



**20** Awards, recognition at 'Colors of Palestine' drawing competition



**22** Women reign at glitzy Grammys gala that also makes rap history



**24** 'Priyanka magic' draws thousands at India rally



**28** Warriors take the Heat, Embiid leads 76ers over LeBron's Lakers



# Jordan King appreciates Kuwait support during meeting with PM

Premiers hold talks • \$6m granted for Syrian refugees • New embassy building opened

## Meeting Amir gives cancer fighter new lease on life



KUWAIT: Shalma Al-Eidi takes a selfie with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. — Amiri Diwan

KUWAIT: A young Kuwaiti woman fighting cancer said yesterday she got a glimmer of hope after her meeting with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Meeting the Amir was a childhood dream that came true, Shalma Al-Eidi said after the encounter, where she bestowed upon the Amir a certificate dealing with Kuwait's

humanitarian contributions. She also handed HH the Amir a copy of a book she had written about the need to generate awareness of childhood cancer, in addition to a website she launched welcoming stem cell donations to help children fight cancer. She expressed her appreciation over the "fatherly advice" HH the Amir had given her. — KUNA

AMMAN: Jordanian King Abdullah II yesterday commended relations with Kuwait at all levels, and appreciated the Gulf state's support for the Hashemite kingdom. King Abdullah made the remarks during a meeting with visiting Kuwaiti Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in Amman, the Royal Court said in a statement. The two leaders discussed economic, investment, trade and military cooperation, it added.

During the meeting, Sheikh Jaber handed a written letter to the Jordanian king from HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on ties between the two countries and issues of common interests. Sheikh Jaber also conveyed greetings of HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince to the Jordanian people, wishing them more success and progress.

King Abdullah highlighted importance of the Jordanian-Kuwaiti higher committee meeting in Amman and the agreements that resulted from the discussions. He asserted the importance of coordination with Kuwait over issues of mutual interest. King Abdullah said he was looking forward to Kuwait's participation in an international conference, co-organized by Britain and Jordan in London at the end of this month.

King Abdullah and Sheikh Jaber called for solving regional conflicts peacefully in a way that safeguard security and stability of people of the area, said the statement. They called for doubling of efforts to restart the peace negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians on basis of the two-state solution and in line with the Arab peace initiative, to ultimately establish an independent Palestinian state on June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.



AMMAN: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hands a letter from HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Jordanian King Abdullah II as Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah looks on yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

Earlier yesterday, HH Sheikh Jaber met his Jordanian counterpart Omar Al-Razzaz for talks, bringing together senior officials from both nations. Razzaz described the talks as another chapter in a long history of goodwill the kingdom shares with Kuwait, as he looked forward to a promising and prosperous future. He pinpointed the Kuwaiti-Jordanian higher committee as a testament to the depth of bilateral ties, saying both nations' respective leaders have a common desire to further ameliorate bilateral relations. Razzaz expressed his satisfaction over how "progressively better" ties with Kuwait have gotten,

thanking the state for its overwhelming support over the years.

Thanking his Jordanian counterpart for the invitation, the Kuwaiti prime minister highlighted the talks as an opportunity to discuss a number of pressing issues. He said the Kuwaiti government, whose investments in Jordan surpass all other Arab nations, has prioritized support for Amman in recent years, given the country's "strategic importance". The talks revolved around strategies to develop ties in various crucial sectors, including the economy, culture and tourism, Sheikh Jaber explained.

Continued on Page 24

## News in brief

### 100 dead after drinking hooch

NEW DELHI: More than 100 people died in two Indian states after drinking bootleg alcohol, police and media said yesterday, in the worst such case in years. Many of those who died in Haridwar in Uttarakhand state and two districts in neighboring Uttar Pradesh complained of stomach pains and respiratory problems, relatives and officials said. Police have arrested four people in connection with the deaths. Deaths from illegally-produced alcohol, known locally as "hooch" or "country liquor", are a regular occurrence in India. Bootleggers often add methanol - a highly toxic form of alcohol sometimes used as an antifreeze - to their product to increase its strength. — Reuters

### France, Qatar ink 'strategic' pact

DOHA: Qatar and France signed a deal yesterday to cooperate on security and economic matters, in a boost to the Gulf state still locked in a diplomatic rift with neighboring Saudi Arabia and its allies. Qatar's top diplomat Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani met with his French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian in Doha to sign the "strategic dialogue" agreement. "This platform will include cooperation in different areas between the two countries, including defense security, regional security as well as energy, economy and culture," Sheikh Mohammed said. Le Drian said the agreement "obliges" Paris and Doha to have regular meetings. — AFP

### UK approaches Gulf on trade pact

DUBAI: Britain has approached the United Arab Emirates and other Gulf countries on a possible trade pact after Britain leaves the European Union, the UAE economy minister said yesterday. Such agreements can take years to negotiate, Sultan bin Saeed Al-Mansouri said on a panel at the World Government Summit in Dubai. The UK was "looking forward" to a free-trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council, Liam Fox, the UK state secretary for international trade, said during a visit to Dubai for the summit, according to state news agency WAM. In 2017, trade between the UAE and UK totalled £17.5 billion (\$22.7 billion), up 12.3 percent from 2016, according to official figures. — Reuters

## Iran taunts US on 40th 'versary of revolution

TEHRAN: Iran's president yesterday insisted "enemy" plots against the country would fail as vast crowds marked 40 years since the Islamic revolution at a time of heightened tensions with the United States. "The presence of people today on the streets all over Islamic Iran... means that the enemy will never reach its evil objectives," a defiant President Hassan Rouhani told those thronging Tehran's Azadi (Freedom) square, decrying a "conspiracy" involving Washington.

Chador-clad women, militia members

in camouflage fatigues and ordinary citizens marched through the capital in freezing rain to commemorate the day in February 1979 that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ended millennia of royal rule. The routes leading up to the square were packed with people as loudspeakers blared revolutionary anthems and slogans. Life-size replicas of Iranian-made cruise and ballistic missiles stood in a statement of defiance after the US last year reimposed sanctions following its withdrawal from a deal on Tehran's nuclear program.

Rouhani lambasted calls from the United States and Europe for a fresh agreement to curb Iran's missile program. "We have not, and will not, request permission from anyone for increasing our defensive power and for building all kinds of... missiles," he told the crowd.

Continued on Page 24

## Egypt tunes in to golden age of song

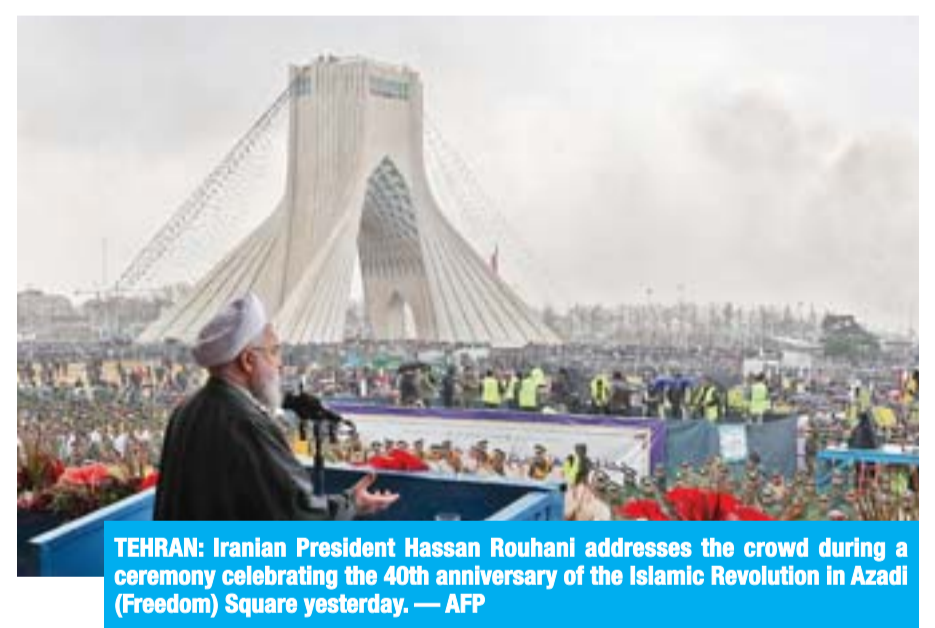
CAIRO: Standing before a rapt crowd, Ahmed Adel oozes charm with his passionate performance of an Egyptian classic,

evoking a romantic nostalgia for Arabic songs of the past. After a melodious introduction on the Oud, the famed oriental lute, Adel croons his way through a "Mawal", a traditional melody boasting long vowels. "Ya leil" ("O night"), he sings, with the dreamy languor of the original performer, Egyptian legend Mohamed Abdel Wahab. With cheers of "Allah!", the mesmerized audience shows its appreciation.

Continued on Page 24



CAIRO: Egyptian classical Arabic music singer Ahmed Adel performs a song by celebrated 20th century Egyptian composer Mohamed Abdel Wahab at the Arab Music Institute Theatre on Jan 20, 2019. — AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani addresses the crowd during a ceremony celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Azadi (Freedom) Square yesterday. — AFP

## Thailand frees Bahrain player

BANGKOK: Thailand yesterday freed a jailed refugee Bahraini footballer with residency status in Australia, after Bahrain abandoned its bid to seek his extradition, and immigration officials said he was immediately driven to the airport. Hakeem Al-Araibi, 25, who fled Bahrain in 2014 and received refugee status in Australia, was arrested in November last year at a Bangkok airport while on a honeymoon trip, following an Interpol notice issued at Bahrain's request.

However, the Middle East nation has withdrawn the request, prompting a Thai court to approve a motion by prosecutors to drop the case against the footballer, Thai officials said. "There are no grounds to hold him anymore. It is his right to decide where he will go next. He is a free man," said Chatchom Akapin, an official in the Thai Attorney-General's office. A Reuters witness said Araibi was seen leaving the Bangkok remand prison



Hakeem Al-Araibi

in a car and immigration officials said he was heading for the main international airport in the Thai capital.

Rights group Amnesty International, which lobbied for his release, later said Araibi had arrived at the airport. It was not immediately clear when or why Bahrain withdrew its request. A Bahrain government spokesman declined to give details when asked who ordered the halt of the legal proceedings.

Continued on Page 24



## Local

# Prime Minister's visit to Jordan to propel 'historic' ties to new levels

Jordanian officials describe relations as 'exemplary,' push for more cooperation



Foreign ministers of Kuwait and Jordan, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Ayman Safadi respectively, shake hands after signing an agreement between the two countries yesterday.



Kuwait's Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah inaugurates his country's new embassy building in Jordan.

**AMMAN:** His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday that his visit to Jordan aims to propel the Gulf state's 'historic' ties with the Hashemite Kingdom to new levels. The Kuwait prime minister handed Jordan's King Abdullah II a letter from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He also held talks with the Jordanian King and other senior officials on matters of mutual concern. Furthermore, the Kuwaiti premier pointed out that bilateral ties have seen 'tangible progress' in recent years. He went on to commend the Jordanian government for its efforts to achieve the country's development goals, saying cooperation with Kuwait has been very satisfactory. His Highness the Prime Minister's visit saw the holding of the fourth joint higher committee session, as well as the signing of some 14 agreements, in addition to inaugurating Kuwait's new embassy building in Amman.

cially that it coincides with holding the committee meeting after six years of holding the last one. Razzaz pointed out. The delegation accompanying His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak comprises Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Commerce, Education and Justice and other senior officials. The delegation also includes several Kuwaiti businesspersons and representatives of the private sector, which confirms the interest in developing economic ties and opening up wider horizons for trade and investment cooperation between the two countries.

By 2017, trade volume between the two countries amounted to \$400 million, while Kuwaiti investments in Jordan reached \$18 billion; of the highest among foreign investments in the Arab country. 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.

#### More cooperation

In the meantime, Speaker of Jordan's House of Representatives Atef Tarawneh affirmed the importance of partnership with Kuwait as it could result in more cooperation and integration. "Kuwait and Jordan's relations are deep-rooted and this visit is considered an additional step towards buttressing those relations, under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and King Abdullah II,"

#### Exemplary relations

Jordanian Premier Omar Razzaz described his country's relations with Kuwait as 'exemplary' of pan-Arab ties, as such 'pinnacle' of a bond should be followed on all levels. "Relations with Kuwait are solid and deep-rooted, which enabled both countries to achieve mutual interest and benefit for both peoples," Razzaz said.

The visit would buttress the 'fraternal' relations, espe-



AMMAN: Prime Ministers of Kuwait and Jordan chair a meeting yesterday featuring senior officials from each country's respective government. — KUNA photos

Tarawneh noted. His Highness the Prime Minister and his accompanying delegation were welcomed upon arrival at Amman for a two-day visit by Jordanian Prime Minister Omar Al-Razzaz. The Kuwaiti delegation also

met with senior Jordanian officials upon arrival at the Jordanian Cabinet's headquarters. An official reception was then held and the national anthems of Kuwait and Jordan were played. — KUNA



Officials pose for a group photo following the inauguration of Kuwait's new embassy building in Jordan yesterday.

## Sharm El-Sheikh street named after Amir

**KUWAIT:** A main street in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm El-Sheikh has been named after His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-

Sabah, a senior Egyptian official said yesterday. The good gesture comes in Egypt's appreciation for Kuwait and His Highness the Amir's support to Egypt and its people, South Sinai Governor Major General Khaled Fouda said in a press statement following talks with Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah. He added that they had agreed to hammer out a twinship agreement between both governorates for future cooperation and share of expertise at all levels. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah (right) meets with South Sinai Governor Major General Khaled Fouda. — KUNA

## Ex-UN chief commends Amir's efforts

**KUWAIT:** Former Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon yesterday voiced much appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's leading role in global humanitarian activities and Middle East mediation efforts. Ban, who is the current chairman of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens, made the remark in a press statement following a meeting with His Highness the Amir. "We really appreciate the strong support from the Kuwaiti Government for the activities of the global citizenship center. I also highly appreciate and commend the great leadership of His Highness for his peace and mediating role in this area, particularly for the Yemen conflict as well as the Iranian issues, also some dispute between Saudi Arabia and Qatar," he said.

"The peace and reconciliation in the Gulf area is crucially important, he assured us that he will continue his mediating role and Kuwait is now acting as the United Nation's Security Council member and now chairing the Security Council in the month of June," Ban added. He went on to say: "We hope that the Kuwaiti government and delegation will continue to contribute to world peace and stability and

development through their very active diplomatic activities in the Security Council." The former UN chief said it was a great honor for him to visit Kuwait on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the independence and the 13th anniversary of His Highness the Amir's succession. He noted that his center would hold a major meeting tomorrow (Tuesday) on women's empowerment and promotion of young people's role, pointing to a meeting held today with Kuwaiti charities.

Meanwhile, former Austrian President Heinz Fischer said that His Highness the Amir completely backs the humanitarian and development goals of Ban Ki-moon Center for Global Citizens. Fischer, who chairs the advisory board of the center, made the remark in a press statement following a meeting with His Highness the Amir. "We are very proud that we had the honor to be received by His Highness the Amir and he promised and announced full support for the goals of Ban Ki-moon Centre, the goals of humanity and the goals of supporting the sustainable development," he said. "I am impressed that His Highness is very well informed in supporting the bilateral relations between Kuwait and Korea, and Kuwait and Austria, and I mentioned that we are also interested in the cultural field and the group of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra will perform today here in Kuwait," he added. "His Highness expressed his satisfaction so that we can say it was a very friendly and a very successful meeting," he noted. — KUNA

## Amir receives letter from Nigerian President

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a letter from Nigerian President Mohammad Bukhari. The letter tackled bilateral relations between the two countries, and means to develop them in various fields. Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah received the letter from the Nigerian President's envoys Professor Ibrahim Gambari and Dr Mohammed Indimi. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah receives a letter from Nigerian President Mohammad Bukhari, delivered by the president's envoys Professor Ibrahim Gambari and Dr Mohammed Indimi. — Amiri Diwan photo



Local

# Amir expresses deep appreciation for brotherly relations between Kuwait, Saudi

His Highness Sheikh Sabah meets officials at Bayan Palace



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the visiting Saudi Prince Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Saud bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and their accompanying delegation. —Amiri Diwan photos

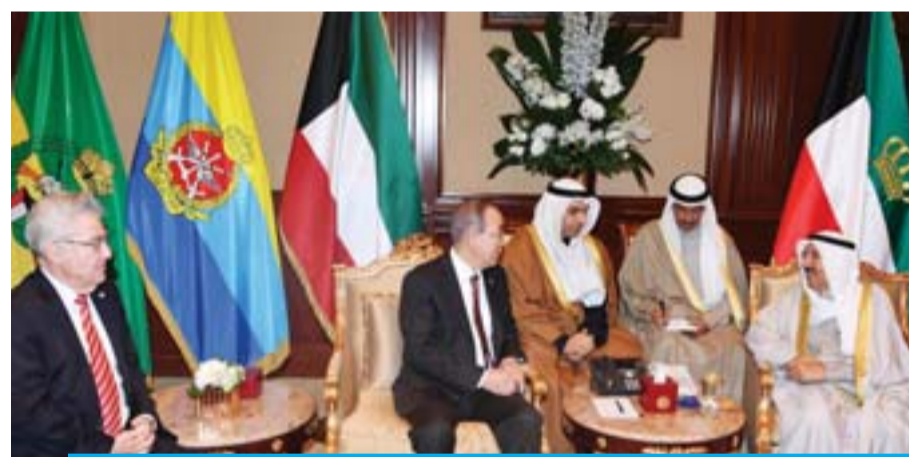
KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. His Highness the Amir also received the visiting Saudi Prince Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Saud bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and their accompanying delegation, on the opening of 'Al-Fahad.. Spirit of Leadership' exhibition held in Kuwait. His Highness the Amir expressed his deep appreciation for the brotherly relations between Kuwaiti and Saudi people and leaderships, as he recalled the achievements and positions of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud which will remain immortal in history and minds through generations. His Highness the Amir was also honored with a commemorative gift on this occasion, as he also held a luncheon, with the attendance of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-

Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in honor of the Saudi guests.

