanted Thailand to "move forward". The king did not criticize the princess directly and seemed to focus blame on political party members who brought her on board.

Both Yingluck and Thaksin live in self-exile to avoid charges which they say are politically motivated. Observers had said Thaksin and the party would not have teamed up with the princess without royal approval. But the bold play appears to have backfired dramatically on Thaksin. "After last night the king's intervention had an effect of discrediting Thaksin," Anusorn said.

Ubolratana is the first-born of former king Bhumibol Adulyadej. She gave up her royal titles when she married an American in 1972, but they divorced and she moved back to Thailand. Ubolratana is an unusually public figure for a royal, having starred in movies and maintaining an active social media footprint. While she said she was exercising her rights as a commoner to stand for prime minister, the statement from the palace said she is she is "still a member of the House of Chakri", referring to the name of the dynasty. — AFP



**BANGKOK:** An official of Raksa Chart party submits the registration document of Thai Princess Ubolratana to election commission officials in on Friday. — AFP

## Sisi set to chair African Union

**CAIRO:** Nearly six years after the African Union shut it out in the cold, Egypt will take the organization's helm - and strengthening multilateral powers is unlikely to be on the agenda. Cairo's tenure "will probably concentrate on security and peacekeeping", said Ashraf Swelam, who heads a think tank linked to the country's foreign ministry. Incoming AU chair President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi will likely focus less on "financial and administrative reform" than his predecessor, Swelam added.

Such reform was the cornerstone of outgoing AU chairman Paul Kagame's year in the role. The Rwandan president has pushed for a continent-wide import tax to fund the AU and reduce its dependence on external donors, who still pay for more than half the institution's annual budget. An African diplomat told AFP that Egypt - along with fellow heavyweights South Africa and Nigeria - does not want a powerful AU.

This diplomat, who has been tracking AU affairs for over a decade, said Cairo has "never forgotten" its suspension in 2013. The near year-long lock out from the AU came after Egypt's army deposed Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, who in 2012 had become the country's first democratically elected

president. Sisi is due to take the helm at the AU's biannual heads of state assembly, which takes place on Feb 10 and 11 at the AU's gleaming headquarters in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa.

As usual, the continent's multiple security crises will be high on the VIPs' agenda. Rwanda's ambitious funding proposal will also likely be on the table. But it has met resistance not only from Egypt, but other member states, so may fail to pass. Reform of the AU Commission is an even more sensitive topic. In Nov 2018, most states rejected a proposal to give the head of the AU's executive organ the power to name deputies and commissioners.

But the Egyptians are "fully engaged" in pushing other AU reforms, according to an AU official. One key initiative backed by Cairo is the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), an initiative agreed by 44 of 55 member states in March 2018. The single market is a flagship of the AU's "Agenda 2063" program, conceived as a strategic framework for socioeconomic transformation. However, the trade pact has met resistance from South Africa.

Sisi will therefore need to push hard for ratification of this accord, if it is to come into effect. For Elissa Jobson, head of Africa advocacy at the International Crisis Group, Sisi can be expected to "use the presidency to increase his country's standing among other African states". "This is not a departure from previous administrations", particularly that of the outgoing chairman, she added. — AFP

## Quebec mosque shooter gets life...

Continued from Page 1

But he also noted the killer's "visceral hatred of Muslim immigrants", "You killed six of your compatriots whose only crime was to be different than yourself," Huot said in court. "With your hatred and racism, you've ruined their lives, yours and your parents', and the crime you've done deserves the greatest denunciation," he said.

A university student at the time of the shooting, Bissonnette appeared to have been seduced by nationalist and supremacist ideologies into committing this "unjustified and deadly" massacre that sought to "undermine our fundamental societal values", the judge said. The attack at the Quebec Islamic Cultural Centre in the quiet Sainte-Foy neighborhood of Canada's oldest city, he concluded, will go down in Canadian history "written in blood" as one of this country's worst tragedies.

As the 246-page verdict was read over a six-hour period, Bissonnette sat quietly in the packed courtroom, gazing at his feet while his parents and several friends and family of the victims wiped tears from their eyes. Outside the courtroom, Aymen Derbali, who was left quadriplegic in the shooting, said he was "very upset and astonished" that Bissonnette did not get more time. "I had hoped for justice for the victims, for the people who died, and that the sentence reflected the seriousness of the crime," he said. "This was a very serious attack in a place of worship."

Surrounded by members who lamented having to

face Bissonnette at a parole hearing in the future and relive the tragedy, mosque president Boufeldja Benabdallah said: "We are completely stunned." On Jan 29, 2017, Bissonnette burst into the Quebec City mosque and unleashed a hail of bullets on the 40 men and four children who were chatting among themselves after evening prayers.

Security video footage showed a cold-blooded killer strategically and methodically firing dozens of shots, retreating to a safe area to reload his nine-millimeter pistol at least four times, "like he was playing a video game", recounted one witness. Six men were killed and five were seriously injured. The victims were all dual nationals who emigrated to Canada over recent decades: Two Algerians, two Guineans, a Moroccan and a Tunisian. They were a scholar, a butcher, a daycare operator, a food industry worker, a public servant and a computer programmer - all connected by faith.

Introverted and educated, Bissonnette had been described after his arrest as a white supremacist opposed to Muslim immigration but not affiliated with any group. At the start of his trial in 2017, he said he had been suicidal, "swept away by fear and by horrible despair", and deeply regretted his "unforgivable" actions. He also told the court he hoped for a "ray of hope at the end of the long, dark tunnel in which I lost myself on January 29".

Survivors testified about those harrowing moments under fire and their suffering since the shooting: One leaving a trail of smeared blood on the floor while dragging himself to a hiding spot, another still feeling pain from bullet debris left in his leg after surgery. Many said they are struggling with anxiety, including one man who said he now plots a safe exit whenever he goes out to a coffee shop or a store. — AFP

## Kuwait calls to empower women...

Continued from Page 1

and families, and secure their safety when testifying in court against assault criminals, he added. Munayyekh mentioned regional and non-regional organizations' role in stopping sexual violence in conflict, lauding Arab League's recent efforts to stop all forms of violence against women, particularly sexual assault, and provide all necessary resources to rehabilitate sexual violence victims. Achieving justice for war and conflict survivors is an inseparable part of attaining effective accountability, which would prevent and stop hideous crimes against humanity, he said, adding achieving justice for victims of sexual violence in conflict is also an

inseparable part of attaining a permanent peace.

The Kuwaiti diplomat stressed the importance of bolstering close cooperation between the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict and member-states in order to empower survivors to obtain justice and compensations, respect to their cultures, care for their physical, mental and social health, and economic support to reach sustainable justice.