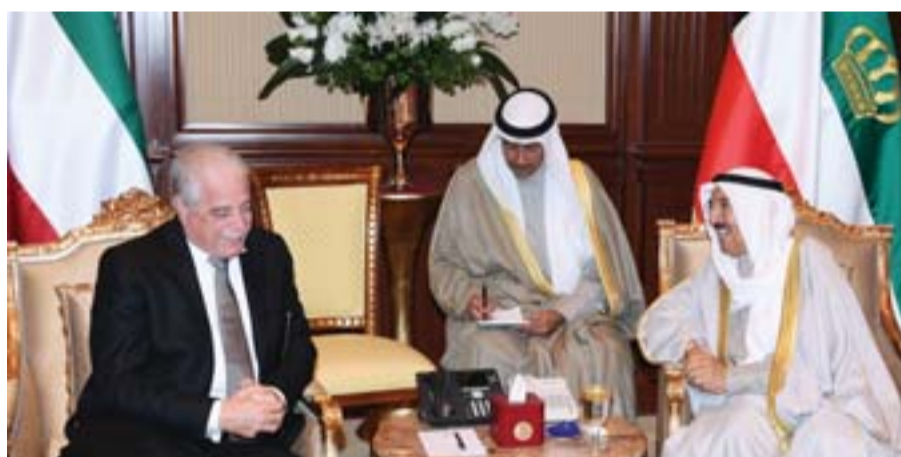
His Highness the Amir also received Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel, Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens and Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon and Former President of the Republic of Austria Heinz Fischer on Ban Ki-moon Centre's third Board Meeting hosted by Kuwait. Furthermore, His Highness received the visiting Governor of South Sinai in Egypt Major General Khaled Fouda. The meeting was attended by Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah. His Highness has also received Shaima Yousef Al-Eidi for having been recently awarded by the Kuwait Charity Forum. In the meantime, His Highness the Crown Prince met with Speaker Ghanem at Bayan Palace. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah hosts a luncheon in honor of the Saudi guests.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon and Former President of the Republic of Austria Heinz Fischer.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the visiting Governor of South Sinai in Egypt Major General Khaled Fouda.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Shaima Yousef Al-Eidi.

## Amir patronizes 'Al Fahad.. Spirit of Leadership' exhibition



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses for a group photo with the Saudi guests.—KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the 'Al Fahad.. Spirit of Leadership' exhibition.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronized the 'Al Fahad.. Spirit of Leadership' exhibition and 'Deep-rooted Brotherhood' operetta at Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attending. His Highness the Amir was welcomed by Prince Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Saud bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Faisal bin Saud bin Abdullah Al Saud, Prince Turki bin Abdullah Al Saud, Prince Nawaf bin Faisal bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Khaled bin Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Abdulaziz bin Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Prince Mohammad bin Saud bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and members of the higher organizing committee. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Prince Mohammad bin Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud toured the 14-pavilion exhibition which

focuses on the biography of the late Saudi King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, mainly his positions and achievements, along with Saudi-Kuwaiti relations.

His Highness the Crown Prince also joined legions of senior Kuwaiti and Saudi officials as spectators at the operetta 'Deep-rooted Brotherhood.' As festivities got underway, the opera's chief organizer Saudi Prince Mohammad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud thanked His Highness the Amir for sponsoring the event, saying it was a testament to the impenetrable bond the Gulf neighbors share. He said Kuwait was a fitting host for the operetta, which is a moving tribute to the late Saudi king Fahad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, given the illustrious relationship the Gulf state has with its larger neighbor, which has spanned generations. The Saudi prince went on to wish both countries perpetual development and prosperity, as history has proven that their fates will forever be intertwined. As the show came to a close, His Highness the Crown Prince was given a commemorative plaque to remember the event. —KUNA



Scenes from His Highness Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's tour at the exhibition.





## Local

# Kuwaiti artist's 30 works shine at Qatar exhibition



**DOHA:** Kuwaiti artist Abdullah Al-Otaibi participated in an exhibition at Cultural Village of Qatar (Katara), showcasing 30 paintings. Otaibi used in his collection, titled 'Emotions,' special techniques and characters to reflect most of human emotions. The artworks, on display until February 20, reflect a chain of artistic definition of human emotions like anger, sadness and happiness among others. — KUNA



## NBK launches national song as gift for Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** On the occasion of Kuwait's independence and liberation anniversaries, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), launched a special first of its kind musical work presented as a commemorative gift to Kuwait. Manal Al-Mattar, NBK Public Relations Assistant General Manager said: "The national song is performed by a group of Kuwaiti singers: Nabil Shuaib, Sulaiman Al-Qassar, Mohammad Jasem, Talal Al-Saidalani and Abdullah Al-Masoudi. This piece of art is rich in connotations and invokes remarkably vivid community-related associations that reflects Kuwait's popular heritage. The artists performed different musical genres to reflect the diversity in Kuwait's cultural music and heritage."

The song is revealed on TV stations as well as in cinema theaters. Social media followers can watch the song



Manal Al-Mattar

celebration," Mattar added.

NBK reinforced its position as a lead contributor to the development of the Kuwaiti society through its commitment to corporate social responsibility. This commitment became evident in the numerous social and philanthropic initiatives and national responsibilities including the special musical operetta 'Habibityi ya Kuwait' which was launched on the occasion of Kuwait's independence Golden Jubilee, Baqoun and Hatha Howa Elkuweiti.

through NBK social media channels on YouTube and Facebook NBKGroup or Instagram and Twitter @NBKGroup. Special competitions are held with valuable prizes on NBK social media channels. "The song is a part of NBK's social program on the occasion of national and liberation day which includes a host of activities and functions that highlight the spirit of the

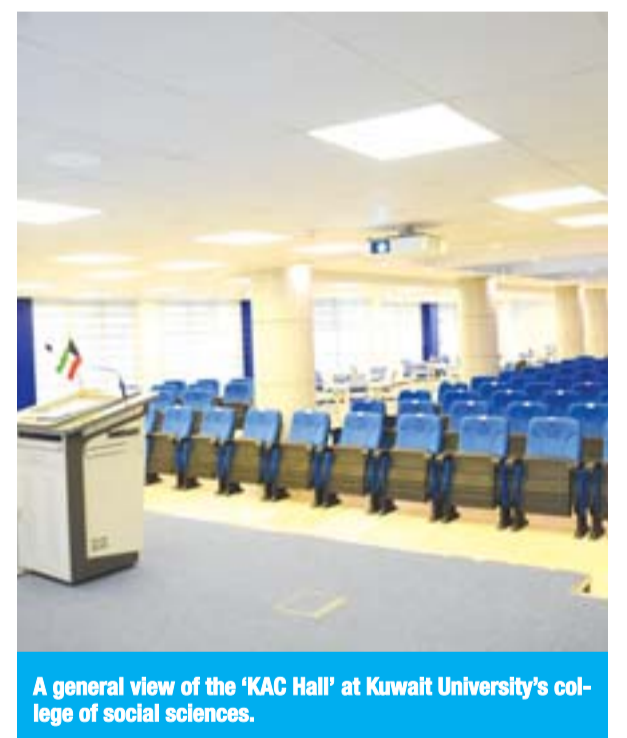


**KUWAIT:** Officials inaugurate the 'KAC Hall' at Kuwait University's college of social sciences.

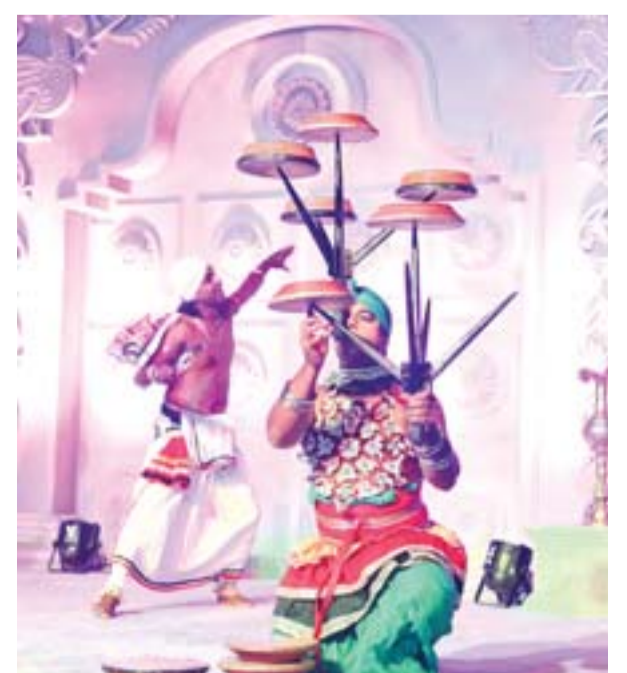
## Kuwait Airways opens hall at Kuwait University

**KUWAIT:** As part of its social responsibility activities, Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC) recently launched its hall at Kuwait University's college of social sciences. A special ceremony was held on the occasion under the auspices of KAC Board Chairman Yousef Abdul Hameed Al-Jassem, and KU Rector Hussein Ahmad Al-Ansari. The college's dean Dr Humoud Al-Qash'an, teaching staff members and students also attended the ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Jassem said that KAC rehabilitated the college's international hall and renamed it the 'KAC Hall' as part of its social responsibility strategies to support educational facilities in Kuwait. Jassem added that KAC had previously signed two agreements with the Ministry of Higher Education to dispatch trainee pilots on scholarships abroad and to provide students studying abroad with special discounts on KAC flights. Meanwhile, Qash'an hailed KAC's efforts and constant support to KU, expressing hopes that KAC always remains an effective partner in supporting the educational sector.



A general view of the 'KAC Hall' at Kuwait University's college of social sciences.



**KUWAIT:** The Ambassador of Sri Lanka Kaandeean Balasubramaniam hosted a reception on the occasion of the 71st anniversary of Independence at Regency Hotel over the weekend. The highlight of the event was a cultural performance of Sri Lankan artists. Higher officials, diplomats, members of the Sri Lankan community and media persons attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



# Government to 'push hard' to pass value added tax law before June

## Lawmaker criticizes planning council for failure to hire more Kuwaitis

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The government's bid to have the value added tax (VAT) law passed by the parliament will not be the only option to resolve the state budget deficit and press ahead with economic reform as recommended by both the IMF and local economic committees, said official sources. The sources added that despite parliamentary objections, the government will work hard to have the VAT bill passed before June, adding that lawmakers will demand clear measures that would not affect citizens, including strict price controls to avoid unjustified price hikes such as those detected in Saudi Arabia and UAE.

The sources added the government is demanding another package of measures to resolve deficit problems including lifting subsidies on basic services and increasing fuel prices once more, especially since they are the cheapest in the GCC states. "Increasing fuel prices might take effect in one or two years," stressed the sources, excluding the possibility of increasing elec-

tricity prices for the time being.

### Recruiting expats

Chairman of the parliamentary budgets and final statements committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad said the committee discussed the final statement of the Secretariat General of Planning and Development for 2017-2018. Abdulsamad said the remarks made by the State Audit Bureau showed that the secretariat kept recruiting expats with excuses of the unavailability of Kuwaitis in the same field, while the Civil Service Commission (CSC) announced that it does not mind that government bodies advertise their needs of experts after its approval, thus opening the door to hiring citizens in those positions.

### Hazard and pollution allowance

Kuwait Municipality plans to contact the Civil Service Commission (CSC) demanding the payment of hazard and pollution allowance to staff members working in the funerals department, said informed sources. They said that the municipality explained

that those working outdoors in cemeteries are subject to various weather conditions including rain and floods in which they could drown or get electrocuted. The municipality also explained that these workers are subject to injuries if they get bitten or stung by snakes or scorpions.

### Premarital checkups

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah amended clause number 3 of law number 31/2008 pertaining premarital medical checkups. The amendments include filing checkup applications directly at MoH checkup centers instead of filing them at the justice ministry, provided one or both spouses are Kuwaitis.

### Facilitated pilgrimage

The ministry of awqaf and Islamic affairs announced extending the time for Kuwaiti hajj convoys to apply for facilitated pilgrimage to Thursday, Feb 14. The ministry added that convoys allocated for bedoons would be declared later after Saudi authorities approve the ministry's request.



### Government Mall

Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Services Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan is scheduled to launch

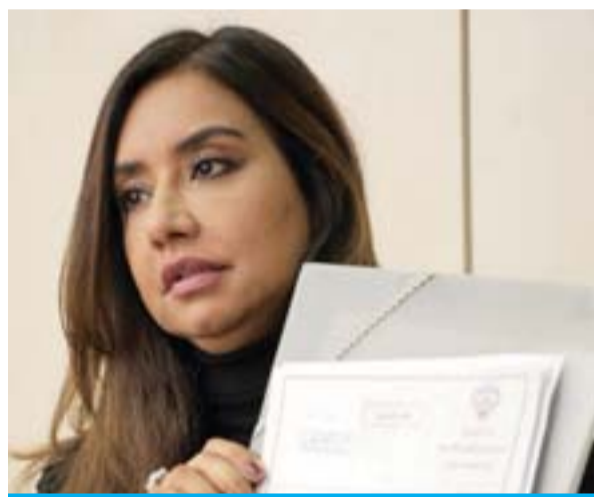
the Government Mall building in Qurain on Feb 18, said informed sources, noting that the mall will include offices of all ministries and government bodies to serve Mubarak Al-Kabeer residents.

## Five candidates apply on 5th day of nomination

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and KUNA

**KUWAIT:** Five candidates have submitted their applications on the fifth day of candidacy to run for the upcoming parliamentary by-elections slated for March 16. Election affairs department received applications of five candidates, including a woman. They are running for two seats in the second and the third constituencies, the Interior Ministry said in a statement yesterday. Candidates can submit their bids until February 16, the ministry said.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Municipality is on full alert with regards to the by-elections in terms of issuing campaign headquarter and ad licenses and removing any possible violations. The municipality stressed that candidates should themselves apply to the municipality's cleaning and road blockage department in their respective constituencies to obtain licenses for their campaign headquarters. The municipality added that once all conditions are met, including providing parking spaces that are at least 500



**KUWAIT:** Candidate Reem Al-Eidan shows her registration documents yesterday after applying to run for the upcoming parliamentary by-elections slated for March 16. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh

meters away from other campaign headquarters and 200 meters from nearby houses, candidates should pay a KD 500 deposit.

On February 4, the government assigned the Interior Ministry to prepare for organizing by-elections for 2nd



**Yousuf Al-Methn registers as a candidate for the upcoming parliamentary by-elections.**

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

## MPs push for more freedoms in media laws

**KUWAIT:** The information ministry's acting undersecretary Mohammad Al-Awash announced that a team was formed to study all legislations and media laws that organize information activities in all fields, on the instruction of Information Minister and State Minister for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri. Meanwhile, MPs laid down general ideas for such amendments, stressing this should result in more freedoms. Al-Jarida reported yesterday. Awash said the team held its first meeting yesterday in order to review all laws related to e-media, audiovisual, in addition to print and publication. He said the ministry believes it is time to review the laws to support national media, both official and private, adding that the ministry is keen on getting the expected results. In the meantime, MP Khalid Al-Shatti rejected any amendment that leads to reducing media and public freedoms, adding that ambitions are for more freedom as stipulated by the constitution. Furthermore, MP Ahmad Al-Fadhl said "we will have a close eye on any limitations." Moreover, MP Mohammad Al-Dallal said amendments must be made towards more freedoms and deal with drawbacks of the previous laws.

## Three fire teams battle stables' blaze

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Fire broke out in stables in Kabd on Sunday evening. Kabd, Jleeb and backup fire stations responded, led by Col Salem Al-Shafi. The site of the fire contained woodworks, combustible materials and paint. The fire was brought under control without injuries.