He also expressed his country's support and encouragement of the efforts exerted by a number of international bodies specialized in monitoring most dangerous crimes and violations around the world, including sexual violence, and bringing their perpetrators to justice.

Next year will mark the 20th anniversary of UNSC resolution 1325, Munayyekh noted, hoping to contribute with UN partners in the forthcoming period to attain a quantum leap in empowering women effectively to achieve peace and stability in the world, particularly the Middle East region. — KUNA

## Sex, plots and blackmail: Toxic ...

Continued from Page 1

what they sent me, despite the personal cost and embarrassment they threaten," Bezos wrote.

He maintained that the Enquirer demanded that he and his security consultant Gavin de Becker, who is leading the probe, publicly state they had "no knowledge or basis for suggesting that AMI's coverage was politically motivated or influenced by political forces". The revelations appear to show the gossip tabloid trying to smear Bezos - whom Trump has repeatedly attacked as the owner of The Washington Post, a paper he claims is biased against him.

Bezos meanwhile hinted he may have been targeted by pro-Trump forces in part because of the Post's coverage of the murder of its contributor Jamal Khashoggi, strangled and dismembered by Saudi agents in the kingdom's Istanbul consulate in October. "The Post's essential and unrelenting coverage of the murder of its columnist Jamal Khashoggi is undoubtedly unpopular in certain circles," he wrote. Pointing at connections between Pecker, AMI and the government of Saudi Arabia, Bezos said he learned that "Pecker is 'apoplectic' about our investigation," and that "the Saudi angle seems to hit a particularly sensitive nerve".

American Media said in an emailed statement that it "believes fervently that it acted lawfully in the reporting of the story of Mr Bezos" and made "good faith negotiations" with the US billionaire but had decided nonetheless to "promptly and thoroughly investigate the claims" by the Amazon CEO. Bezos pointed out that Pecker recently entered into an immunity deal with federal prosecutors on his role in so-called "catch and kill" stories - in which reports are quashed by paying off sources - about Trump and his alleged mistresses.

But Pecker and his Enquirer colleagues could face fresh criminal investigations based on the Bezos allegations, according to former federal prosecutor Jacob Frenkel. The

allegations "easily could fall into possible violations of federal criminal statutes involving extortion or wire fraud," the attorney said. Bloomberg News reported that federal prosecutors were already reviewing the matter, including whether the tabloid breached its immunity agreement.

Former federal prosecutor Renato Mariotti said however on Twitter he didn't believe they would pursue the company. "Was AMI's action slimy? Yes," Mariotti posted. "Is it consistent with some of the questionable practices that AMI engaged in on behalf of Trump and others? Yes. But is this the sort of case federal prosecutors would charge as extortion? No."

The case highlights a politically-tinged feud between the Post owner and the supermarket tabloid, with Bezos asserting that he would not be intimidated. Releasing the email exchanges, he said, shows "the precise details of their extortionate proposal: They will publish the personal photos unless Gavin de Becker and I make the specific false public statement to the press... And there's an associated threat: They'll keep the photos on hand and publish them in the future if we ever deviate from that lie."

"If in my position I can't stand up to this kind of extortion, how many people can?" Bezos wrote on Medium. The bombshell from Bezos brought a tidal wave of reactions, many praising his decision to face down Pecker and the Enquirer. "Not everyone can stand up to bullies, thugs and extortionists, but if you can, you should," said rival tech entrepreneur Pierre Omidyar, founder of eBay. Until recently, Bezos had been seen as a bookish but determined entrepreneur, running his businesses with ruthless determination but avoiding the limelight - steering clear of confronting Trump after a series of attacks by the president.

But the disclosures are likely to deepen the rift between Bezos and Trump, who claims that the tech entrepreneur is using the newspaper for his own purposes. Taking aim last month at Bezos, Trump alluded to Enquirer reporting of the billionaire's relationship with the former news anchor and entertainment reporter, Lauren Sanchez. "So sorry to hear the news about Jeff Bozo being taken down by a competitor whose reporting, I understand, is far more accurate than the reporting in his lobbyist newspaper, the Amazon Washington Post," he tweeted. — AFP

## Fast-food fan Trump in 'very good health'

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump, who delights in confounding health experts with his junk food cravings and disinclination to exercise, is "in very good health", his doctor declared Friday following an annual medical checkup. "I am happy to announce the president of the United States is in very good health and I anticipate he will remain so for the duration of his presidency, and beyond," chief physician Sean Conley said in a memorandum released by the White House.

The Marine One helicopter returned the 72-year-old head of state to the White House from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in the Washington suburb of Bethesda after a full four hours of prodding, poking and testing. Dressed in a long dark overcoat, Trump gave a thumb's up, but did not respond to reporters' questions about how he was feeling. It remained unclear how many of the test results would eventually be made public.

Last year, everything from the president's cholesterol levels (high) to weight (too high 108 kg) was released. Trump's then chief physician, Ronny Jackson - who has since run into trouble over alleged ethical misconduct - also held an unusually detailed press conference in which he declared Trump to be in "excellent health". On the plus side, Trump doesn't smoke and is a noted teetotaler. He says he's never even had a beer. Less good: the former real estate tycoon and reality TV performer

unashamedly embraces the couch potato life.

Not for Trump the basketball sessions that Barack Obama sweated through in the White House, or the bike rides of George W Bush. Trump loves the more sedate game of golf, but rides a cart between holes and has said that anything more strenuous is actually bad for your health. "All my friends who work out all the time, they're going for knee replacements, hip replacements - they're a disaster," Trump told The New York Times in 2015.

Aides said he now eats more fish than he used to but still enjoys steaks, well done with ketchup on the side, and fried potatoes prepared by the chefs at the White House and at the Trump International Hotel in Washington.

Trump also has long had a well-documented fondness for fast food. Trump has admitted he has not hewn closely to his diet plan. Nor has he been known to enter the White House gym for a workout.

"The president received a diet and exercise plan last year after his annual physical, but the president admits he has not followed it religiously," White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said. Trump daily takes a 10 mg dose of the drug Crestor to lower cholesterol, 81 mg of aspirin for cardiac health, and 1 mg of the drug Propecia for prevention of male pattern hair loss.

Trump has described his chief exercise as walking around the White House compound and standing up at public events. The 45th president's diet, reportedly involving legendary amounts of Coke and red meat, also seems to defy most doctors' orders. In January, Trump hosted the strapping athletes of America's champion college football team, the Clemson Tigers, with a mountain of hamburgers and pizzas. According to Jackson last year, Trump's secret is genes. "Incredibly good genes," he said. "It's just the way God made him." — Agencies

renewable energy in the coming decades, in line with the Paris Agreement on climate change, which stipulates a reduction in greenhouse emissions. The IMF last month lowered its economic growth forecasts for Saudi Arabia - the world's top crude exporter - and the wider Middle East and North Africa region due to a renewed fall in oil prices, low output and geopolitical tensions.

Lagarde welcomed both spending and revenue reforms, including the introduction of a value added-tax (VAT) and excise duty by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. But she urged more reforms, anti-corruption measures and transparency. "The economic path ahead for the region is challenging," she added. — AFP

## IMF warns of high Arab...

Continued from Page 1

of GDP, accelerated by the crash in oil prices around five years ago, Lagarde said. "The oil exporters have not fully recovered from the dramatic oil price shock of 2014," she said. "Modest growth continues, but the outlook is highly uncertain."

Lagarde said oil producing countries should look to



# Jansrud denies Svindal dream finale to win downhill gold

## Denies team mate Svindal a fairytale finish to his career

**ARE:** Kjetil Jansrud led a Norwegian one-two to win gold in a weather-hit men's downhill at the Alpine skiing world championships yesterday, denying team mate Aksel Lund Svindal a fairytale finish to his career by the narrowest of margins.

Jansrud, 33, made light of the falling snow and poor visibility to win by 0.02 seconds and claim a first world title, reversing the result at last year's Winter Olympics when Svindal came out on top in the blue-riband event.

Svindal, who will end his glittering career after the championships, came agonisingly close to becoming the first man to win three downhill world titles but a small mistake in the closing stages of his descent probably cost the 36-year-old.

"I was ready today, it's been an emotional couple of weeks and I wanted to get it over with," Svindal, who has battled persistent knee injuries, said. Svindal becomes only the third man to win medals at six different world championships.

Austria's Vincent Kriechmayr was third, 0.33 seconds back, to earn his second medal of the week after sharing silver with Johan Clarey in the Super-G. After silver medals in combined and Super-G in the last two world championships, Jansrud, who has struggled in the speed events this season, finally made it one step further up the podium as he beat his great friend and rival.

"We've been lucky enough to share a few one-twins," Jansrud said in the finish after Austrian Hannes Reichelt, the 45th starter despite wearing bib number one, failed to threaten to spoil the Vikings' party.

"I had missed a (world gold) until now so that makes it bigger. Doing this in Aksel's last race is a real honour. It's a perfect day. "I brought everything I had in my heart and mind today." The race had been delayed for an hour with low cloud at the top of the course but organisers decided to run it, on a lowered start, despite heavy snow falling throughout.

Super-G winner Dominik Paris, who came sixth, suggested the race should not have been run. "It was tough with the weather," the Italian said. "I'm happy for Aksel in his last race but maybe they shouldn't have started today. It was foggy, then it started snowing hard and there was too much snow on the race line."

Reichelt, one of the quickest in the training runs, had deliberately given himself a low starting place by not showing up for the bib ceremony, but his gamble backfired as he got snagged in some soft snow and lost time.

Switzerland's Beat Feuz, who was bidding to become the first man to successfully defend the downhill world title since compatriot Bernhard Russi won in 1970 and in 1972, was fourth. — Reuters



**ARE: (L-R) Second placed Norway's Aksel Lund Svindal, winner Norway's Kjetil Jansrud and third placed Austria's Vincent Kriechmayr celebrate with a Norwegian flag during the flowers ceremony after the Men's Downhill event of the 2019 FIS Alpine Ski World Championships. — AFP**

## Vonn, long lost Norwegian adopted by Aksel Svindal's 'Attacking Vikings'

**ARE:** US ski star Lindsey Vonn bows out from skiing this weekend at the same time as Aksel Lund Svindal, a Norwegian legend two years her senior whom she has described as her "life coach".

Vonn has decided to hang up her catsuit at the age of 34 after Sunday's downhill, her 82 World Cup wins tantalisingly short of the record held by Ingemar Stenmark (86). The multi-medalled Svindal, 36, will also shelve his skis and move on from the global circuit.

As the end nears, the two skiers are increasingly hampered by nagging knee injuries. "We're both going through the same thing at the exact same time," said Vonn, whose accolades include a record 20 World Cup titles, including four overall, along with 2010 Olympic downill gold and seven world medals, two of which were gold. The American has trained extensively with the Svindal-led Norwegian ski team, dubbed the "Attacking Vikings". "I train with them quite a bit, probably more than the US men," said Vonn, whose great-great grandmother hails from the Norwegian town of Laudal.

"They've always pushed me and always reseeded me as much as I respect them and I find that to be very motivating. "They're always smiling, working hard and very gracious on and off the slope. It's been a privilege to spend time with them."

Svindal and teammate Kjetil Jansrud, 32, have enjoyed a longevity on the World Cup circuit with Vonn which means the trio have also become good friends and confidants. Svindal was effusive in his praise for Vonn, saying: "She's been a great profile for skiing on and off the hill. "She has a reach that goes beyond just racing and that is something everyone involved in skiing should be grateful for because it's important for the sport to have those profiles."

### AN INSPIRATION

Jansrud added: "She's the record-breaking woman out there and has been a source of inspiration for everybody including all the men and us as a team. "We have spent a lot of days training together with the US team



**ARE: File photo shows Lindsey Vonn (C) of the US gets help after she crashed during the women's Super G event of the 2019 FIS Alpine Ski World Championships at the National Arena in Are, Sweden, on February 5, 2019. — AFP**

and also at the same places as the US women's team, for example in Chile, in Portillo, during the summer. We spend a lot of time together.

"She's a great girl. She's fun and has a way of looking at this sport which is very healthy for the mind: it's everything but you're also having fun and very relaxed with what you're doing. We'll miss her."

Vonn acknowledged that she shared a technical talking point with the Norwegian men. "I talk about their skis with them because I'm on men's skis!" she said. Throughout her career, Vonn long argued with the International Ski Federation (FIS) that she be allowed to compete against men, something the governing body has so far refused to agree to.

**'BAD MISTAKE'**

Svindal and Jansrud consistently gave full backing to Vonn's dream, the former calling FIS' refusal a "bad mistake". "She's done some pretty ballsy stuff," Svindal said of Vonn. "If I was representing the sport at the highest level, I would have allowed her to ski against

the men for instance.

"No matter if you grew up in the desert or on the snow, that's something you can relate to: a girl taking on the guys. "That would have been great marketing for the sport and would have a reach that goes beyond snow-covered mountains."

Jansrud added: "She was welcome to do it, but it ended up being a thing of politics. "If ever there was a girl who could, then Lindsey in her prime would be there. "Just having the question in the mix, 'Should I race against the men?', tells you something about how good she is. There are not many (women ski racers) throughout history of whom you could have asked that question." Vonn admitted to bittersweet feelings going into her final weekend of racing, but underlined that she had at least had someone to whom she could relate. "I don't think a lot of people understand the emotions I'm going through," she said.