### Emergency landing

A citizen was sent to concerned authorities for forcing a Kuwait Airways plane to land in Iran for two hours, Al-Rai reported yesterday. An informed source said the man was in an abnormal state, and behaved strangely and started screaming and moving between seats and did not heed the orders of cabin crew, so the pilot made an emergency landing. Airport security there controlled and handcuffed him to his seat. The plane then took off and he was handed to airport police on arrival.

### Forged visa

Kuwait Airport passport control officers arrested a Bangladeshi man who attempted to enter the country on a forged visa. He said he paid someone in the country to obtain the visa, Al-Rai reported. The suspect was sent to concerned authorities.



**KUWAIT:** Firefighters battle a blaze reported in Kabd on Sunday evening.

### Trucks' theft

Two Syrians who bought stolen trucks sold by drivers without the knowledge of the owners were arrested. The duo used to dismantle the vehicles and sell their parts, reported Al-Rai. Detectives learned the two had an enclosure where they removed the parts, then crushed the metal and sold it as steel scrap. Detectives stormed the place and found cash and cutting tools. The two were arrested and confessed to committing seven thefts. Detectives are collecting information about missing trucks to learn if the two are involved in their disappearance.

## Child protection hotline 'suspended'

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Around two years ago, the ministry of health announced on various official media a hotline (147) for child abuse cases. It said children in danger can call for help 24/7 or seek advice if they are abused, especially by family members. But it seems this hotline was never activated. About a month ago, in a TV awareness show, the ministry of interior announced the same number 147 as the hotline to report cases of violations of the child protection law on social media.

When Kuwait Times tried to call this number, it was not in service. It rings once and then disconnects. When the ministry of interior was asked about this service, it noted the ministry of health is the body in charge. Kuwait Times then contacted the hotline of the ministry of health to clarify this issue. The employee at the emergency call center explained that the child abuse project including the 147 hotline was stopped and postponed.

"We expect to activate this line soon, hopefully within two months. Currently, there are child protection centers in all public hospitals in Kuwait, which only work in the morning. But in case of emergency or serious danger, the case should always be reported to the police," the operator told Kuwait Times.

## KFAED offers KD 25m to Iraq

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) yesterday signed a grant deal worth KD 25 million (\$85 million) with the Reconstruction Fund for Areas Affected by Terroristic Operations (REFAATO). The grant is part of a \$100-million pledge announced by Kuwait during an Iraq donors conference in Washington, the KFAED said in a statement. In January 2018, the KFAED signed an urgent financing deal valued at KD 4.5 million (\$15 million) to support health projects in several Iraqi provinces, according to the statement. It underlined the significance of these projects to upgrading the level of health services in affected areas as a prelude to a home-return of refugees. The REFAATO would undertake overseeing the execution of all these health projects in Iraq, it noted. — KUNA

## Cabinet discusses 'North Azzour' shares distribution

**KUWAIT:** The cabinet's weekly meeting focused on recommendations by the economic committee concerning the partnership between the public and private sectors over distribution of shares of First North Azzour on citizens in an initial public offering. He indicated that there would be further deliberation on the matter. The cabinet was also informed by the economic committee on proposals regarding allocation of appropriations to address deficits of state administrations' budgets, revealed Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, adding that the draft law mainly aimed at covering the budget deficit in the Ministry of Justice. The draft law was approved and sent to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who will then refer it to the National Assembly for deliberation.

Minister Saleh said that the cabinet was briefed

on the public services committee's proposals on speeding up the process of public and private sectors' joint ventures. The cabinet was informed on the findings of the committee tasked with addressing damage caused by heavy rains, which hit Kuwait late last year. Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Housing Affairs Dr Jenan Ramadan briefed the cabinet on the committee's findings, said Minister Al-Saleh who indicated that the ministers voiced their approval of the committee's efforts to hold accountable people who were involved in construction of infrastructure which failed to cope with heavy rainfall and floods.

Saleh said following the meeting that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah briefed the cabinet on the results of his latest visit to the US. In his address to the meeting, Sheikh

Sabah Al-Khaled indicated that his encounters with American officials focused on means to enhance relations on all possible spheres in addition to issues of mutual interest as well as latest regional and international developments, said Saleh. He added that Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also informed the cabinet on the results of the fifth session of Arab-European ministerial meeting held in Brussels, Belgium. According to the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, the Brussels meeting touched on efforts to bolster Arab and European relations in addition to the preparation for the first Arab-European summit to be held in Egypt in February, stated minister Saleh. The cabinet, meanwhile, condemned the recent terror attack north of Burkina Faso, which resulted in several casualties, stated Saleh who affirmed that the cabinet reflected Kuwait's utter condemnation of terrorism in all shapes and form. — KUNA

## Required

### Sales Engineer - Sales Representative

- minimum 3-5 years experience in selling construction materials - preference sealants and fire stopping materials.
- Fluent in English

Email: [samer@surfacespro.com](mailto:samer@surfacespro.com)





30 years after Rushdie fatwa, blasphemy still a potent weapon

## As Indian election looms, Facebook steps up fact-checks

Page 9

Page 7



TEHRAN: President Hassan Rouhani (center) walks in a crowd during a ceremony celebrating the 40th anniversary of Islamic Revolution in the capital Tehran's Azadi (Freedom) square. —AFP

# Iran: Mideast Shiite contender for power

## Iranians mark 40th anniversary of its Islamic revolution

**TEHRAN:** Iran, which marked the 40th anniversary of its Islamic revolution yesterday, is the world's largest Shiite Muslim country and a fierce rival of Sunni kingpin Saudi Arabia. Here is some background.

### From monarchy to revolution

Successor to the ancient Persian Empire ruled by monarchs called shahs, Iran installed military strongman Reza Shah Pahlavi on the throne in 1925 after years of upheaval. He was forced to abdicate in 1941 in favor of his son Mohammad Reza. In the early 1950s the prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, nationalized the key oil sector which had been controlled by the British. But in 1953 he was ousted in a coup orchestrated by London and Washington.

In 1963, Shiite cleric Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini became the leader of opposition to the shah's modernizing reforms. He was deported the following year. Anti-government demonstrations and strikes erupted in

January 1978. In the face of the growing protests, the shah left Iran in January 1979 for what turned out to be permanent exile. Khomeini, who had led the uprising from exile, made a triumphant return in February. The shah's government fell 10 days later and an Islamic republic was proclaimed on April 1, Khomeini becoming its first supreme leader.

### Cleric rules supreme

Iran's constitution gives the final say on all issues of state to the supreme leader, whose authority trumps that of the elected president. The role was taken by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, now 79, after Khomeini's death in 1989. An elected council of vetted clerics, the Assembly of Experts, oversees the work of the supreme leader and has the authority to dismiss him. Next in line is the president, who names the government and is elected for four years by universal suffrage.

Moderate cleric Hassan Rouhani, now 70, became

president in 2013, winning a second term in 2017. He replaced hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad whose reelection in 2009 sparked massive protests and a government crackdown. Parliament's powers are limited when compared to other institutions. It is vetted by the Guardian Council of clerics and jurists with the authority to interpret the constitution. The Revolutionary Guards branch of the armed forces is particularly influential and is considered to be the country's ideological army.

### Rivalry with Saudi Arabia

Shiite-majority Iran rivals Sunni kingpin Saudi Arabia for influence in the Middle East, the two taking opposing sides in multiple regional conflicts. During the Syrian civil war which broke out in 2011, Tehran has been the main regional military and financial backer of President Bashar al-Assad against Sunni rebels supported by Riyadh. In Yemen, Iran supports Shiite rebels who control the capital Sanaa despite a major military interven-

tion launched by Saudi Arabia and its allies in 2015.

### Nuclear deal and sanctions

In 2015, Iran reached a landmark agreement with major powers—after 12 years of negotiations—to accept limits on its controversial nuclear program in exchange for an easing of crippling sanctions. But last year, President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the hard-won accord and reimposed sanctions. The other parties have vowed to keep the accord alive. Iran is a founding member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and sits on the world's fourth-biggest oil reserves and second-largest gas reserves. But it suffers from chronic unemployment and high inflation, and Washington's reimposition of sanctions last year sent the rial tumbling. According to the International Monetary Fund, GDP is expected to fall by 3.6 percent in 2019, mostly due to lower oil sales as a result of US sanctions. —AFP

## Climate change seen as top threat, but US influence a growing worry

**BERLIN:** Climate change is the top security concern in a poll conducted by the Washington-based Pew Research Center, followed by Islamist terrorism and cyber attacks while respondents in a growing number of countries worried about the power and influence of the United States. In 13 of 26 countries, people listed climate change as the top global threat, with the Islamic State militant group topping the list in eight and cyber attacks in four, the non-profit, non-partisan Pew Research Center said in its report. Worries about climate change have increased sharply since 2013, with double-digit percentage point increases seen in countries including the United States, Mexico, France, Britain, South Africa and Kenya, according to the poll of 27,612 people conducted between May and August, 2018.

North Korea's nuclear program and the global economy were also significant concerns, while respondents in Poland named Russian power and influence as the top threat. The largest shift in sentiment centered on the United States, it said, with a median of 45 percent of people naming US power and influence as a threat in 2018, up from 25 percent in 2013, when Barack Obama was US president. In 10 countries, including Germany, Japan and South Korea, roughly half of respondents or more saw US power and influence as a major threat to their nation, up from eight in 2017 and three in 2013, the poll showed.



LEUVEN: Youths hold placards and shout slogans during a 'Youth For Climate' rally in Leuven, calling on authorities to take action on climate and ecological issues. —AFP

In Mexico, where those concerns have spiked since the election of US President Donald Trump, the percentage jumped to 64 percent, the poll showed. Trump has railed against illegal migration and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and is pressing to build a wall between the two countries. In 2018, a median of 61 percent of respondents across all countries represented viewed cyber attacks as a serious concern, up from 54 percent in 2017. The number of countries that saw Islamic State as a threat fell by double-digit percentage points in Israel, Spain, the United States and Japan. —Reuters

## Scales of justice: Indonesia police probe snake interrogation

**JAYAPURA:** Indonesian authorities yesterday launched an investigation after a police force chief admitted an officer wrapped a live snake around a terrified suspect in a bid to force a confession. Shocking viral footage emerged online showing an alleged pickpocket—handcuffed and sitting on the floor barefoot—screaming hysterically as another officer shouts abuse at a police station in restive Papua province. "How many times have you stolen a mobile phone?" he yells at the unidentified suspected thief, who appears to be covering in fear.

"Only two times," the suspect says in response. At one stage, the officer appears to try to shove the snake into the man's mouth, while others are heard laughing in the background during the undated video. "An officer is now being questioned by Papua police internal affairs division," Papua police spokesman Ahmad Mustofa

Kamal said yesterday. He did not identify the officer or say if others present would be investigated. Tony Ananda Swadaya, the police chief in Jayawijaya district, where the incident took place, apologized in a statement Sunday.

But he added that the suspect was not in physical danger from the serpent. "The snake was tame and not poisonous or dangerous and the incident was their own idea so they could get admission of guilt as quick as possible," Swadaya said in a statement. "We will work more professionally in the future," he added. Police did not say what kind of snake was used. Indonesian security forces have been repeatedly accused of using excessive force and committing rights abuses against Papua's ethnic Melanesian population including extrajudicial killings of activists and peaceful protesters.

Human rights lawyer Veronica Koman said the video confirmed what some jailed Papuan activists have reported in the past. "They have long known that snakes are being used by police and the military (in interrogations)," she said. "So they're not surprised" by the video. Papua, one of Indonesia's poorest regions, has seen several spasms of violence over the past year, including in December when at least 16 employees of a state-owned company—who were building bridges in a major infrastructure push for the impoverished region—were killed by separatist rebels. —AFP



## International

# At Iraqi place of exile, Iranians remember revolution's leader

## Former home bustles with tourists

**NAJAF:** On a backstreet in Iraq's holy city of Najaf, Iranian pilgrims shuffle in and out of a small doorway, making a short but important detour. They have come to see where the leader of the Islamic revolution once dwelled in exile. The former home of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who in 1979 led an uprising that ousted the Shah of Iran, is bustling with tourists on the 40th anniversary of the birth of the Islamic Republic.

Escaping for a moment Najaf's crowded Shi'ite Muslim shrine nearby, they tour the humble home which is now a museum and gallery showcasing Khomeini's political and personal life. Teenagers take selfies in rooms where he studied, prayed and developed his ideas for the establishment of an Islamic state. "The house captures the spirit of Khomeini. He was not interested in money or worldly possessions - he was there to serve the people," said one visitor, 56-year-old Mohammad Javad Elahi.

Khomeini's Najaf abode, where he lived for 13 years before being expelled from Iraq by Saddam Hussein in 1978, has little furniture. His private meeting room is small with only a carpet to sit on. Photos on the walls show Khomeini with his children and grandchildren, although most are iconic pictures of the uprising, including the takeover of Iran's embassy in Paris by protesters and Khomeini's arrival by plane in Tehran after the fall of the Shah. Elahi, a logistics manager from Tehran, said he saw Khomeini's legacy as an Iran that stands firm in the face of

US sanctions. Despite unrest over a hurt economy, sanctions had served to unite many Iranians behind their current government, he said.

"We don't suffer the upheaval of some of our neighbors. Things are mostly stable," he said, referring to conflicts in Arab countries in recent years. Other visitors said they saw the Islamic republic as an improvement on the secular monarchy which it replaced. "I was 13 during the revolution. I remember the time of the Shah. He was a Western puppet - the economy and politics of Iran was basically in the hands of America and its allies," said Alireza Ghorbani, a retired school teacher. "The Shah's secret service killed and tortured opposition, including clerics."

### 'Better than the Shah'

The 1979 uprising deposed Western-allied Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Khomeini spent the final year of his exile in France. Khomeini's Islamic republic, and the leadership that has followed it under Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have been criticized internationally for crackdowns on political opponents, including during protests over alleged election fraud in 2009 and last year over wages and complaints of corruption. Those visiting Khomeini's Najaf home, all religious tourists, said they support Iran's clerical establishment. "Most people in Iran supported the revolution," said Mohammad Kazemi, a clergyman from northwestern Tabriz. "Things are still better than before. Today I'm here to pay my respects to its leader."



**QOM:** A cleric visits the house of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in the holy city of Qom. — AFP

Khomeini went into exile in the 1960s, first to Turkey then to Najaf. The Iraqi city and Qom in Iran are the seats of the two great seminaries for Shi'ite clergy. Iraq's top Shi'ite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani is based in Najaf. Khomeini mostly kept a low profile in Najaf, studying and lecturing, but also developed his ideas for a system of Islamic govern-

nance. Iran's influence in Iraq, which has steadily grown since the US invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003, has brought with it increasing numbers of Iranian tourists and pilgrims. Hundreds of thousands visit Iraq's holy shrines at Najaf and Kerbala each year. This week, many were stopping through Khomeini's home. — Reuters

## Rushdie: From fatwa fugitive to free speech hero

**PARIS:** On February 14, 1989 Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini called for British writer Salman Rushdie to be killed for writing "The Satanic Verses", which the cleric said insulted Islam. In a fatwa, or religious decree, Khomeini urged "Muslims of the world rapidly to execute the author and the publishers of the book" so that "no one will any longer dare to offend the sacred values of Islam." Khomeini, who was 89 and had just four months to live, added that anyone who was killed trying to carry out the death sentence should be considered a "martyr" who would go to paradise. A \$2.8-million bounty was put on the writer's head.

### Driven underground

The British government immediately granted police protection to Rushdie, an atheist born in India to non-practicing Muslims. For almost 13 years he moved between safe houses under the pseudonym of Joseph Anton, changing base 56 times in the first six months. "I am gagged and imprisoned," he recalled writing in his diary in his 2012 memoir, "Joseph Anton". "I can't even speak. I want to kick a football in a park with my son. Ordinary, banal life: my impossible dream."

### 'Blasphemous'

Viking Penguin published "The Satanic Verses" in September 1988 to critical acclaim. The book is set by turns in the London of Conservative British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and ancient Makkah, Islam's holiest site. It centers on

the adventures of two Indian actors, Gibreel and Saladin, whose hijacked plane explodes over the English Channel. They re-emerge on an English beach and mix with immigrants in London, the story unfolding in surreal sequences reflecting Rushdie's magic realism style.

The book was deemed blasphemous and sacrilegious by many Muslims including over references to verses alleged by some scholars to have been an early version of the Koran and later removed. These verses allow for prayers to be made to three pagan goddesses, contrary to Islam's strict belief that there is only one God. Controversially, Rushdie writes of the involvement of a prophet resembling the founder of Islam, Mohammed. This prophet is tricked into striking a deal with Satan in which he exchanges some of his monotheistic dogmatism in favor of the three goddesses. He then realizes his error. Khomeini and others insist he had depicted the prophet irreverently.