"Aksel is in the same position as I am. We're both accepting of where we are. "We both said maybe we should finish out in Are and have a big party!" — AFP

## Davis needs extra time to make weight for title defense

**LOS ANGELES:** Gervonta Davis needed an extra half hour to make weight Friday for his World Boxing Association super featherweight world title defense against Mexican veteran Hugo Ruiz.

Davis, unbeaten with a record of 20-0 with 19 knockouts, came in at 130.2 pounds in his first appearance on the scale, but returned to weigh in under the 130-pound limit at 129.8.

The powerful southpaw was supposed to be defending against three-division champion Abner Mares.

But the 33-year-old Mares (31-3-1, 15 knockouts) pulled out two weeks ago after learning he had suffered a career-threatening detached retina in his right eye in a sparring session.

Ruiz, a former super bantamweight world title holder with a record of 39-4 with 33 knockouts, replaced Mares on 10 days' notice. "The opponent change didn't really affect me," Davis said this week. "I had been sparring someone taller than me in training camp anyway. I think a fighter should be ready and able to adapt to anything that is in front of him in the ring."

"I'm ready and I hope Ruiz is too. He's been telling the media he's going to knock me out, so I hope we get an action packed fight." Ruiz will be fighting just three weeks after posting a unanimous 12-round decision over Alberto Guevara on the undercard of Manny Pacquiao's 12-round demolition of Adrien Broner in Las Vegas.

"I'm in rhythm and in shape," he said. "Davis is a tremendous champion, but he doesn't intimidate me." — AFP

## Guptill set to return for NZ, Bangladesh to miss Shakib

**DHAKA:** New Zealand opener Martin Guptill is set to return from a back injury for the upcoming one-day international series against Bangladesh, selectors said yesterday.

Guptill was ruled out of the ongoing Twenty20 series against India after aggravating a disc in his lower back, but was named for the three-game series against Bangladesh, which starts in Napier on Wednesday.

"We're delighted to have Martin back on the park for this series. He's a world-class player and an integral part of our one-day side," selector Gavin Larsen said in a statement.

Guptill will undergo a fitness test on Sunday after which a final decision will be taken on whether he can partner Henry Nicholls at the top of New Zealand's order.

"He and Henry did a good job opening up in Hamilton against India and they're a combination we want to see some more of in this series," Larsen added.

Mitchell Santner and Todd Astle are the specialist spinners in the squad, with Colin de Grandhomme and Jimmy Neesham taking the pace-bowling all-rounder spots.



**HAMILTON: File photo shows New Zealand's Colin de Grandhomme (L) and Martin Guptill celebrate the wicket of India's Dinesh Karthik during the fourth one-day international cricket match between New Zealand and India at Seddon Park in Hamilton on January 31, 2019. — AFP**

Skipper Kane Williamson is to be rested for the final ODI with Colin Munro standing in as captain.

Bangladesh will be without all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who has been ruled out of the series after fracturing a finger during the Bangladesh Premier League final on Friday.

"An X-ray was done after the match and the results have confirmed a fracture on the left ring finger. The

affected area will now have to be immobilised for around three weeks," said Debashis Chowdhury, the Bangladesh Cricket Board's chief physician.

**New Zealand squad:** Kane Williamson (captain), Todd Astle, Trent Boult, Colin de Grandhomme, Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Colin Munro, Jimmy Neesham, Henry Nicholls, Ross Taylor, Mitchell Santner, Tim Southee. — Reuters

## Pakistan's Amir set for Essex return

**LONDON:** Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Amir is set to join up with Essex again for a spell in the forthcoming domestic Twenty20 Blast competition, the English county announced Friday.

The 26-year-old left-arm quick helped Essex win the first-class County Championship in 2017 during a stint that saw him take career-best figures of 10 for 72 against Yorkshire at Scarborough.

Amir will be available for eight games in this year's Blast, including Essex's opener against Middlesex at Lord's on July 18. "I'm very excited to return to Chelmsford and re-join my Essex team-mates," Amir told the county's website. "I thoroughly enjoyed my time here in 2017 and I'm looking forward to playing my role in the club's success this season."

Due to family commitments, Amir will miss the games against Surrey and Kent while his final match for Essex is set to be against Glamorgan on August 16.

Essex coach Anthony McGrath added: "Mo is one of the most exciting bowling talents in the world and I'm ecstatic he's going to be back with us." Amir's career looked finished when he was given a five-year ban and jailed for involvement in a spot-fixing 'sting' during Pakistan's 2010 Test against England at Lord's.

But he returned to international cricket in 2016 and has now played 36 Tests, 49 one-day internationals and 42 Twenty20s. — AFP



# Biggest story of NBA trade deadline was a trade that never happened

## East powerhouses add key pieces ahead of the playoffs

By Ahmad Jabr

**KUWAIT:** On a day that saw Eastern Conference powerhouses retool ahead of the NBA Trade Deadline, arguably the biggest story on Thursday was the New Orleans Pelicans deciding to keep their embattled Center Anthony Davis and wait until the summer to possibly deal their disgruntled superstar.

The Los Angeles Lakers, whose last offer to the Pelicans would have seen young prospects including Brandon Ingram, Lonzo Ball and Kyle Kuzma in addition to multiple draft picks move to New Orleans, cited the latter's 'outrageous' demands for pulling out of trade talks. Meanwhile, the Pelicans could have become more tempted to wait for potentially better deals in the summer, especially with the Boston Celtics reportedly willing to include anyone on their roster in trade talks. The Celtics, who could not trade for Davis due to an NBA rule that bans teams from having two players on contracts extended under the so-called 'Rose Rule' (they already have Kyrie Irving signed to such deal), hope they can pair Davis with Irving who is going to be a free agent in the summer. In the meantime, the Pelicans are almost certainly going to demand that Jason Tatum be included in any trade for Davis, and the Celtics have reportedly showed willingness to discuss a trade involving their top young prospect and multiple first round picks.

Part of the reason the Celtics are waiting for the summer to retool is perhaps realizing that, barring any surprises, they likely face the toughest road to the finals this year compared to their peers at the top echelon of the Eastern Conference, especially after other top teams in the East - the Milwaukee Bucks, Toronto Raptors and the Philadelphia 76ers - have all executed major deals before the trade deadline to boost their rosters (the Indiana Pacers made a minor move as well by adding the bought-out Wesley Matthews to somewhat fill the void left by Victor Oladipo's injury). The Bucks have acquired Power Forward Nikola Mirotic from the Pelicans in a three-team trade that saw their estranged backup Center Thon Maker sent to the Detroit Pistons. By incorporating Mirotic into their

**BRIEFS**

**Beckham to be honoured**

**LOS ANGELES:** Former England captain David Beckham will become the first Major League Soccer player honoured with a statue, which will be unveiled outside LA Galaxy's stadium prior to their season opener on March 2, the team said on Friday. In 2007, the former Manchester United and Real Madrid midfielder became the first big European name to join the MLS, where he won back-to-back championships in 2011 and 2012 during his six years and 98 appearances with the Galaxy. Beckham's MLS stint helped give the American league credibility and paved the way for other top European players to make the leap in subsequent years. The 43-year-old is currently the owner of expansion side Inter Miami CF, which is set to join the MLS in 2020.

**No rift with Vardy: Puel**

**LONDON:** Leicester City manager Claude Puel has dismissed talk of a rift with Jamie Vardy, saying he had no problem with the striker's angry reaction following last week's 1-0 Premier League defeat by Manchester United. Television cameras captured Vardy appearing upset as Puel spoke to United midfielder and fellow Frenchman Paul Pogba, but the manager said his striker was merely showing his frustration after the narrow defeat. "I have a good relationship with Jamie. We know Jamie after a loss he is angry, it's normal for a player," Puel told a news conference ahead of Sunday's league trip to Tottenham Hotspur. "If I thought one of my players was disrespectful to me or the club there would be a sanction. But that is not the case with Jamie."

**Folau signs four-year deal**

**MELBOURNE:** Australia outside back Israel Folau has extended his Wallabies contract until 2022, ending speculation of a switch back to rugby league. The 29-year-old's deal will also keep him at Super Rugby club New South Wales Waratahs for four years, Rugby Australia said yesterday. "I'm really grateful to Rugby Australia and the Waratahs for all they have done for me," Folau said in a statement issued by the governing body. "When I made the switch to rugby five years ago, I could never have dreamed that it would have gone this well. "The World Cup is a big target of mine this year and I believe this Wallabies group can go a long way if we keep on improving.

starting lineup, the Bucks adds another three-point shooting specialist to create more spacing and open the lanes even more for Giannis Antetokounmpo to punish their opponents' defense.

In the meantime, Toronto traded for the Memphis Grizzlies' long-time Center Marc Gasol, adding a brand-new dimension to their already highly-efficient offense. The Raptors look forward to utilize the 12-year veteran's vast offensive arsenal, including his top-notch post moves, great playmaking abilities, and decent three-point shooting, and hope that adding a former NBA Defensive Player of the Year will come in handy especially in the playoffs. But by giving away three players in the trade (in addition to two others in separate deals), the Raptors are left with a thin bench that they likely are going to fill through the buyout market.

And in perhaps the most impactful move among Eastern Conference teams in terms of its immediate effect, the 76ers improved their already stacked-up starting lineup by adding Los Angeles Clippers' leading scorer Tobias Harris. Furthermore, Philadelphia opted to end the Markelle Fultz experience by trading the 2017 number 1 overall pick to the Orlando Magic for depth (Jonathan Simmons) and future assets (a protected 2019 first-round pick and a 2019 second-round pick). The trade also gives Fultz the chance to revive his injury marred career by starting over with a team that desperately needs Point Guard help.

While most major moves were executed by Eastern sides, a few big deals were made by Western Conference teams as well. In one of the biggest moves this year, the Dallas Mavericks acquired Kristaps Porzingis in a trade with the New York Knicks. Dallas will have to wait until next season to have Porzingis in their lineup as he recovers from a torn ACL, but the prospect of his pairing with rookie phenom Luka Doncic leaves Mavs fans with a lot of reason to be optimistic for the future.

The Clippers, despite trading away their highest achieving player this year, have probably came out better after their trade with the 76ers. Not only did they acquire future assets including Miami Heat's highly-valuable unprotected 2021 first round pick, but they also



freed up enough cap space to pursue two maximum-contract players this summer, when players such as Golden State's Kevin Durant, Toronto's Kawhi Leonard and Philadelphia's Jimmy Butler are slated to be unrestricted free agents. The Knicks are another team to watch for in the summer, as they also can offer maximum deals to two players and are heavily expected to make a hard push to sign Durant and Irving in specific.

Some teams made minor moves to prepare for their playoff campaigns, including the Houston Rockets which traded for Sacramento Kings' three-point shooter Iman Shumpert, and the Portland Trail Blazers who also went for another sharpshooter in the Cleveland Cavaliers'

Rodney Hood. The Utah Jazz failed in their bid to acquire Memphis' Mike Conley, who did not find any of the offers made and centered around Ricky Rubio and Derrick Favors enticing enough to part ways with their star Point Guard. The Lakers, who ended the trade deadline in controversial fashion by dealing promising Center Ivica Zubac to the Clippers, have been linked to free agent forward Carmelo Anthony for some time, and are widely expected to sign the former Rocket as they make a playoff push. Among the other top names in the buyout market which are expected to join playoff candidates in the coming weeks are Enes Kanter, Markieff Morris, Zach Randolph, and Marcin Gortat.

## Davis returns but sits out end of Pelicans' win

**NEW ORLEANS:** Anthony Davis returned from a three-week absence to score 32 points before his New Orleans Pelicans teammates took over in the fourth quarter of a 122-117 victory over the visiting Minnesota Timberwolves on Friday night. Davis, who was booed during his pregame introduction and whenever he touched the ball during his first appearance since asking for a trade and recovering from a finger injury, made 11 of 15 field-goal attempts and 10 of 11 free-throw attempts. He also grabbed nine rebounds. The All-Star forward sat out the final 15-plus minutes of a close game, but there was no indication of a health issue as he stayed on the bench. Jrue Holiday had 27 points, rookie Kenrich Williams added 19 and Tim Frazier and Julius Randle had 12 each for New Orleans. Karl-Anthony Towns had 32 points for the Timberwolves. Jeff Teague, who came off the bench in his return from an eight-game absence caused by a foot injury, scored 12.

**76ERS 117, NUGGETS 110**  
JJ Redick scored 34 points to lift new-look Philadelphia past visiting Denver. The Sixers

won in their first game since making a blockbuster deal with the Los Angeles Clippers before the Thursday trade deadline. Jimmy Butler added 22 points, and newly acquired Tobias Harris had 14. Joel Embiid had 15 points and 12 rebounds for his league-leading 45th double-double of the season. The Sixers snapped a two-game skid on a night when they retired Moses Malone's No. 2 jersey. Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 27 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his 11th triple-double of the season. Jamal Murray added 23 points, but Denver dropped its third in a row.

**BUCKS 122, MAVERICKS 107**  
Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 29 points and grabbed 17 rebounds to lead visiting Milwaukee over Dallas. The Bucks' Khris Middleton did not play, nor did Nikola Mirotic, who was acquired from New Orleans at the trade deadline. Mirotic, who still must pass a physical, missed his last seven games with the Pelicans because of a calf strain. Milwaukee didn't need either Middleton or Mirotic in winning its sixth consecutive game, as the Bucks shot 54.3 percent from the field. Rookie Luka Doncic led the Mavericks with 20 points.