### 'Hang Rushdie'

In October 1988 Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi banned the import of the book, hoping to win Muslim support ahead of elections. Some 20 countries went on to outlaw it. In January 1989 Muslims in Britain's northern city of Bradford burned copies in public. A month later, thousands of Pakistanis attacked the US Information Center in Islamabad, shouting "American dogs" and "hang Salman Rushdie". Police opened fire, killing five. Khomeini's fatwa provoked horror around the Western world. There were protests in Europe, and London and Tehran broke off diplomatic relations for nearly two years. In the United States authors like Susan Sontag and Tom Wolfe organized public lectures to support Rushdie. The author tried to explain himself in 1990 in an essay titled "In Good Faith" but many Muslims were not placated.

the defeat of an empire. Rushdie's novel, and the fatwa which followed, were "like a dam breaking", Rehman said. Today, the novelist is "hated as much... as he was hated back then", said Pakistani religious scholar Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi. But "people cannot protest consecutively for 30 years," he added.

Anger over blasphemy remains effervescent among Islamic hardliners, however. In the last ten years in Pakistan, politicians have been assassinated, European countries threatened with nuclear annihilation and students lynched over the issue. The case of Asia Bibi - a Christian woman whose death sentence for blasphemy was overturned in Pakistan last year, sparking days of violence and drawing global attention to religious extremism in the South Asian country - is just the latest example. Ashrafi said the publication of the novel "justified" laws against blasphemy - without them, he argued, "people like Rushdie will keep hurting the religious sentiments of Muslims".

### 'Catastrophic'

Even calls to reform the laws have provoked violence in Pakistan, and for some the fatwa helped blur the lines between blasphemy and intellectual debate across the Muslim world. Analysts such as Khalid Ahmed, author of a book on Pakistan's sectarian divide, say the fatwa marked the beginning of a "terrible decline" of intellectual discourse in Islam. Khomeini's call for blood was "catastrophic for the freedom of creation, literature and thought", Egyptian journalist and novelist Ibrahim Issa said.

Other fatwas had been issued against writers in the past, he said - but usually by small, extremist groups. Khomeini's was the first issued by an Islamic state. "It was a dark moment that, thirty years later,



**MUMBAI:** In this file photo, an Indian Muslim wears a mask of now US novelist and essayist Salman Rushdie as he displays a placard condemning Rushdie during a protest in Bombay. — AFP

### Attacks

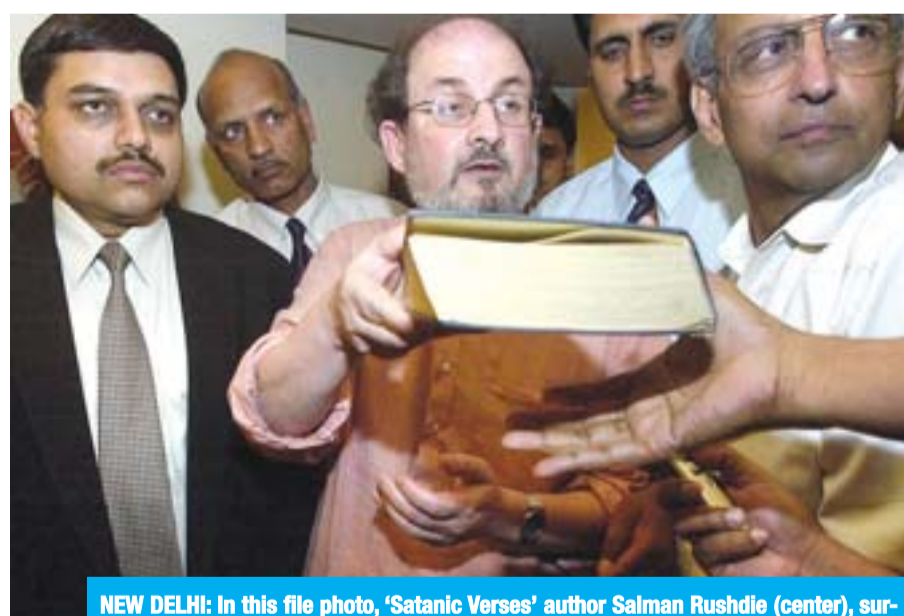
Rushdie gradually emerged from his underground life in 1991, but his Japanese translator was killed in July that year. His Italian translator was stabbed a few days later and a Norwegian publisher shot two years later, although it was never clear the attacks were in response to Khomeini's call. In 1993 Islamist protesters torched a hotel in Sivas in central Turkey, some of whom were angered by the presence of writer Aziz Nesin, who sought to translate the novel into Turkish.

He escaped but 37 people were killed. In 1998 the government of Iran's reformist president Mohammad Khatami assured Britain that Iran would not implement the fatwa. But Khomeini's successor, Ayatollah

Ali Khamenei, said in 2005 he still believed Rushdie was an apostate whose killing would be authorized by Islam.

### 'Islamophobia'

Many Muslims were furious when Rushdie was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2007 for his services to literature. Iran accused Britain of "Islamophobia", saying its fatwa still stood, and there were widespread Muslim protests, notably in Pakistan. Rushdie was by then living relatively openly in New York where he moved in the late 1990s, and where his recent novels are set. After many years living in the shadows, he became something of a socialite and is seen by many in the West as a free speech hero. — AFP



**NEW DELHI:** In this file photo, 'Satanic Verses' author Salman Rushdie (center), surrounded by security, returns a book to an Indian fan after autographing it during a brief encounter with the press in New Delhi. — AFP

reminds us how dangerous the interference of religion in freedom of expression (is)", he said. Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei has on numerous occasions reiterated the verdict on Rushdie, most recently in 2015.

The Iranian government vowed it would not act on the fatwa in 1998, but such decrees are "not revocable", Mehdi Aboutalebi, cleric and doctor of political science at the influential conservative think-tank Imam Khomeini Educational Research Institute in Qom said. "Even if 800 years pass, the sentence remains the same," he said. The fatwa has caused multiple diplomatic rows over the years - as have other cases of blasphemy, such as the controversy over satirical Danish cartoons of

the Islamic prophet printed in the right-wing Jyllands-Posten newspaper in 2005.

Politics and religion are often intertwined in Iran, Aboutalebi explained, echoing a sentiment expressed in other Muslim countries. "For instance, Iran's quarrel with US is not over money or economy... This is all about our beliefs and our religion," he said. The fatwa shows "we will not tolerate anyone breaking our belief boundaries". Today the furor over Rushdie interests only "the most radical ayatollahs", said Clement Therme, research fellow at the Iran International Institute for Strategic Studies. Iranians are experiencing "revolutionary fatigue", he said, as Tehran hunts for friends amid criticism over its regional policies and disputed nuclear program. — AFP

## The 10 days that changed Iran forever

**PARIS:** From the return to Tehran of exiled revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to the fall of the shah's last government, Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution was over in 10 days. Here are the highlights of what has become known as the 10 Days of Dawn, or Daheh Fajr in Farsi, which ended 25 centuries of monarchy and are officially celebrated in Iran every year.

### Khomeini returns

On February 1, 1979 Shiite opposition leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini makes a triumphant return to Tehran after more than 14 years in exile, mostly in Iraq. Iran's last monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, had fled on January 16 after months of protests against his regime. Jubilant crowds welcome Khomeini at the airport and line the road which leads to the Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery where he gives his first major address. Khomeini challenges the legitimacy of the government headed by prime minister Shapour Bakhtiar, appointed by the shah on the eve of his departure in a bid to prevent clerics from taking power.

### Islamic revolution 'council'

On February 3 Khomeini announces at his first news conference that a council has been formed of key figures in the revolution movement to prepare for the establishment of an Islamic republic. A day later, in a show of support for the ayatollah while the shah's administration is still in place, there are hunger strikes within the air force. One-fifth of conscripts do not show up at their barracks.

### Demonstrations, strikes

On February 6 a prime minister is appointed for a provisional revolutionary government: Mehdi Bazargan, a nationalist and Islamist engineer and long-time opponent of the shah's regime. Tehran is thus the seat of two governments: one revolutionary, the other imperial. In support of the revolutionary government, the clergy organizes daily demonstrations that gather several million people. Strikes are followed in the key oil industry. On February 7 mullahs in the second city Isfahan establish a parallel authority to manage municipal affairs. On February 8 more than 1,000 soldiers in uniform march in Tehran in support of Bazargan's provisional government.

### Uprising

On February 10 mutinous air force soldiers take control of eastern Tehran aided by armed civilians. The neighborhood is cut off by barricades and sandbags and political prisoners are freed. AFP journalist Pierre-Andre Jouve describes a capital in chaos with "gatherings of demonstrators armed with clubs" and "thousands of men claiming to be 'police of the revolution' at almost all the city's major intersections".

### Revolution 'completed'

On February 11 an army barracks to the northeast of Tehran is stormed by several thousand civilians and falls to Khomeini's supporters. In the late morning, the centre of the capital falls under the control of armed civilians and army deserters. The radio, controlled by Khomeini supporters, announces parliament has been dissolved. Khomeini calls on military chiefs to not stand in the way of troops rallying to the revolution. "Tehran is practically in the hands of supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini," writes AFP correspondent Patrick Meney.

"At nightfall, the centre of Tehran already had the appearance of a completed revolution: it is almost time for victory parades," his report says. "Mutinous soldiers are hailed by the crowd. Army soldiers join students in revolt on campus. People who were enemies only yesterday embrace." Overnight a statement from the revolutionary government declares the "revolution having won" with the military joining the popular movement. In two days the battle has left more than 200 dead and more than 1,000 injured. With the shah's government departed, Bazargan officially takes up his post in the offices of the prime minister. — AFP



## International

# US-backed fighters battle to take last Islamic State pocket

## Landmines, IS snipers, tunnels hindering the advance

**SOUSA:** Syrian fighters backed by artillery fire from a US-led coalition battled a fierce jihadist fightback yesterday as they pushed to retake a last morsel of territory from the Islamic State group. Mushrooming black clouds rose over the embattled jihadist holdout in eastern Syria, as missiles and a warplane streaked through the sky. More than four years after the extremists declared a "caliphate" across large parts of Syria and neighboring Iraq, several offensives have whittled that proto-state down to a tiny holdout.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) on Saturday announced the final push to expel hundreds of diehard jihadists from that patch on the Iraq border. "IS launched a counterattack on our forces and we are now responding with rockets, air strikes and direct clashes," SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali said yesterday. He said there were "dozens of SDF hostages held by IS" inside their last foothold, but denied reports of executions.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said the alliance of Kurdish and Arab fighters had pressed yesterday morning in the face of tough obstacles. "The SDF are advancing slowly in what remains of the IS pocket" on the edges of the village of Baghouz, Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said. But landmines, IS snipers, and tunnels the extremists have dug out for their defense are hindering the advance, he said. Backed by coalition air strikes, the SDF alliance has been battling to oust the jihadists from the eastern province of Deir Ezzor since September.

### Screening for jihadists

Since December, tens of thousands of people, most women and children related to IS fighters, have fled to SDF territory. US-backed forces have screened the new arrivals, weeding out potential jihadists for questioning. Yesterday, dozens of coalition and SDF fighters were stationed at a screening point for new arrivals from IS areas. Coalition forces stood over about 20 men who were

crouching on the ground. Some 600 people were able to reach SDF territory on Sunday after fleeing the fighting, the Observatory said. Among them, were 20 suspected IS members, including two French women, seven Turks, and three Ukrainians, said the monitor, which relies on sources inside Syria. The SDF—which has said it expects the final offensive to be over in days—announced Sunday that it had taken some 40 positions from the jihadists following direct combat involving light weapons.

The alliance had earlier said that up to 600 jihadists as well as hundreds of civilians could remain inside a patch four square kilometers. Spokesman Bali said IS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, the man who pronounced the cross-border "caliphate" in 2014, was not among them, and likely not in Syria. At the height of their rule, the jihadists imposed their brutal interpretation of Islamic law on a territory roughly the size of Britain. But military offensives in both countries, including by the SDF, have since retaken the vast bulk of their territory. The jihadists however retain a presence in Syria's vast Badia desert, and have claimed a series of deadly attacks in SDF-held areas.

### Planned US withdrawal

US President Donald Trump in December shocked Washington's allies by announcing a full withdrawal of US troops from Syria as IS had been "beaten". But the US military warned in a report published this month that IS "could likely resurge in Syria within six to twelve months and regain limited territory" if sustained pressure is not maintained. In January an IS suicide bomber attacked a US patrol in the northeastern city of Manbij, killing four Americans, five SDF fighters and ten civilians. The losses were the worst combat losses for the US in war-torn Syria since it launched the coalition to fight IS in 2014.

Trump's decision to withdraw US troops has left Syria's Kurds scrambling for safeguards. A US departure makes them more vulnerable to a long threatened attack by



**ALEPPO:** Syrian people walk amid destruction in the Bab Al-Qinnasrin area in Aleppo's Old city. — AFP

neighboring Turkey, who considers Kurdish fighters to be "terrorists", and dashes their dreams of autonomy. The Kurds have largely stayed out of Syria's nearly eight-year civil war, instead building their own semi-autonomous institutions in the northeast of the country. But the expect-

ed US pullout has seen them grappling to mend ties with the Damascus regime, which is against Kurdish self-rule. Syria's war has killed 360,000 people and displaced millions since it started in 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government protests. — AFP

### News in brief

#### Teacher, classmate killed

**MINSK:** A 15-year-old Belarusian yesterday stabbed his teacher and a classmate to death while seriously injuring two others, authorities said, in a rare school attack in the ex-Soviet nation. The teenager arrived at school before the first lesson and stabbed his history teacher in the neck, fatally injuring her, local media reported. He then entered a neighboring classroom and killed a student, before escaping via the window and injuring two more. Police arrested the attacker some two hours later, according to reports. The regional office of the interior ministry confirmed a 53-year-old teacher and one student had been killed, while two other students were in intensive care. The incident took place in Stolbtsy, a town 40 miles south-west of the capital Minsk. The attacker deleted his social media presence the day before the killings, according to media. — AFP

#### Copter crashes; 3 die

**JUBA:** An Ethiopian military helicopter crashed inside a United Nations compound in the disputed Abyei region between Sudan and South Sudan, killing three crew members and injuring 10 passengers, the UN said in a statement Sunday. The statement said the helicopter was carrying 23 passengers when it crashed on Saturday inside the compound of the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), "killing three of its crew members." "Ten passengers were injured with three in critical condition," it said. The Mi-8 helicopter was carrying Ethiopian troops from Kadugli in Sudan to Abyei, which has been contested since South Sudan gained independence in 2011. "We are investigating the incident," said UNISFA's acting Head of Mission and Force Commander Major General Gebre Adhana Woldezgu. The remains of the Ethiopian peacekeepers were repatriated to Addis Ababa on Sunday at a ceremony attended by hundreds of UNISFA personnel. — AFP

#### Drug lord stabbed

**SYDNEY:** A notorious crime boss who was once Australia's most wanted man has been stabbed in prison, reports said yesterday, months after revelations his lawyer was a police informant cast doubt on his criminal convictions. Tony Mokbel, who masterminded a drug trafficking empire, was a central figure in Melbourne's gangland war which began in the late 1990s. The violence claimed dozens of lives and was later immortalized in the hugely popular Australian TV series "Underbelly". Police said a man aged in his 50s—widely reported to be Mokbel by Australian media—was flown from the maximum security Barwon Prison southwest of Melbourne in a serious condition after a stabbing on Monday afternoon. A Victoria Police spokeswoman would not confirm the victim's identity to AFP. A second man aged in his 30s was also taken to hospital, police added. — AFP

#### Thai princess disqualified

**BANGKOK:** Thai Princess Ubolratana was yesterday formally disqualified for running for prime minister, ending her brief and ill-fated political union with a party allied to the powerful Shinawatra clan, just days after a stern royal command rebuking her candidacy was issued by her brother, the king. Uncertainty and conjecture have coursed through Thailand since Friday when the Thai Raksa Chart party made the explosive announcement of Princess Ubolratana, King Maha Vajiralongkorn's elder sister, as their candidate for premier after the March 24 election. Her tilt appeared to some to be a masterstroke of back-room dealings by Thaksin Shinawatra, the billionaire self-exiled ex-premier, just weeks before the poll. But just hours later it fell apart. A royal command from the king put a pin in her unprecedented political aspirations, insisting the monarchy was above politics and describing his sister's candidacy as "highly inappropriate". — AFP

## Pompeo tries to woo Orban away from Moscow

**BUDAPEST:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo arrived in Hungary yesterday, on the first leg of a European tour, hoping that economic and defense incentives will dissuade Prime Minister Viktor Orban from getting too close to Russia. Pompeo is set to meet Orban on the one-day trip to Budapest, from where he will proceed to Slovakia, another NATO ally that has seen few recent senior US visitors. The focus of Pompeo's trip to Europe is a US-driven conference on the Middle East in Poland later this week, which has been toned down after European allies were uneasy about promoting President Donald Trump's hawkish line on Iran.