**WARRIORS 117, SUNS 107**  
Stephen Curry saved 10 of his 20 points for a fourth-quarter rally that enabled Golden State to overtake Phoenix for its 11th consecutive win. Phoenix lost its 13th straight despite



leading by as many as 17 points in the first quarter and 94-88 after a hoop by Kelly Oubre Jr. with 8:35 left in the game. The Warriors won for the 14th time in their past 15 games despite losing Draymond Green at the start of the fourth period after he drew his second technical foul. Klay Thompson led Golden State with 25 points, and Kevin Durant added 21. Oubre (25 points, 12 rebounds) and Deandre Ayton (23 points, 12 rebounds) paced the Suns.

**WIZARDS 119, CAVALIERS 106**  
Bobby Portis scored 30 points in his debut with Washington, which beat visiting Cleveland to end a three-game losing streak. Obtained along with Jabari Parker in a trade with the Chicago Bulls for Otto Porter Jr. earlier this week, Portis made 12 of 18 field-goal attempts. Bradley Beal had 25 points and 13 assists for Washington. Parker had seven points, 11 rebounds, nine assists and three steals in 23 minutes. Collin Sexton scored 27 points and Jordan Clarkson added 24 for the Cavaliers, who have lost three straight and 21 of 24. Forward Kevin Love returned after missing 50 games because of a left foot injury. He started the game and played six minutes in his first action since Oct. 24, scoring four points.

**PISTONS 120, KNICKS 103**  
Andre Drummond collected 29 points

and 20 rebounds, and Blake Griffin had 26 points as host Detroit handed New York its 15th consecutive loss. Drummond overcame early foul trouble to shoot 12-for-15 from the field while Griffin recorded the same numbers from the free-throw line for the Pistons, who scored a season-high 41 points in the first quarter. Detroit won for the fourth time in five games and produced its sixth straight victory versus New York. Dennis Smith Jr. scored 19 of his career-high 31 points in the first half for the NBA-worst Knicks, who have dropped 23 of their past 24 games overall. Smith shot 9-for-15 from the field and added a team-high eight assists.

**BULLS 125, NETS 106**  
Lauri Markkanen collected 31 points and 18 rebounds for his 10th double-double of the season and fifth in six games as visiting Chicago led most of the way in beating Brooklyn. Markkanen's third straight 30-point showing helped the Bulls snap a six-game losing streak to the Nets and also win for the third time in 19 games since Dec. 30. Otto Porter Jr. helped the Bulls stretch the floor by contributing 18 points and hitting four 3-pointers in his team debut after being acquired from Washington on Wednesday. D'Angelo Russell scored 23 points for the Nets, who lost for the fourth time in five games. — Reuters

## Hazard relishing partnership with Higuain

**LONDON:** Chelsea playmaker Eden Hazard is convinced that he can form a great partnership with the club's new striker Gonzalo Higuain after playing two matches together. Chelsea signed Higuain on loan from Juventus last month and the Argentina striker scored twice in last week's 5-0 thumping of the Premier League's bottom club Huddersfield Town.

Hazard, who also scored two goals in that game at

Stamford Bridge, said he was already enjoying playing alongside the former Real Madrid and Napoli striker. "I've only played two games with Higuain and I know we can do something great together, not only with him but also with the other strikers, the other winger," Hazard told The Times ahead of Sunday's league meeting with Manchester City.

"Chelsea is not about Higuain and Hazard, it is about 25 players. But Higuain is a fantastic striker." Victory over Huddersfield followed league defeats by Arsenal and Bournemouth while midfielder Jorginho was man-marked to nullify the Italy international's influence.

"If one guy is marking him all the time, we need to adapt also. Jorginho is always trying to be free to take the ball to create something. He's a fantastic player," Hazard said. Manager Maurizio Sarri has also faced questions about his insistence on playing N'Golo Kante on the right side of

midfield instead of in his natural holding role, but Hazard believes the Frenchman has to adapt.

"N'Golo's a clever guy, one of the best in his position, maybe the best in the world. N'Golo now plays six months in the different position. He needs to adapt," Hazard said. "When we win, everyone will say, 'yes, he plays in his (best) position, and if we lose everyone will say, 'no, he needs to go a bit behind'. Depends only on the result."

Hazard said Chelsea still need time to adapt to Sarri's possession-based style of play, which contrasts to the counter-attacking football of previous managers Antonio Conte and Jose Mourinho. "Sometimes we keep possession, and I understand the fans want us to go forward (more directly), but it is part of the football," Hazard said.

"We are still learning about his concept. We are doing well. I like this kind of football." — Reuters



# Iwobi, Lacazette lead Arsenal to win at Huddersfield

## Zaha earns Palace a point at home to West Ham

**LONDON:** Arsenal returned to winning ways with a 2-1 victory over bottom side Huddersfield Town yesterday, but remain the only side without an away clean sheet in the Premier League this season.

Arsenal had suffered four defeats in their last nine league games, including a 3-1 loss at Manchester City last week, but Alex Iwobi put them ahead in the 16th minute with a deflected shot. Huddersfield pressed and harried but rarely troubled the Arsenal goal in the first half, with the difference in quality showing as the visitors doubled their advantage through Alexandre Lacazette's 10th league goal of the season a minute before halftime.

Adama Diakhaby had two good chances to get Huddersfield—who had drawn once and lost 11 of their previous 12 league games—back into the match, but failed to really test Bernd Leno in the Arsenal goal. Sead Kolasinac put through his own net in stoppage time to give Huddersfield late hope, scoring Huddersfield's first goal in over nine hours of football in all competitions, but the visitors held on for the win.

Victory moved Arsenal level on points with fifth-placed Chelsea, who play Manchester City on Sunday, while Huddersfield stayed bottom, 13

points from safety.

In another game Wilfried Zaha's deflected goal earned Crystal Palace a 1-1 draw at home to fellow Londoners West Ham United in the Premier League yesterday. It had looked as though Mark Noble's 27th-minute penalty and Palace's profligacy in front of goal would condemn Palace to a damaging loss in their bid to climb away from relegation trouble.

But Zaha eventually beat West Ham's keeper Lucasz Fabianski with a shot that looped up off the boot of Issa Diop. West Ham had been the better side before the break with Noble calmly putting them ahead from the spot after Palace keeper Vincente Guita hauled down Michail Antonio.

Palace, who began the day four points and four places above the bottom three, were much improved in the second half and created numerous chances to equalise. Substitute Michy Batshuayi should have scored before James McArthur struck the post with only Fabianski to beat.