Orban is one of the few European leaders to praise Trump, sharing the mogul-turned-president's antipathy for migrants and his belief in promoting a Christian cultural identity. While the previous president, Barack Obama, tended to cold-shoulder Orban, the Trump administration has taken the opposite tack, but the strategy has little to show for it so far. US officials said that Pompeo will discuss ways to increase defense and economic cooperation with Hungary. While Hungary is treaty-bound to the United States through NATO, US officials are pushing for progress on a bilateral defence cooperation agreement, which would let US forces move freely in the country.

Such an agreement could prove controversial if Hungary is the stage for a US military operation. And it would be sure to irritate President Vladimir Putin, who has considered Orban his closest friend in the European Union. Putin visited Budapest twice last year, with Orban welcoming him in defiance of Western efforts to isolate him over Moscow's support to separatist insurgents in Ukraine and its 2014 annexation of Crimea. The United States has also voiced worries over Hungary's growing relationship with China, including an agreement for telecom giant Huawei to develop the country's fifth-generation mobile networks. Washington has been ramping up pressure on Huawei with senior executives of the company arrested in US allies Canada and Poland. It warns that



**BUDAPEST:** US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (center) is pictured next to the statue of the former US President Ronald Reagan at the Liberty square (Szabadsag) in Budapest yesterday. — AFP

China could come to dominate the next wave of technology, with grave repercussions for the protection of individual data and the safety of infrastructure. Hungary has said it has no plans to revisit the decision to allow 5G networks contract to Huawei. And critics say that Washington's concerns have as much to do with preserving US commercial dominance as with security.

### Alarm at Hungary's direction

Pompeo also plans to discuss expanding exchanges between the US and Hungary to strengthen Hungarian independent media and the ability of law enforcement to crack down on corruption, officials said. The US has voiced alarm over the direction Hungary has taken in these

areas recently, including a decision last year to return two Russian arms dealers home rather than to extradite them to face charges in the United States. And the prestigious Central European University last year moved its key programs out of Hungary after the government-rejecting direct appeals from the US ambassador-cracked down on educational institutions considered foreign.

The university was founded by George Soros, the US-Hungarian billionaire and champion of liberal values, who has been vilified by the far-right in both countries with imagery that is at times anti-Semitic. Joerg Forbrig, an expert on Central Europe at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, doubted that the Trump administration could change Orban. — AFP

## Acting Pentagon chief Shanahan in Afghanistan

**KABUL:** Acting Pentagon chief Patrick Shanahan arrived in Afghanistan on an unannounced visit yesterday as the United States leads a push for peace talks with the Taliban. Shanahan will meet President Ashraf Ghani, who has warned against rushing into a deal after Washington held major talks with Taliban officials in Qatar last month that negotiators hope could herald a breakthrough in the grinding 17-year conflict. US President Donald Trump is pushing to end US involvement in Afghanistan, where 14,000 American troops are still deployed, raising Afghan fears that Washington could exit before securing a lasting peace between the Taliban and the Kabul government.

Shanahan told reporters earlier that he had no instructions from Washington to begin a withdrawal, however. "I have not been directed to step down our forces in Afghanistan," Shanahan said. "I think the presence we want in Afghanistan is what assures our homeland defense and supports regional stability." He said it was crucial Kabul, whose representatives were not at the talks in Qatar, was involved in discussions over the future of Afghanistan. "The Afghans have to decide what

Afghanistan looks like in the future. It's not about the US, it's about Afghanistan," Shanahan said.

"The US has significant-significant investment in ensuring security, but the Afghans decide their future," Shanahan met General Scott Miller, the top US and NATO commander in Afghanistan, before visiting Camp Morehead where Americans train Afghan special forces. Zalmay Khalilzad, the US special envoy leading the talks, has expressed hope at finding a deal before Afghan presidential elections scheduled for July, but has emphasized that any troop withdrawal would depend on conditions on the ground. Khalilzad is set to lead a large delegation on a six-nation tour, including Afghanistan, to boost the peace process and seek to bring all Afghan parties to the table.

### 'Constructive'

The months-long push by the US to engage the Taliban has ostensibly been aimed at convincing them to negotiate with Kabul, which the insurgents consider a US puppet. Ghani spoke last week with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who also stressed the importance of the Afghan government being at the centre of the peace process. But the insurgents, who ruled Afghanistan from 1996-2001, have steadfastly refused. Instead they met directly with US negotiators in Doha last month for peace talks described by US President Donald Trump as "constructive".

The US is expected to commence a second round of talks with Taliban officials



**KABUL:** Acting Pentagon chief Patrick Shanahan (front 2nd right) arrives in Kabul. — AFP

on February 25 in Qatar, where they have their political office. The militants, who were toppled by US-led forces in 2001, last week held separate talks in Moscow with a senior delegation of Afghan politicians—including chief Ghani rivals. The two-day talks were the Taliban's most significant engagement with Afghan leaders in years, and saw former president Hamid Karzai, among others, dining and praying with the insurgents—though without the involvement of the government it was unclear what impact they will have.

Ghani—who has vented frustration as his friends and enemies were pictured negotiating the future of his country—has described the Moscow talks as "nothing more than fantasy". The Taliban have outlined their vision for Afghanistan, propos-

ing an "inclusive Islamic system" of governance and demanding a new Islam-based constitution for the country. Both parties released a statement at the conclusion of the talks promising to advance negotiations at a later date. Shanahan was elevated from deputy defense secretary to the Pentagon's top spot January 1, after Jim Mattis quit amid long-running disagreements with President Trump. His visit to Afghanistan comes as the United Nations said it was investigating "credible" reports of Afghan civilian deaths and injuries from an airstrike over the weekend in Helmand, a Taliban stronghold. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said late Sunday it would share its findings once an inquiry into the "aerial operations" in Sangin district was completed. — AFP



International

# After criticizing vote, US charts careful course on Bangladesh

## Sheikh Hasina seen as a useful partner

WASHINGTON: Bangladesh faced widespread international criticism over the conduct of recent elections, but the United States looks set for business as usual as it sees strong common interests with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. As the eighth most populous nation in the world, with a moderate Muslim population that largely welcomes cooperation with the West, Bangladesh has a warming relationship with the United States—yet not so close as to give Washington significant leverage.

Sheikh Hasina's Awami League won an incredible 288 seats in the 300-seat parliament in the December 30 election, with opposition leader Khaleda Zia—her bitter nemesis for decades—in jail on charges her opponents say are politically motivated while the press faces draconian new restrictions. The US State Department voiced concern ahead of the election, accusing Bangladesh of foot-dragging on letting in electoral observers and urging greater efforts to ensure a free vote. The United States followed up after the election with a letter by President Donald Trump that wished Sheikh Hasina success but asked her to "renew her commitment to protecting human rights, individual freedom of expression and democratic institutions," a US official said.

Sheikh Hasina is a sworn enemy of Islamists, mounting a crackdown on the Jamaat-e-Islami party that included hanging five of its leaders over charges related to Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence from Pakistan. She has also earned widespread praise in Washington for taking in more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees who fled from neighboring Myanmar in a brutal campaign the United States has called ethnic cleansing—stopping the crisis from become more regional in dimension.

Michael Kugelman, senior associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said that Bangladesh was effectively becoming a one-party authoritarian state—but one whose orientation largely suits Washington. "I think the bottom line is that the US sees Sheikh Hasina as a

useful partner. She's very tough on terror and she's presided over a remarkable degree of economic growth," he said. "I think, in that regard, the US sees her as a supporter and practitioner of stability in Bangladesh in spite of the tradeoff of having a very troubled domestic political situation in Bangladesh."

### Seeking greater ties

Bangladesh's government has shown no sign it takes seriously the concerns about the election, also voiced by the European Union. Sajeb Wazed, Sheikh Hasina's US-based son who serves as her adviser on information and communications technology, said the pre-election US statement was "disappointing" and blamed it on what he called opposition supporters among local staff at the US embassy in Dhaka. But he saluted the relationship with the United States and voiced hope for further ties, saying a top priority was to draw greater US investment in an economy that has been growing by more than six percent annually.

"We have a huge consumer market. You have almost 80 million people in the middle class," he said. He said that Bangladesh has been "phenomenally successful in combating terrorism," calling it "one of the few Muslim countries that is considered relatively terrorism-free." Wazed added that the government felt a genuine empathy for fleeing Rohingyas in light of Bangladesh's plight at independence and noted that the refugees have not seen the type of backlash experienced by migrants to Europe.

### Limited scope to criticize

The United States see a friendly rapport with Bangladesh as vital to Washington's goal of an open, US-friendly Indo-Pacific region. Unlike neighbors such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh has not drawn high-profile infrastructure deals with China. Another country is even more critical to the US relationship with Bangladesh—regional power and emerging



DHAKA: US actress, filmmaker and humanitarian Angelina Jolie (left), a special envoy for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), looks on as she meets Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina following her visit in Dhaka. —AFP

US ally India, which has staunchly supported Sheikh Hasina, limiting the scope for Washington to take another approach even if it so chose.

The opposition, however, is hopeful that US criticism can make headway. Humaitun Kobir, the international affairs secretary of Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party who met policymakers in Washington ahead of the vote, said the United

States should make clear that relations will be limited "unless you show us you are democratizing."

He said that Sheikh Hasina had turned Bangladesh into a country like Cambodia or Venezuela, where the United States to varying degrees had criticized strongmen. Kobir praised a US House of Representatives resolution that had urged free elections and noted the opposition's concerns. —AFP

## China: US aiming to 'stir up trouble' with naval sail-by

BEIJING: China accused the United States of trying to "stir up trouble" yesterday by sending two US guided-missile destroyers near disputed South China Sea islands. The two warships sailed near the Beijing-claimed Spratly Islands earlier yesterday as part of what Washington calls "freedom of navigation operations". Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a daily press briefing. The US is "determined to stir up trouble in the South China Sea, create tension and undermine peace", Hua said.

She urged the US to cease the "provocative actions". The sail-by—conducted by USS Spruance and USS Preble—occurred as both sides started crucial trade talks in Beijing this week, seeking to avoid an all-out trade war between the world's two biggest economies. Beijing asserts nearly all of the South China Sea as its territorial waters, while Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim parts. The US and its allies periodically send planes and warships near South China Sea islands and reefs claimed by Beijing to signal their right under international law to pass through the waters, invariably angering China.

In mid-January, US and British warships conducted their first joint military exercises in the South China Sea since Beijing began building bases and air strips on islands. Another US warship, USS McCampbell, sailed within 12 nautical miles of the Paracel Islands chain-north of the Spratly Islands—on January 7 during a previous round of trade talks between the two countries. —AFP

## As Indian election looms, Facebook steps up fact-checks

MUMBAI: Facebook Inc is expanding its fact-checking network in India to curb the spread of misinformation as the world's largest democracy prepares for a general election that must be held by May, the US-based social media giant said yesterday. "We are committed to fighting the spread of false news on Facebook, especially ahead of the 2019 General Election campaign season," Manish Khanduri, Facebook India's news part-

nership head, said in the statement.

The coming election is expected to be a close fought battle between Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the opposition Congress Party and its regional allies. Last week, Facebook said it was introducing stricter rules for political advertisements in India. The latest move to strengthen the fact checking program is aimed at verifying the accuracy of stories and preventing the spread of hoaxes.

Five new partners, including the India Today Group, a leading local media house, have been added to Facebook's fact-checker network, taking the total number to seven, the statement said. And the program has been broadened to cover services in more Indian languages, so that it will now cover English and five local languages, the statement added. India is Facebook's

largest market by users, and its WhatsApp messaging service has more than 200 million users in the country thanks to the advent of cheap mobile data and increasing penetration of smartphones.

Aside from concerns over misuse of social media for political purposes, there has also been criticism over the spread of false, incendiary messages that have fanned communal tensions and sparked mob violence. Last year, after a series of lynchings were incited by messages sent on its service, WhatsApp reduced the number of people or groups that a message could be forwarded to at one time, cutting it to five from 20 previously. WhatsApp has since moved to make that its norm worldwide. Facebook's main rival in India, Alphabet Inc's Google, has also conducted scores of workshops across the country to train journalists to verify news. —Reuters

## Meth 'disaster' for region as seizures surge in Thailand

BANGKOK: Seizures of high-purity crystal methamphetamine have surged more than tenfold in Thailand over the past two years, statistics show, a stark indicator of the growth in industrial-scale production of the stimulant in neighboring Myanmar. Thailand is a major trafficking route for crystal meth manufactured in Myanmar's Shan and Kachin states, where police say Asian organized crime groups have allied with local pro-government militias and armed rebels to set-up "super labs".

The drug syndicates have distributed the meth across the Asia-Pacific region, from South Korea to New Zealand and most countries in between, authorities say. Some 18.4 tons of crystal meth, also known as ice, was seized in Thailand in 2018, according to preliminary statistics from the country's Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) reviewed by Reuters. The final data is expected to be released publicly next month.

That is up from 5.2 tons in 2017 and 1.6 tons in 2016. It's more than treble the amount captured across all of Southeast Asia five years ago. Myanmar's illicit labs also pump out tablets of meth mixed with caffeine, commonly known as "yaba", or crazy pill, in the Thai language. The tablets are popular with low-paid workers in grueling jobs and poor recreational drug users across Southeast Asia. Thai authorities seized 516 million meth tablets in 2018, more than double the previous year and four-and-a-half times the 114 million pills captured in 2016.

Niyom Termsrisuk, secretary general of the ONCB, told Reuters that, despite the rising seizures, prices for meth are falling, suggesting far more is eluding authorities than being stopped. The average price of a meth tablet was 200 baht (\$6.33) in 2013. The latest data, for 2017, showed a yaba pill can be bought for as little as 80 baht (\$2.50), he said. By flooding Thailand and other countries with meth, organized crime groups have "generated new users" by enticing them with lower prices, Niyom said. The users then become dependent on the highly addictive drug, creating a bigger market for the product.

Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle - which encompasses northern Myanmar and parts of Laos and Thailand - has long been a hub of illicit drug trafficking. While opium cultivation and heroin refining has fallen in the past decade, methamphetamine production has more than filled the breach. —AFP

Kuwait Times Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call: +965 248 35 616 / 617  
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
ads@kuwaittimes.net  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

best OFFERS 50% SAVE UP TO

SHARP ES-T106AP-Z  
WASHER 10  
59 69  
9

SHARP ES-MM125Z-S  
8 Programs  
8 Water Level Selection  
Child Lock

SHARP ES-FDP914AZ-W  
Washer with Dryer  
2 in 1  
1400 Rpm  
15 Programs  
White Color  
89 109  
20  
10  
199 230  
31

best 1 809 809  
www.best.com.kw

Kuwait City (New St.) | Kuwait City (Panasonic Tower) | Sharq (Souq Sharq)  
Hawalli (Tunis St.) | Hawalli (Bin Khaldoon St.) | Al-Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak St.)  
Al-Salmiya (Boulevard Mall) | Al-Farwaniya (Behind the Police Station)  
Al-Shuwaikh (Al-Ghazali Bridge) | Al-Fahaheel (Opposite Public Parking)  
Al-Rai (4th Ring Rd) | Al-Jahra (Opposite Main Co-op) | Airport (Departures)  
Al-Eqaila (B9 Mall)



## Analysis

**Kuwait Times**  
Established 1961  
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF  
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher  
**YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN**

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

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

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.

Email: info@kuwaittimes.com  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

## Qatar revamps strategy after Kushner bailout

When news emerged that Qatar may have unwittingly helped bail out a New York skyscraper owned by the family of Jared Kushner, Donald Trump's son-in-law, eyebrows were raised in Doha. Kushner, a senior White House adviser, was a close ally of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman - a key architect of a regional boycott against Qatar, which Riyadh accuses of sponsoring terrorism. Doha denies the charge. Brookfield, a global property investor in which the Qatari government has placed investments, struck a deal last year that rescued the Kushner Companies' 666 Fifth Avenue tower in Manhattan from financial straits.

The bailout, in which Doha played no part and first learned about in the media, has prompted a rethink of how the gas-rich kingdom invests money abroad via its giant sovereign wealth fund, two sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. The country has decided that the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) will aim to avoid putting money in funds or other investment vehicles it does not have full control over, according to the sources, who are familiar with the QIA's strategy.

"Qatar started looking into how its name got involved into the deal and found out it was because of a fund it co-owned," said one of the sources. "So QIA ultimately triggered a strategy revamp." The QIA declined to comment. Canada's Brookfield Asset Management Inc bailed out 666 Fifth Avenue via its real estate unit Brookfield Property Partners, in which the QIA acquired a 9 percent stake five years ago. Both parent and unit declined to comment.

The QIA's strategic shift was made late last year, according to the sources. It offers a rare insight into the thinking of one of the world's most secretive sovereign wealth funds. The revamp could have significant implications for the global investment scene because the QIA is one of the world's largest state investors, with more than \$320 billion under management. The wealth fund has poured money into the West over the past decade, including rescuing British and Swiss banks during the 2008 financial crisis and investing in landmarks like New York's Plaza Hotel and the Savoy Hotel and Harrods store in London.

### Qatari boycott

Kushner was chief executive of Kushner Companies when it acquired 666 Fifth Avenue in 2007 for \$1.8 billion, a record at the time for a Manhattan office building. It has been a drag on his family's real estate company ever since. The debt-laden skyscraper was bailed out by Brookfield last August, when it took a 99-year lease on the property, paying the rent for 99 years upfront. Financial terms were not disclosed.

The QIA bought a 9 percent stake in Brookfield Property Partners, which is known as BPY and is listed in Toronto and New York, for \$1.8 billion in 2014. BPY has about \$87 billion in assets, part of more than \$330 billion managed by its parent Brookfield. The stake purchase by QIA was in line with its strategy to boost investments in prime US property. The investment gave QIA no seat on the board of BPY.

The Qatari wealth fund was not involved in the 666 Fifth Avenue deal, a source close to Brookfield Asset Management told Reuters. There was no requirement for Brookfield to inform the QIA beforehand. The rescue raveled with Doha, according to the two sources familiar with the QIA's strategy, because Kushner - married to US President Trump's daughter Ivanka - had long been one of the key supporters in Washington of the Saudi crown prince, who is the king's favorite son and heir to the throne.

Prince Mohammed was a prime mover in leading regional states to severing links with its neighbor Qatar and embargoing the small nation since mid-2017. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain accuse Qatar of sponsoring terrorism. Doha denies the allegation and says the other countries simply want to strip it of its sovereignty. "There is no upside in investing through funds for someone like QIA. Qatar wants full visibility into where its money goes," said the second source familiar with the QIA's strategy. The QIA will not wind down existing investments with Brookfield or others, but will rather no longer invest in similar deals, according to the two sources. The source close to Brookfield said relations with QIA were still strong.

The QIA's strategic revamp also followed a reshuffle at the top of the fund last November when its long-serving chief, Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohamed bin Saud Al-Thani, was replaced by its former head of risk management, Mansour Ibrahim Al-Mahmoud. Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani was named QIA chairman. Qatar, whose wealth comes from the world's largest exports of liquefied gas, does not provide data on how much money it places with external fund managers. "What we have seen lately is that it has not been placing much," said a Western fund manager who regularly sources money from wealth funds. "Either they are investing themselves or they are just sitting on a lot of cash." The Qatar shift in its approach reflects a wider trend among sovereign wealth funds to reduce reliance on external investment managers, in an attempt to keep tighter control over their money. — Reuters



In this file photo taken on March 27, 2018, a visitor takes a photograph of cherry blossoms in full bloom in the Japanese capital Tokyo. — AFP

## Art and science of cherry blossom forecast

As spring approaches in Japan, the country's weather forecasters face one of their biggest missions of the year: predicting exactly when the famed cherry blossoms will bloom. Japan's sakura or cherry blossom season is feverishly anticipated by locals and visitors alike. Many tourists plan their entire trips around the blooms, and Japanese flock to parks in their millions to enjoy the seasonal spectacle. "People pay more attention to the cherry blossom season than any other flower in Japan," Ryo Dojo, an official of the statistics unit at the Japan Meteorological Agency, told AFP.

The most basic element of predicting when the delicate pink and white petals will begin to unfurl is a large data set of temperatures. That's because the flowers will come earlier if temperatures rise quickly in spring, Dojo said. Conversely, if temperatures in the autumn and winter period are higher than usual, the blooms can end up being delayed.

Extreme weather can affect the trees too, with unusual patterns in 2018 prompting some blossoms to appear in October, well before the usual season. In general, blooms begin as early as March in southern Kyushu and appear as late as May in northernmost Hokkaido. In a bid to improve its forecasts, some outfits have started crowd-sourcing data, including Weathernews, a firm in Chiba near Tokyo. It relies on photos of buds sent in regularly by 10,000 citizens across the country who are registered on the company's website and app. "Cherry blossom forecasting is impossible for us without this system," spokeswoman Miku Toma said.

### Two million reports

The company launched what they call the "sakura project" in 2004, signing up members who choose their own cherry tree and send pictures of its buds to the firm at regular intervals. "We realised we could see the details of how buds grow thanks to the pictures sent to us," Toma said. "So we decided to incorporate the project to help predict blossoms." Just observing the bud can give surprisingly accurate information about how far the flower is from full bloom.

A sakura bud still a month from blossoming will be small and firm, but after 10 days, the tip turns slightly yellow-green, and then a darker green part emerges. When the tip of the bud turns a faint pink, it's just a week until bloom-time. Thanks to the project, Weathernews has accumulated data from two million reports on cherry flower buds in the past 15 years, which it uses to increase the accuracy of its forecasting.

It also incorporates weather data collected from its own observation devices across Japan — 13,000 locations in total, 10 times more than the official weather agency has. Weather news employees also call around 700 parks regularly to check the growth of cherry flower buds. The company and other forecasters also employ mathematical models and algorithms. Otenki Japan, a forecaster run by a subsidiary of precision-equipment manufacturer Shimadzu, even began using artificial intelligence to predict cherry blossoms in 2018.

### Blooms on beer

The forecasts are not only for flower fans, but reflect

the fact that sakura season is big business in Japan. Cherry blossoms symbolize the fragility of life in Japanese culture as full blooms only last about a week before the petals start falling off trees. And in that period and the preceding weeks, shops will pack their shelves with sakura-themed merchandise. Pink and white blossoms seem to decorate everything from beer cans to sakura-flavored chips and flower-themed candy.

The season is traditionally celebrated with hanami, or viewing parties, in cherry blossom hotspots, with picnics organized beneath the trees. The season is also considered one of change, as it marks the start of the new business year, with many university graduates starting their first full-time jobs and older colleagues shifting to new positions. Japan's Meteorological Agency stopped forecasting cherry blossoms in 2010, after more than five decades, saying other organisations were now making predictions with sufficient accuracy.

The agency does however still declare the official start of cherry blossom season by monitoring 58 so-called barometer trees. The trees are at locations across the country, and the precise locations are considered a closely-guarded secret. One of them in Tokyo, however, is known to be at the Yasukuni Shrine. From the beginning of March, inspectors visit the barometer trees once a day, with the trips increasing to twice daily as blossoming nears, Dojo said. "We check flowers with our own eyes. And we announce the blossoming if five or six flowers appear," he added. — AFP

## Made-in-Britain mozzarella on rise as Brexit looms

Buffalo mozzarella made from the milk of a herd roaming the green rolling hills of southern England is hoping to dethrone the Italian original in the UK thanks to Brexit. Some 2,000 km from Campania in southern Italy is Laverstoke Park Farm in Hampshire - owned by the 1979 Formula One motor racing champion Jody Scheckter. "The difference with the Italian mozzarella is that ours is better!" the South African, 69, boasted to AFP on a tour of his farm.

Come milking time, the buffaloes leave their barn, straw still stuck to their hooves, and head to the milking sheds. Their milk, rich in protein and calcium, is transformed into white balls of mozzarella which are then sold to customers including supermarket chain Waitrose, online delivery giant Ocado and Pret a Manger sandwich shops. Scheckter turned to mozzarella 10 years ago with the aim of making it "better tasting, without compromise".

Nowadays he produces 150 tonnes of organic mozzarella a year on his 2,500-acre farm. The buffalo are pampered, grazing freely in pastures filled with different types of grass and clover. In winter, they can get a massage in the barn from a giant rotating brush. Scheckter said it took a while for the British palate to adjust to the new domestic delicacy. "At the beginning, it was difficult because my mozzarella was fresh and most of the people in England had never tasted fresh mozzarella. They tried Italian mozzarella, which is five days old and starts to get soft," he said.

### Switching sources

With just weeks to go before Britain leaves the European Union on March 29 and much of the country in a state of confusion, Scheckter is optimistic. Potential new clients have been in touch, assessing their options as no deal has yet been agreed between London and Brussels on keeping goods from the EU flowing. "The interest is there," said Scheckter. Around a third of the food eaten in Britain comes from the rest of the EU and the industry fears supply chain disruptions if the UK crashes out without a deal.

Some companies are stockpiling, while others are changing to domestic suppliers. Tim Martin, the chairman and founder of the UK pub chain Wetherspoon, has decided to stop selling champagne and other European products in favor of British equivalents.

### UK mozzarella exporter

The Azzurri restaurant group, which owns the Zizzi and ASK chains, has switched from Italian to British suppliers for the 650 tonnes of mozzarella it gets through each year. The group's restaurants are now supplied by Glanbia Cheese, one of the largest mozzarella producers in Europe, which exports from the UK to more than 30 countries worldwide. The firm has two production sites, in Wales and Northern Ireland, and announced last year that it was investing £130 million (\$147 million) in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in the Republic of Ireland. It will be able to produce 45,000 tonnes of mozzarella a year.

"We did blind taste-tests and the British mozzarella came out as a winner. It had much better texture and much creamier profile," Kathryn Turner, director of food development at Zizzi, told AFP. "It is a really good product and not just from a taste and flavor profile... It is a more local product. Brexit always comes into consideration at the moment with daily changes. It wasn't the sole reason why we did it but it was a consideration." — AFP



Dairy Production assistant Marcin Bednarek hand rolls mozzarella cheese at the Laverstoke Park Farm near Overton, Hampshire on Feb 6, 2019. — AFP

## How Greek PM hopes to solve election riddle

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has been implementing his re-election strategy to the letter over the past six months, steering Greece out of a humiliating bailout and resolving a decades-old dispute with neighboring Macedonia. So far, it isn't paying off. With a general election no more than eight months away, his Syriza party is far behind in opinion polls. That is despite two signature projects since last summer, evidence that the economy is climbing out of years of depression and willingness at last among investors to lend.

Tsipras was elected as a firebrand leftist in 2015 on a promise to reject the austerity required in the bailout. He later caved in to the lenders' demands and has reinvented himself as a conformist. Now, after years of austerity many ordinary voters cannot afford to keep the lights on, others are deeply indebted, and almost one in five Greeks is unemployed. "Our debt is huge and it's still growing, unemployment is still very high," said 30-year-old Athens resident Panagiotis, an environmentalist who works in the private sector. "The crisis isn't over. That's a lie, we are not fools."

Sources close to the prime minister say his strategy is only now reaching the point where his government can deliver on its pre-election promises and make amends for bailout pain-a plan he says aims at "fair growth". Creditors released Greece from its third bailout in August, putting it back on the path to full financial independence. Tsipras has since used greater fiscal freedom to scrap further pension cuts, cut property and corporate taxes and ease some social security contributions. He raised the minimum wage for the first time in a decade, by 11 percent.

He also wants to extend a reduced value-added tax regime for five islands with huge migrant arrivals in past years, and to make it easier for people to pay off pension-fund arrears and bank loans, government officials said. Tsipras aims to hire thousands of public-sector workers by 2020 as well as making constitutional reforms to separate the Greek Orthodox Church clearly from the state, important to left-wing voters.

Moves are also underway to extend Greece's western maritime boundaries to 12 miles offshore from six, two officials said. This could smooth some nationalist feathers ruffled over Macedonia and enable the creation of exclusive economic zones surrounding Greece, Albania and Italy but it could also inflame tensions with Turkey.

The latest poll by Metron Analysis, for To Vima newspaper, puts Syriza 12 points behind the conservative New Democracy, whose leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis promises to ease tax and social contributions for businesses and boost investment. The government aims to shrink that gap before European Parliament elections in May. Tsipras' first official popularity test since winning power. Analysts say he may opt for a snap vote if the gap keeps widening, though he has repeatedly ruled that out. His term expires in October.

"We want to ... showcase that Greece has returned to normality," one of the government officials said. "The aim is to shrink the gap in the EU election to be able to win a national vote later in the year." His government has a razor-thin majority in parliament, beating a censure motion last month by a single vote with support from independent lawmakers, after his right-wing coalition ally resigned over the Macedonia name accord.

The neighboring ex-Yugoslav state agreed to rename itself North Macedonia to ease Greek fears that the old name implied a sovereignty claim over its northern province of Macedonia. — Reuters



# Business

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019

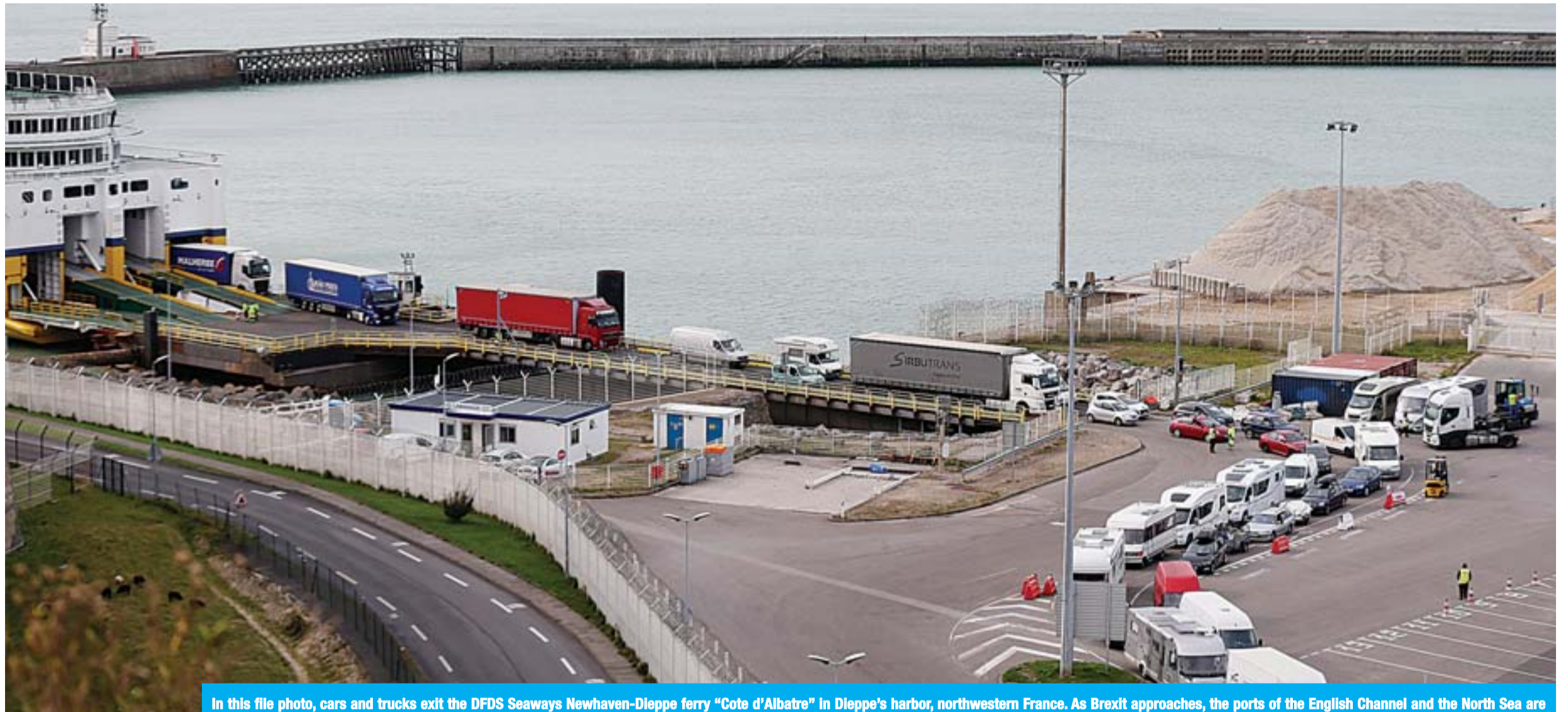
**12** NBK Capital inks partnership with GCC Board Directors Institute



**13** Al-Tijari declares a net profit of KD 63.8 million for year 2018



**14** NBK awarded 'Top 10 GCC Businesses Award' by SCCI



In this file photo, cars and trucks exit the DFDS Seaways Newhaven-Dieppe ferry "Cote d'Albatre" in Dieppe's harbor, northwestern France. As Brexit approaches, the ports of the English Channel and the North Sea are preparing for the worst. —AFP

## British economy slowed sharply in 2018

### No-deal Brexit 'could cost 600,000 jobs worldwide': Study

LONDON: Britain's economy slowed sharply in late 2018, pushing full-year growth to its weakest in six years as Brexit worries hammered investment by companies and the global economic slowdown weighed on trade, official data showed yesterday. The pace of economic growth fell to a quarterly rate of 0.2 percent between October and December from 0.6 percent in the previous quarter, in line with forecasts in a Reuters poll, while output in December alone dropped by the most since 2016.

"The UK economy lost its summer exuberance in the final months of 2018, and there are signs of further chill winds ahead," economist Tej Parikh at the Institute of Directors said. Sterling fell by a third of a cent to below \$1.29. For 2018 as a whole, growth dropped to its lowest since 2012 at 1.4 percent, down from 1.8 percent in 2017. Exports suffered from global weakness and consumers and businesses grew increasingly concerned about the lack of a plan for when Britain is due to leave the European Union on March 29. Prime Minister Theresa May has so far failed to win parliament's backing for the plan she agreed with Brussels to avoid reimposing checks on goods exported from Britain.