The draw left Palace with 27 points from 26 games, three points above the relegation zone while West Ham, in 10th place, have now gone five games without a win all competitions. — Reuters



LONDON: Arsenal's Nigerian striker Alex Iwobi (R) shoots but fails to score during the English Premier League football match between Huddersfield Town and Arsenal at the John Smith's stadium in Huddersfield, northern England yesterday. — AFP

## 161 shooters participate in Amir's Shooting Grand Prix

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The third day of HH the Amir of Kuwait 8th International Shooting Grand Prix, being held at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex, will see three gold medals given to shooters of 10m air rifle for men and women, 50m pistol for men.

The Grand Prix will also see qualifying rounds for men and women in the 10m pistol and trap, in addition to the three position rifle for men.

Head of the shotgun referees committee Hamad Al-Ruwaisan said 161 shooters of both genders are participating in the shotgun events of the Grand Prix, 84 in the trap and 77 in the skeet, as the Double Trap has been scrapped internationally.

He said that an elite group of world shooters and Olympians are keen to participate in the tournament, as it became well known on the international shooting federation agenda on annual basis.

He said a large number of Kuwaiti referees are officiating the Grand Prix, 17 of whom are international, and this has been achieved through courses organized by Kuwait Shooting Sport Club, the latest of which



Hamad Al-Ruwaisan

was last week.

Al-Ruwaisan thanked KSSC Board of Directors due to their support for Kuwaiti referees and remove all obstacles, in addition to nominations to participate in international events.

Qatar federation head of the technical committee Abdallah Al-Hammadi lauded the outstanding organization of a tournament that has a clear name HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah

Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He said competitions will be hard between shooters, because it is on the



DORTMUND: Dortmund's French defender Abdou Diallo and Hoffenheim's German goalkeeper Oliver Baumann vie for the ball during the German first division Bundesliga football match Borussia Dortmund vs TSG Hoffenheim in Dortmund, western Germany, yesterday. — AFP

after losing 3-0 at home by Hertha Berlin as Salomon Kalou, playmaker Ondrej Duda and Davie Selke scored.

In the basement battle, Hanover climbed off the bottom with a 2-0 home win at Nuremberg, who took their place as last in the table, with former Germany striker Nicolai Mueller scoring both goals.

Fourth-placed RB Leipzig were held to a goalless draw at home by Eintracht Frankfurt, who are just one place behind them.

Mid-table sides Freiburg and Wolfsburg shared a point in an entertaining 3-3 draw as Gian-Luca Waldschmidt equalised for hosts Freiburg two minutes from time as his side came back from 2-1 down. — AFP

ISSF agenda.

It was clear that shooters' preparations were high in the ladies trap event, as Omani shooter Reem Al-Housani said she trained hard for the tournament as she seeks the gold medal.

She said Omani women shooters have been competing for seven years and won gold in the Arab Gulf competitions. She said she is familiar with Kuwait ranges.

Qatari shooter Khoulood Al-Khalaf said she hopes to win a medal during this Grand Prix, as per her representations. She said competitions will definitely be fierce during the second day of qualifying. Al-Khalaf said her ambition is to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

## Phillips strikes late to send Leeds top in Championship

**LONDON:** Winger Jack Clarke was taken to hospital as Calvin Phillips' header in the 11th minute of added time salvaged a 1-1 draw for Leeds United at Middlesbrough to send them to the top of the second tier Championship yesterday.

The huge amount of injury time was due to Leeds' highly-rated 18-year-old Clarke being taken ill and after undergoing medical attention was stretchered off while being given oxygen and taken to hospital.

"What we know is that he didn't feel well," Leeds manager Marcelo Bielsa said. "We don't know the reasons yet. But when he was taken to the dressing room he was better. He was taken to hospital to see if he is alright."

Leeds later issued a statement reassuring fans about Clarke, who had been taken off at half-time. "The player is responsive and attending hospital with the club's head of medicine and performance. "On behalf of everyone at Leeds United, we would like to thank the medical staff from both clubs for their response to the incident."

The draw sends Bielsa's side a point clear of Norwich at the top though the Canaries can reclaim that position if they beat East Anglian rivals bottom-placed Ipswich Town today. Sheffield United lie in third position—three points off Leeds—after missing a golden opportunity of going top themselves surrendering a 3-0 lead on Friday to be held 3-3 by Aston Villa.

'Boro had taken the lead through Lewis Wing two minutes into the second-half, slotting home from George Friend's cut-back. Leeds—who have had a poor run of late losing four of their last six matches coming into Saturday's game—should have levelled in the 71st minute.

Patrick Bamford returning to his former club— for whom he scored a hat-trick against Leeds last year—fired wide from four yards out with the goal gaping. Middlesbrough's Ireland goalkeeper Darren Randolph also kept the hosts' noses in front with some stunning saves, thwarting Kemar Roofe twice. — AFP

## Cardiff lead Premier League tributes to Sala

**LONDON:** Cardiff City led the Premier League's tributes to Emiliano Sala yesterday in the first round of English top-flight matches since his death was confirmed earlier this week. The Argentinian's body was formally identified by a coroner in Dorset, southwest England, on Thursday, a day after it was recovered from underwater wreckage in the English Channel.

The plane carrying Sala from the French city of Nantes to Cardiff, his new club, disappeared near the British island of Guernsey on January 21. Pilot David Ibbotson remains missing. His family have launched a fundraising campaign to find his remains.

The Welsh club hoped Sala would help them avoid relegation from the world's most lucrative league this season after signing him from Nantes for a club record fee.

Cardiff, away to Southampton yesterday, had been given permission by the Premier League to wear shirts embroidered with a yellow daffodil, the national emblem of Wales and the team colour of Nantes.

Bluebirds manager Neil Warnock and his players bowed their heads as a minute's silence was impeccably observed before kick-off at St Mary's Stadium. "Our thoughts remain with the families of Emiliano and David Ibbotson," said a message on Cardiff's club Twitter account shortly before kick-off. — AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Tottenham Hotspur v Leicester City