Major economies around the world also slowed in late 2018, due in part to trade tensions between the United States and China, while Brexit is an added challenge for Britain. Last week the Bank of England chopped its forecast for growth this year by 0.5 percentage points to 1.2 percent, which would be the weakest year since the 2009 recession. Monday's data showed net trade lopped more than 0.1 percentage points from the fourth-quarter growth rate. Falling business investment did similar damage. "GDP slowed in the last three months of the year with the manufacturing of cars and steel products seeing steep falls and construction also declining," Office for National Statistics statistician Rob Kent-Smith said.

In December alone, the economy contracted by 0.4 percent, the biggest fall since March 2016. Finance minister Philip Hammond said the data showed the economy remained "fundamentally strong" and that public-sector forecasters did not foresee a recession. Business investment dropped 3.7 percent in the fourth quarter compared with a year earlier, the biggest fall since the first three months of 2010, when Britain was emerging from recession. Investment has contracted for four consecutive quarters, the longest run since the third quarter of

2009. Household spending - which offered an unexpectedly strong boost to growth in mid-2018 - remained resilient, up 1.9 percent on a year ago, as did government spending. Overall, business investment has stalled since June 2016's referendum, which the BoE blames for stagnating economic productivity. The BoE expects business and housing investment to fall this year, and for export growth to halve.

#### No-Brexit deal scenario

A British departure from the European Union without a deal could put 600,000 jobs around the world at risk, with Germany the hardest hit, a study published yesterday found. Researchers at the IWH institute in Halle, eastern Germany, examined what would happen if UK imports from the remaining EU fell 25 percent after Brexit. They reckoned that some 103,000 jobs would be under threat in Europe's largest economy Germany and 50,000 in France. Being affected by Brexit would not necessarily mean workers were laid off, the economists noted. "Given the lack of skilled labor in many advanced economies, firms could also try to keep staff on by cutting hours or opening new markets," they said.

It is so far uncertain whether Britain will strike a deal with the EU before its legally-binding exit date of March 29, after a huge majority of lawmakers last month voted down Prime Minister Theresa May's painstakingly-negotiated accord with Brussels. A "hard" departure without a deal would see tariffs imposed at the border. "tangling up global supply chains," study co-author Oliver Holtemoeller said in a statement. The economists focused only on trade in goods and services, leaving out other possible economic impacts of Brexit like changes to investment flows. They noted that "since markets are linked up across the globe, suppliers based outside the European Union are also affected" by a no-deal Brexit. Within the 27 remaining EU countries, a total of almost 180,000 posts at firms directly exporting to the UK would be at risk. But 433,000 more workers in the EU and around the world would be affected, as their employers sell to companies who in turn export to Britain. For example, the study found some 60,000 workers in China and 3,000 in Japan could lose their jobs.

In the UK, the study turned up around 12,000 jobs dependent on supplying EU firms with inputs for products which are then sold back to Britain. —Agencies

## UIC seminar discusses global economic outlook 2019

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Union of Investment Companies (UIC) held a seminar on 'Global Financial and Economic Outlook for 2019' at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday, in cooperation with the Quorum Center for Strategic Studies. During her opening speech, Technical Support Manager and acting Director of Investment Training Center Fadwa Darwish pointed out that the Kuwaiti economy is affected by global developments, so this seminar sheds light on the latest international developments.

Tariq Al-Rifai, CEO of Quorum Centre for Strategic Studies, gave an overview of the current global economic outlook for 2019, highlighting current problems facing major economies in Europe, United States and China. He also discussed the current economic growth cycle, which is strongly believed to be nearing an end. Rifai believes that the global economy is heading towards another global recession.

"According to published statistics, economic growth in Europe is declining, including in some of the largest economies, including Germany and France. Italy has already entered a recession. Also, the central bank of the United Kingdom, the Bank of England, recently lowered its econom-



KUWAIT: Tariq Al-Rifai (left), CEO of Quorum with Fadwa Darwish, Technical Support Manager and acting Director of Investment Training Center, during the seminar. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

ic growth forecast, citing Britain's exit from the European Union, trade wars and other global economic problems as a reason for this negative outlook," Rifai said.

"The continuing trade war between the United States and China has begun to affect global trade and economic growth, especially in China. I believe that the already depressed economic growth figures will only worsen as the trade war enters its second year. These problems are expected to affect global economic growth and the IMF expects to experience less economic growth in 2019 due to these increasing factors and risks," he said.

About Kuwait's economy, he explained how weak economic growth globally means lower oil prices, adding that Kuwait should prepare to depend less on oil, because the next 10 years will not be like the past 10 years. "As the world economy approaches its first recession since 2009, we can expect future oil prices to drop, meaning more pressure on



Tariq Al-Rifai speaks during the seminar

the government of Kuwait to ensure its implementation of the 2035 vision, which aims to diversify the economy away from dependence on oil revenues," he added.

"We are at a late stage in the economic growth cycle, which means the next stage is an economic contraction (recession). A recession is a normal occurrence and does not necessarily mean bad news for investments, but other problems in the global economy could trigger another financial crisis and affect investments. Rising interest rates in the US are causing problems in emerging markets and will continue to do so. Oil is headed lower and will remain low for longer than most expect. Stock markets around the world have been correcting this year, with few exceptions, so they will start falling too. China is also headed for a major financial and economic disaster, which will affect all of us," Rifai concluded.

The Union of Investment Companies in Kuwait regularly hosts economic and financial seminars and conferences with the aim of informing analysts and investors about the local, regional and global market and investment trends and issues.

## UAE expects oil market to balance in first quarter

DUBAI: The energy minister of the United Arab Emirates said yesterday supply and demand in the oil market should balance out in the first quarter of 2019, following weeks of output cuts. "My expectation is that we will see the balance during the first quarter unless something happens," Suheil Al-Mazrouei told the three-day World Government Summit in Dubai. "We are removing enough oil to correct the market," Mazrouei said. OPEC cartel countries and other major oil producers in January began implementing a deal to cut output by 1.2 million barrels per day to shore up sagging prices.

Based on provisional figures of production levels in January, most oil producing nations were complying to the cuts, Mazrouei said. The oil market, however, remains highly volatile and prices hover just above \$60 a barrel after recovering from as low as \$50 a barrel. That figure remains far below the \$85 a barrel oil hit in early October before beginning to slide. Mazrouei said producers were "doing our best" to stabilize the market. Khalid Al-Falih, energy minister of the world's top supplier Saudi Arabia, said in mid-January he expected the oil market to rebalance within weeks. Oil prices crashed in mid-2014 to below \$30 a barrel, down from over \$100 a barrel, due to a glut in supplies and weakening global demand. —AFP



Business

# NBK Capital inks partnership with GCC Board Directors Institute

## Agreement to strengthen corporate governance region-wide

**KUWAIT:** NBK Capital, one of the region's leading investment firms, has signed a one-year partnership agreement with GCC Board Directors Institute. Faisal Al-Hamad, Chief Executive Officer represented NBK Capital and Jane Valls, Executive Director represented GCC Board Directors Institute at the signing, with attendance of several senior officials from both organizations.

"NBK Capital gives considerable importance to corporate governance practices as a basis for its future development and performance and is committed to applying the rules issued by the Capital Markets Authority on corporate governance and the highest standards of professional competence in all its activities," Al-Hamad said in remarks made during the signing ceremony. "Partnering with GCC Board Directors Institute demonstrates our continued commitment to promoting the highest standards of corporate governance in the region and supporting the great work that the Institute does."

NBK Capital adheres to world class standards of corporate governance practices and policies and focuses its client-centric strategy on sustainable growth that contributes to the development of the economy and the community.

"This type of partnership contributes to the development of GCC economies by improving the effectiveness of board members and enhancing their business abilities and level," Al-Hamad notes.

Al-Hamad concluded his remarks: "NBK Capital partners with institutions that support and develop values that align with our own: priority for client and stakeholder interest; innovation in products, services and work processes for greater efficiency and excellence in all that we do."

"We are confident that sharing our expertise with



GCC Board Directors Institute will contribute to promoting best practices at the local and international levels. Enhancing our understanding of business, which is essential for engaging in successful economic activities," Al-Hamad concluded.

Founded in 2007, the GCC Board Directors Institute (GCC BDI) is a not-for-profit organization that guides board directors of organizations, from family-owned businesses to listed companies, to acquire the know-how and the tools to reach and sustain effective governance.

"We are pleased to join NBK Capital as a corporate partner, and we look forward to fruitful cooperation and a long-term relationship," said Valls. "Now and more than ever, our boards of directors and governance practices are subject to investor and stakeholder analysis, and working with a world-class investment company like NBK Capital will support our efforts to promote the latest trends in corporate governance and best practices."

Launched in 2007, the GCC Board Directors Institute (GCC BDI) is a not-for-profit organization that guides board directors of organizations, from family-owned businesses to listed companies, to acquire the know-how and the tools to reach and sustain effective governance.

GCC BDI was founded by four leading regional corporations - Investcorp, SABIC, Saudi Aramco and Emirates NBD - and it is supported by four advisory firms: Allen & Overy, Heidrick & Struggles, McKinsey & Company and PricewaterhouseCoopers, as well as regional regulatory authorities: the Emirates Security and Commodities Authority of the UAE, the Capital Market



**KUWAIT:** Faisal Al-Hamad, Chief Executive Officer, NBK Capital and Jane Valls, Executive Director, GCC Board Directors Institute during the signing of partnership.

Authorities of both Saudi Arabia and Oman and the Central Bank of Bahrain.

GCC BDI now works with over 1200 Alumni members who benefit from a network of senior business leaders and a variety of workshops designed for board directors

and senior executives. Notably, the Institute hosts an annual Chairman Summit that brings together regional leaders and actors to explore the evolving role and value of Boards as well as appropriate corporate governance standards.

NBK International Markets Report

## Global markets recover as Fed signals policy shift

**KUWAIT:** Global financial markets recovered ground in January after a tumultuous December, benefitting from an end to the US government shutdown, tentative signs of progress in US-China trade talks and a dovish policy shift from the US Federal Reserve. Oil prices rallied too, helped by reports of rapid progress by OPEC+ in implementing the production cuts agreed in December. But despite these encouraging developments, evidence that global growth is softening continues to accumulate. In its latest economic update, the IMF revised down again its forecast for world growth this year to 3.5 percent from 3.7 percent in October, and warned of mounting downside risks from trade tensions, slowing growth in China, a 'no-deal' Brexit and financial tightening amid high debt levels.

**Fed pauses rate hikes**

The Federal Reserve left interest rates on hold in January, but indicated a pause in further rate hikes and that the pace of its balance sheet normalization ('quantitative tightening') might slow. This contrasted with its more hawkish December stance, which pointed to at least two interest rate hikes this year and asset sales remaining on 'autopilot' at up to \$50 billion per month - announcements that triggered a sharp market sell-off. It justified the shift by citing 'cross currents' including tightening financial conditions and slowing global growth, as well as modest inflation. Some analysts are speculating that the move represents the first step in a pivot towards a loosening cycle, though the consensus is that the pause will extend throughout 2019. Futures markets currently predict an 86 percent probability of rates being unchanged this year, with a 10 percent chance of a 25bps cut.

The partial shutdown of the federal government lasted for a record five weeks, before ending on January 25th without President Trump securing congressional funding for his proposed border wall. Trump however has threatened a fresh shutdown if funding is not approved by February 15th. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the shutdown cost the US economy \$11 billion (0.06 percent of projected 2019 GDP), though \$8 billion of this would be recouped as returning employees received back pay. The shutdown resulted in

delays to a host of economic data including the first estimate of GDP for 4Q18, which is expected to show growth slowed to an annualized 2.6 percent from 3.4 percent in Q3. This would leave growth for 2018 overall at 2.9 percent, the fastest since 2015.

High frequency data generally confirm the limited impact of the shutdown on economic activity and that growth for now looks solid going into 2019. The stand-out figure over the past month was from the labor market, with non-farm payrolls surging 304,000 in January, more than double expectations, and government employment also rising.

Unemployment ticked up to 4.0 percent due to a rise in participation, but hourly earnings growth decelerated to 3.2 percent y/y, helping the case for the Fed's rate hike 'pause'. Flash PMI data for January was also upbeat, with the composite index rising to 54.5 signaling decent growth in both services and manufacturing. Not all data has been positive however. The University of Michigan's consumer confidence gauge fell sharply to a two-year low of 91.2 in January no doubt affected by the lingering shutdown. The strong labor market suggests that the dip in confidence should be temporary.

**US labor market**

Consumer price inflation declined further in December to 1.9 percent y/y from 2.2 percent in November and a recent peak of 3.0 percent last summer. The fall was driven by lower energy costs due to lower oil prices, while core inflation was steady at 2.2 percent. Tame inflationary pressures continue to be one of the puzzles of the current economic cycle, given strong economic growth and the tight labor market. Inflation risks could ease further if the US and China can agree a trade deal ahead of a March 1st deadline, when US tariffs on \$200 billion of imports from China are scheduled to rise from 10 percent to 25 percent.

**Italy falls into recession**

A combination of slowing world growth, global trade tensions, the withdrawal of monetary stimulus by the European Central Bank (ECB) and Brexit concerns, all continue to dampen the economic mood in Europe. The Ifo economic sentiment index for 1Q19 fell to a four-year low of -11.1 points, with France particularly affected against a backdrop of street protests against President Macron's economic reforms. The Italian economy was confirmed as already in recession with GDP falling 0.2 percent q/q in 4Q18 after a 0.1 percent drop in Q3, which could put pressure on its latest budget deficit agreement with the EU. Growth in the Eurozone overall came in at just 0.2 percent q/q. The IMF downgraded its forecast for Eurozone growth for 2019 by 0.3

percent to 1.6 percent (1.8 percent in 2018), reflecting in particular slower growth in Germany, and warned of the risks to financial stability from stress on Italian banks.

Having ended its asset purchase stimulus program in December, the ECB now faces a tough balancing act between sticking to policy normalization and addressing the growth slowdown - particularly given the more dovish signals from the Fed. ECB President Mario Draghi noted that the risks to growth had tilted to the downside but stopped short of announcing a shift in policy guidance, which is for interest rates to remain on hold until after the summer. Eurozone inflation fell to 1.4 percent in January, below the ECB's "below but close to 2 percent" target.

With the UK's planned March 29th departure date from the EU edging closer, uncertainty continues to prevail with no political agreement over the manner of the UK's withdrawal. Prime Minister May's negotiated deal with the EU was voted down heavily in the UK parliament, but could yet pass if the EU agrees to change the so-called 'backstop' component, which they have so far ruled out. Although UK economic growth has been resilient and is forecast at a reasonable 1.5 percent this year - close to the Eurozone average - the uncertainty is weighing on investment, with the construction PMI falling to a 10-month low of 50.6 in January. A Brexit deal would improve the near-term outlook, and possibly see UK assets rally.

**BoJ leaves policy on hold**

The Bank of Japan maintained its ultra-loose monetary policy last month, amid continued economic headwinds. Indeed, Japanese exports fell at their fastest pace in two years in December, as external demand slowed, particularly from China. Exports fell by 3.8 percent y/y while imports grew by a mere 1.9 percent y/y, a multi-month low, as domestic demand remained weak and as the impact of higher oil prices waned. Additionally, core inflation, which excludes food costs, slowed to just 0.7 percent y/y in December and logged an annual average of 0.8 percent for 2018, far below the central bank's target of 2 percent but still an improvement from 0.5 percent and -0.3 percent in 2017 and 2016, respectively. The central bank cut its inflation forecast again for the 2019 fiscal year from a range of 1.5 percent to 1.7 percent to a range of 1 percent to 1.3 percent, on the back of limited upward inflationary pressures.

**Chinese growth hit a 28-year low**

Growth in China's economy continued to decelerate in 2018, prompting the government to announce measures to support activity. Economic growth slowed from

6.5 percent y/y in 3Q18 to 6.4 percent y/y in 4Q18 and logged an annual average rate of 6.6 percent, a 28-year low, on the back of weaker domestic conditions and a slowdown in external demand, not least due to US tariffs. In response to the slowdown, the government has announced a raft of growth-stimulating measures including fiscal policy reforms (additional tax and fee reductions for small firms) and a cut in the reserve requirement ratio (RRR). The central bank cut its RRR (the amount of money that banks must keep on reserve at the central bank) last month for the fifth time in a year, to help bolster lending.

Oil prices recovered in January, rising 15 percent m/m as OPEC, led by Saudi Arabia, looked to cut output quickly to comply with the December OPEC+ production agreement. By January's end, Brent crude had reached a two-and-a-half month high of \$61.9/bbl, buoyed by the imposition of sanctions on oil producer Venezuela by the Trump administration and by ongoing discussions to end the trade tariff dispute between China and the US. The risks to the outlook for oil demand growth in 2019 stemming from deteriorating US-China trade relations and a slowing Chinese economy, though, are skewed to the downside, and the International Energy Agency is expected to follow the IMF's lead and revise down its forecast slightly from 1.43 mb/d. Despite record high US crude production of 11.9 million b/d, OPEC cuts together with still-decent demand growth should help the oil market return to balance by mid-year.