beIN SPORTS HD 2

16:30

Manchester City v Chelsea FC

beIN SPORTS HD 2

19:00

SPANISH LEAGUE

CD Leganes v Real Betis

beIN SPORTS HD 3

14:00

Valencia C.F v Real Sociedad

beIN SPORTS HD 3

18:15

Sevilla FC v SD Eibar

beIN SPORTS HD 3

20:30

Athletic de Bilbao v FC Barcelona

beIN SPORTS HD 3

22:45

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

Bologna FC v Genoa CFC

beIN SPORTS HD 4

14:30

Atalanta v spal

beIN SPORTS HD 4

17:00

Torino FC v Udinese Calcio

beIN SPORTS HD 8

17:00

UC Sampdoria v Frosinone Calcio

beIN SPORTS HD 4

17:00

US Sassuolo Calcio v Juventus FC

beIN SPORTS HD 4

20:00

AC Milan v Cagliari Calcio

beIN SPORTS HD 4

22:30

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

SV Werder Bremen v FC Augsburg

beIN SPORTS HD 5

17:30

Fortuna D,sseldorf v VfB Stuttgart

beIN SPORTS HD 5

20:00

FRENCH LEAGUE

Montpellier HSC v AS Monaco FC

beIN SPORTS HD 6

17:00

Toulouse FC v Stade Reims

beIN SPORTS HD 10

17:00

FC Nantes v Nimes Olympique

beIN SPORTS HD 7

17:00

Stade Rennais v Saint Etienne

beIN SPORTS HD 6

19:00

EA Guingamp v LOSC Lille

beIN SPORTS

19:00

OGC Nice v Olympique Lyonnais

beIN SPORTS HD 6

23:00



**25** Jansrud denies Svindal dream  
finale to win downhill gold



**26** Davis returns but sits out  
end of Pelicans' win



**27** Iwobi, Lacazette lead Arsenal  
to win at Huddersfield



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Senegalese striker Sadio Mane jumps to win a header during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Bournemouth at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

## Liverpool back on top of EPL table

### Manchester United climb into fourth place

**LONDON:** Liverpool returned to winning ways and the top of the Premier League table while Manchester United climbed into fourth place yesterday as English football paid tribute to the late Emiliano Sala.

First-half goals from Sadio Mane and Georginio Wijnaldum and Mohamed Salah's 48th-minute effort gave Liverpool a 3-0 win over Bournemouth at Anfield.

Victory meant Liverpool, who had been second on goal difference, leapfrog Manchester City by three points ahead of the reigning champions' match at home to Chelsea today.

Meanwhile United's revival under caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer continued with an equally com-

fortable 3-0 win away to Fulham. Liverpool had dropped points in successive 1-1 draws against Leicester and West Ham, sparking questions over the resolve of Jurgen Klopp's side as they bid to end a 29-year wait to once again be crowned champions of England. Mane, however, settled early nerves among home fans at Anfield when he headed in a James Milner cross to score for the fourth game in a row.

Liverpool doubled their lead in through Wijnaldum's delightful 34th-minute lob before Egypt striker Salah sealed victory with a curling effort.

In London, Paul Pogba scored two goals-including a second-half penalty-either side of an emphatic

Anthony Martial strike, as United made it 10 wins in 11 game since former striker Solskjaer was put in temporary command.

Chelsea could regain a spot among the Champions League qualifying places against Manchester City today. But United, 11 points adrift of the top four when Jose Mourinho was sacked in December, are back in the hunt now.

"The top four is a big thing. There are so many games left, but we hope to stay in the top four. We can't worry about what other teams do," said Solskjaer.

Elsewhere Everton manager Marco Silva's return to Watford ended in a 1-0 defeat. Watford striker Troy

Deeney had scorned Silva in the build-up by saying "the people at Everton are fantastic, not the manager" and Andre Gray's first goal since September meant Deeney did not have to eat his words.

Meanwhile London rivals Crystal Palace and West Ham drew 1-1. Hammers captain Mark Noble's first-half penalty gave the visitors the lead at Selhurst Park before Palace striker Wilfried Zaha marked his return from suspension with an equaliser 14 minutes from time.

Brighton face a Burnley side hovering above the relegation zone. Third-placed Tottenham welcome Leicester to Wembley today, with in-form Wolves at home to Newcastle tomorrow. — AFP

### Real jump above Atletico after winning four-goal derby

**MADRID:** Thibaut Courtois overcame the jeers and Gareth Bale delivered a timely reminder of his talents as Real Madrid beat Atletico Madrid 3-1 in a feisty city derby yesterday.

Real's fifth league win in a row means they sit second for the first time since September, above Atletico, and just five points behind Barcelona. Barca could restore that gap to eight by overcoming Athletic Bilbao on Sunday but another impressive performance at the Wanda Metropolitano, aided by some fortunate decisions, puts Real back in the thick of the title race.

Bale had been left out of the starting line-up for the second time in four days, after he was also a substitute against Barca in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday.

The Welshman's goal, his 100th for Real Madrid, will not have been lost on coach Santiago Solari and ended Atletico's hopes of a comeback after Sergio Ramos' penalty put Real in front at half-time, with Antoine Griezmann earlier cancelling out Casemiro's acrobatic opener.

By the time Thomas Partey was sent off with 10 minutes left, the game was up, and Courtois could have been forgiven for breathing a sigh of relief at the final whistle.

The Belgian, who spent three years at Atletico, was playing in the white of Real for the first time at the home of his former club. He was whistled when he came out alone to warm-up, when he emerged again with his team-mates and then before kick-off too, as the Atletico ultras behind the goal hurled dozens of toy rats towards his head. A sign read, 'Thibaut - Rata', just to underline the point.

Alvaro Morata had gone the opposite way, also via Chelsea, now for Atleti after starting out at Real Madrid. He was cheered and, despite a quiet game, would have scored but for VAR ruling out an impressive lob in the second half. Isco was left out completely after pulling up with a back complaint in training on Friday. Diego Simeone picked

Saul Niguez in midfield ahead of the more defensive Rodrigo. His team were fired up and first to everything early on, as Griezmann and Thomas unleashed shots while Dani Carvajal and Sergio Reguilon were rushed into panicked clearances.

But Real survived and, with virtually their first attack, scored. Ramos rose high at a corner and the ball was flicked to the back post where the unmarked Casemiro threw himself into the air, and bicycle kicked it in from six yards. Atleti were still snarling as Karim Benzema was shoved into the hoardings and Reguilon tumbled into the cameras. Jose Gimenez clashed with Vinicius, a scuffle that would resurface again soon after.

First, though, Griezmann equalised, sent through by Angel Correa, who was fortunate not to be penalised for a robust challenge on Vinicius. Griezmann, just onside, poked the ball through Courtois' legs. Vinicius' pace had been a constant thorn in Atleti's side but Gimenez refused to be beaten, diving in from behind when he had little chance of getting the ball. The foul might have been committed outside the box but VAR disagreed, and Ramos whipped the penalty into the corner.

Morata had barely featured in the first half but he was celebrating a goal early in the sec-



MADRID: Real Madrid's Welsh forward Gareth Bale (C) vie for the ball with Atletico Madrid's Colombian defender Santiago Arias (L) and Atletico Madrid's Uruguayan defender Jose Gimenez during the Spanish league football match Club Atletico de Madrid against Real Madrid. — AFP

ond, only for his superb lob over Courtois to be ruled out by VAR for offside. Bale came on for Vinicius but Atletico were on top and again,

felt aggrieved, after Morata fell over a clumsy Casemiro challenge in the box. Referee Estrada Fernandez gave Real a free-kick. — AFP