In the GCC, according to official reports, the Saudi economy recovered from its contraction in 2017 (-0.7 percent) to grow by 2.2 percent in 2018. The rebound was led by the oil and non-oil public sector, with the latter underpinned by record government spending. Growth in consumer spending and private sector credit, at 10.4 percent y/y and 2.9 percent y/y respectively in December 2018, also support the narrative of recovery. The unemployment rate for Saudi nationals also improved, falling to 12.8 percent in 3Q18 from 12.9 percent in 2Q18. The government is reportedly considering introducing a private sector cash allowance to encourage more Saudis to move to the private sector and is also mulling revising the expat fee structure amid complaints from businesses of rising costs and a shortage of skilled personnel. Some 1.3 million expats have left the country since the start of 2017.

There was positive news on activity, with PMI indices for both Saudi Arabia (56.2) and the UAE (56.3) ticking up to multi-month highs in January. In Egypt however, the PMI fell further into contractionary territory at 48.5 with falls in the output and new orders sub-indices, while price pressures eased.

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.		Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd		BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL	
<b>EUROPEAN &amp; AMERICAN COUNTRIES</b>		<b>Rate for Transfer</b>		<b>CURRENCY</b>	<b>BUY SELL</b>
US Dollar Transfer	304.350	US Dollar	303.990	British Pound	0.386119 0.400019
Euro	344.830	Canadian Dollar	229.375	Czech Korune	0.005314 0.014614
Sterling Pound	393.640	Sterling Pound	395.530	Danish Krone	0.042045 0.047045
Canadian dollar	229.050	Euro	346.675	Euro	0.336762 0.350462
Turkish lira	58.860	Swiss Frank	306.625	Georgian Lari	0.114369 0.114369
Swiss Franc	305.130	Bahrain Dinar	808.420	Hungarian 0.000967	0.001177
US Dollar Buying	297.050	UAE Dirhams	83.170	Norwegian Krone	0.031120 0.036320
<b>ASIAN COUNTRIES</b>		Qatari Riyals	84.405	Romanian Leu	0.055580 0.072430
Japanese Yen	2.756	Saudi Riyals	81.960	Russian ruble	0.004636 0.004636
Indian Rupees	4.270	Jordanian Dinar	430.045	Slovakia	0.009097 0.019097
Pakistani Rupees	2.217	Egyptian Pound	17.289	Swedish Krona	0.028743 0.033743
Sri Lanka Rupees	1.704	Sri Lankan Rupees	1.707	Swiss Franc	0.297589 0.0308689
Nepali Rupees	2.662	Indian Rupee	4.262	Australian Dollar	0.207470 0.219470
Singapore Dollar	224.390	Pakistani Rupee	2.198	New Zealand Dollar	0.199267 0.208767
Hongkong Dollar	38.635	Bangladesh Taka	3.622	<b>America</b>	
Bangladesh Taka	3.579	Philippines Peso	5.838	Canadian Dollar	0.223437 0.232437
Philippine Peso	5.841	Cyprus pound	18.080	US Dollars	0.300250 0.305550
Thai Baht	9.685	Japanese Yen	3.770	US Dollars Mint	0.300750 0.305550
Malaysian ringgit	77.532	Syrian Pound	1.590	<b>Asia</b>	
<b>GCC COUNTRIES</b>		Nepalese Rupees	2.669	Bangladesh Taka	0.003052 0.003853
Saudi Rival	80.894	Malaysian Ringgit	75.570	Chinese Yuan	0.043352 0.046852
Qatari Rival	83.317	Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.530	<b>Arab</b>	
Omani Rival	787.914	Thai Bhat	10.650	Bahraini Dinar	0.792724 0.809224
Bahraini Dinar	805.500			Egyptian Pound	0.017114 0.019174
UAE Dirham	82.591			Iranian Rival	0.000084 0.000086
<b>ARAB COUNTRIES</b>				Iraqi Dinar	0.000211 0.000271
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.850			Jordanian Dinar	0.424968 0.433968
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.224			Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000 1.000000
				Lebanese Pound	0.000151 0.000251
				Moroccan Dirhams	0.021739 0.045739
				Omani Rival	0.784201 0.789861
				Qatar Rival	0.079307 0.084727
				audi Rival	0.080073 0.081373
				Syrian Pound	0.001290 0.001510
				Tunisian Dinar	0.095546 0.103546
				Turkish Lira	0.051394 0.062894
				UAE Dirhams	0.081438 0.083128
				Yemeni Rival	0.000989 0.001069



# Al-Tijari declares a net profit of KD 63.8 million for year 2018

Board recommends 20% cash dividend and 10% bonus shares

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced a growth of 15.0 percent in the net profit over the last year. The net profit of KD 63.8 million for the year is higher by KD 8.3 million compared to KD 55.4 million of 2017. The earnings per share are 35.4 fils, as compared to 30.8 fils for the last year. The Board of Directors recommended the distribution of a cash dividend of 20 fils per share and a bonus issue of 10 shares for each hundred shares, compared to 18 fils cash dividend and a bonus issue of 10 shares for the previous year.



Sheikh Ahmad Duaij Al-Sabah

Commenting on the financial results, Sheikh Ahmad Duaij Al-Sabah, the bank's Chairman, said Commercial Bank successfully managed to clean the loan portfolio and achieved an exceptional target of "zero" non-performing loans. He reiterated that the bank's emphasis on the qualitative factors over the quantitative growth will continue in the coming years. The total provision held with the Bank against its loan portfolio as at 31st December 2018 were KD 142.2 million, which is a reflection of our conservative approach to mitigate any risk against unexpected future events.

Sheikh Ahmad added that the balance-sheet reached KD 4,467.5 million with a growth of KD 72 million. A strong investment and quality loan portfolio helped to improve the assets' yield. Cost of funds was maintained at a reasonably low level ensuring compliance with all regulatory requirements. The bank's capital adequacy ratio at the end of December 2018 was at 18.7 percent, the leverage ratio at 11.8 percent, net stable funding ratio at 115.7 percent, and liquidity coverage ratio at 156.0 percent, comfortably exceeding the regulatory requirement set by the Central Bank of Kuwait.

The bank continues to demonstrate its cost leadership with operational efficiency, a competitive advantage for the bank, which continues to maintain one of the lowest cost/income ratios among Kuwaiti banks at 29.7 percent

for the year ended 31 December 2018.

He pointed out that the Bank has made a leap in digitalization of processes to enhance customer experience at various touch points and we will continue investing in technology and human capital to exceed customer expectations by providing effective and efficient virtual services and minimize the need to visit the branch in person. Many initiatives were taken during the year and new features were introduced to facilitate customers and ease their banking experience. Some of the new initiatives taken during the last quarter of 2018 are: introduction of online request for Letter of guarantee for individual and corporate customers, follow up on issued letter of guarantees can be viewed online, development of internal and external transfer services for online and mobile where customers have to include transfer purpose from a drop down list, new user registration from Mobile banking, merchants web page in which cus-



tomers can apply directly for our merchants services, link to Al-Tijari brokerage service directly from our website and CBK Mobile and "Explore Me" feature that shows the current offers and branch locations.

Sheikh Ahmad further added that in continuous effort towards Kuwaitization, the recruitment has been focused on hiring Kuwaiti nationals and the Kuwaitization

ratio now reached 73 percent.

He said, "a concentrated effort to recover the previously written off loans is yielding its results: KD 78.5 million was recovered during current year and more recoveries are expected in the near future. The bank will continue its balanced strategy and focus on available growth opportunities by financing new projects of national impor-

tance by efficient management of risks and associated returns," he said.

Sheikh Ahmad took the opportunity to thank the Bank's shareholders, valued customers, staff and regulatory authorities, emphasizing that the Bank's Management continues to implement all the required policies to protect the interest of all its stakeholders.

## Financial Results For the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018



	2018	2017	
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>63.8</b> KD Million	<b>55.4</b> KD Million	<b>↑ 15.0%</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>4,467.5</b> KD Million	<b>4,394.6</b> KD Million	<b>↑ 1.7%</b>
<b>Shareholders' Equity</b>	<b>693.0</b> KD Million	<b>624.8</b> KD Million	<b>↑ 10.9%</b>
<b>Capital Adequacy Ratio</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	
<b>Non-Performing Loans (NPL's)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	
<b>Cash Dividends</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>18%</b>	
<b>Bonus Shares</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	
<b>Earning Per Share</b>	<b>35.4</b> (Fils)	<b>30.8</b> (Fils)	



## Business

# NBK awarded 'Top 10 GCC Businesses Award' by SCCI

## In recognition of bank's efforts in supporting private sector investments in GCC

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) National Bank of Kuwait was awarded "Top 10 GCC Businesses Award" by Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). The award is in recognition of the bank's efforts, vital role and positive contributions in promoting the private sector investments in the GCC.

NBK - UAE General Manager, Tareq Al-Mudhaf received the award at a ceremony held at the Sharjah Expo Center. The event was attended by a number of dignitaries and members of the diplomatic corps as well as directors of government institutions and private companies.

Launched in 2002, Sharjah Economic Excellence Network Award consists of seven different categories and is based on the model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), a comprehensive management model employed by more than 30,000 establishments around the world. Participants are required to submit a comprehensive management framework to be nominated for the award.

The Top 10 GCC Businesses Award is open for the nomination of major private companies based

on the number of employees. The award is offered to establishments with the most contributions to support GCC companies in recognition of their efforts to enhance corporate performance and promote business growth. Receiving such a prestigious award is a testimony to the successful implementation of NBK's strategy aimed at diversifying its business, which extends to its product and service offering and its reach into existing geographies.

In line with NBK's efforts to develop its regional corporate banking activities, especially within the GCC region, it has recently launched Al-Watani Wealth Management Company in Saudi Arabia, which is a key milestone to strengthen the bank's leadership position in the region and deliver maximum added value to its customers through offering unique banking services and products.

NBK set up in the UAE by opening its first branch in Dubai in 2008 to capture Kuwaiti linkages and service Group relationships locally. The branch offers full commercial banking services across a broad spectrum of areas including trade, contractor, corporate, retail and treasury.



## Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank held its weekly draw on 10th February 2019 announcing the names of its winners for the week from the 3rd February till the 7th February 2019, in which five winners will receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

### The winners this week are:

- Munser Marzouq Fahad Alajmi
- Ahmad Abdulredha Gambar Mohammad
- Shaha Khaled Ghazi Almutairi
- Nasra Mahmoud Said
- Mohammad Shahwan Saoud Alajmi

The first Gulf Bank Al-Danah's quarterly draw 2019 for the prize of KD 150,000 will be held on 27 March 2019, the second quarterly draw 2019 will be held on 26 June 2019, for the prize of KD 250,000, and the third quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 on 25 September 2019. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1,000,000, will be held on 16 January 2020, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced at a live event.

Gulf Bank encourages customers to increase their chances of winning with Al-Danah by depositing more into their Gulf Bank accounts using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's online and mobile banking services.

Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app. Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD 2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the weekly draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2019 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw.

The Al-Danah draws are all approved by and held in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. Furthermore, Gulf Bank have partnered with Ernst and Young Kuwait (EY) with reference to "Al-Danah Prize Draw" system in order to assist in assessing processes, technical controls considering relevant parameters and provide recommendations in-line with industry leading practices. The study was conducted in line with industry standards and control requirements relevant to similar prize draw schemes wherein, a detailed review of prize draw management system along with draw scheme parameters, data extraction for draw, filtration of customers as per defined business criteria and necessary system interactions was conducted to advise on any potential areas of improvements.

## KAMCO wins 9 outstanding awards in 2018

**KUWAIT:** KAMCO Investment Company, a leading investment firm with one of the largest AUMs in the region, won nine internationally recognized awards in various categories for its performance during 2018. The firm has been recognized year after year for its outstanding performance in the investment sector, as well as its unique product offerings and custom-tailored services.

KAMCO won the awards in the categories of Investment Banking, Asset Management, Wealth Management, Corporate Social Responsibility, Research and Investment Advisory. The firm was

awarded "Wealth Manager of the Year" by Global Investor Group, "Best Kuwait Equity Fund" by MENA Fund Manager, "Best Investment Banking Advisory & Research Company - 2018" and "Best CEO in the Investment Industry - 2018" by World Finance, "Best Asset Manager" by International Finance, "Best Investment Management Company" by Global Business Outlook, "Investment Bank of the Year" by Corporate LiveWire, "Best CSR Leader - Kuwait" and "Best Investment Operations Management Company - Kuwait" by International Business.

Commenting on the awards, Sana Al-Hadlaq, Chief Wealth Officer of KAMCO, said, "With over two decades worth of experience operating in the asset management and investment banking sectors, KAMCO consistently focuses on providing its valued clients with custom-tailored investment solutions backed by the latest market research. We are proud to have been internationally recognized for our exceptional performance in different aspects of our business. These awards are a

testament to our commitment towards harnessing the full strength of our integrated business model to deliver the best results on behalf of our valued clients."

Al-Hadlaq added that the Firm has been taking the necessary steps to further enhance its leadership role in the local market and regionally. Throughout 2018, KAMCO achieved significant milestones in terms of its growth and expansion plan. Al-Hadlaq continued to say that KAMCO will continue to focus on delivering diverse investment products and superior services that will exceed client and market expectations.



Sana Al-Hadlaq

## Turkish Airlines' journey to Istanbul Airport begins with a film from Ridley Scott

**KUWAIT:** Acclaimed filmmaker Ridley Scott has teamed up with Turkish Airlines to direct a cinematic short film set in Istanbul, where East and West meet. "THE JOURNEY", the story of a chase across the city's iconic landmarks was shown at Super Bowl LIII on February 3, paying homage to the ancient city of Istanbul, the airline's hub for 85 years, spanning the continents of Europe and Asia. The 30-second commercial was featured in the first quarter of the most watched sporting event on the global calendar amongst a lineup of some of the world's most recognizable brands, while the six minute cinematic short film version launched simultaneously via Turkish Airlines' YouTube channel.

As the first Turkish brand to advertise at the Super Bowl, Turkish Airlines has been delighting audiences with its inspiring and original commercials since 2016. Turkish Airlines debuted "Batman v Superman" campaign with the leading role played by Ben Affleck in 2016. "Widen Your World" campaign in which Morgan Freeman invited the global audience to widen their world in

2017. "Five Senses" campaign fronted by Dr. Oz who explored the wonders of the world through five senses visiting some of the most unique places around the globe that Turkish Airlines flies to in 2018.

M. Ilker Ayçi, Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee, commented: "When viewers tuned into the Super Bowl on Sunday they were treated to a stunning portrayal of Istanbul in this thrilling film from Ridley Scott. We invite travelers around the world to join us on our journey and experience true Turkish hospitality at our brand new home at Istanbul Airport."

Director and Producer Ridley Scott said: "Istanbul is an inspiring city to build a story around with its beautiful topography surrounded by water. The city is a powerful backdrop to the story that brings together the main characters in an exciting and spectacular way, much as Istanbul has done for generations." Scott directed his first commercial in 15 years, and RSA Films produced, to mark the opening of Istanbul Airport, the new home of Turkish Airlines. "THE JOURNEY" showcases Istanbul as the hub of Turkish Airlines and the new center of aviation for global travelers, which will be the world's largest aviation hub with an annual capacity of 200 million passengers. Flying to more countries than any other airline, Turkish Airlines currently connects 306 destinations in 124 countries, which will expand as it moves its hub from the current Istanbul Ataturk Airport to the newly opened Istanbul Airport. Sylvia Hoeks, known for her role in Blade Runner 2049, plays the leading role alongside key



Istanbul sights such as «iraian Palace, Basilica Cistern, Ortakoy Square and Istanbul Airport. Istanbul Airport hosted the shooting with a cast of 250 people while the film in total starred 500 actors. The scenes at the airport portray Turkish Airlines' cabin crew wearing their new uniforms as well as innovations in inflight cabin design.

The British director, known for unforgettable film classics such as Alien (1979), Blade Runner (1982), Thelma and Louise (1991), and Gladiator (2000), as well as recent hit The Martian (2015), has had ongoing success both on the big screen as

well as directing commercials. The four-time Academy Award nominee has directed an estimated 2700 commercials including the famous commercials created for world's giant commercial brands. Four promotional versions and a six-minute cinematic short film were created as well as a behind-the-scenes special that details the entire experience including interviews with the director and cast. Previous high profile Turkish Airlines collaborations include sports stars Lionel Messi and Kobe Bryant, actor Morgan Freeman and Kevin Costner, and "THE JOURNEY" stars actresses Sylvia Hoeks and Aure Atika.

## AUB launches win up to 100% of value of international purchases campaign

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank has launched a campaign that allows AUB customers to win up to 100 percent of the value of their international purchases using their AUB ATM cards. The campaign, which will last from 4 to 28 February and is launched on the occasion of the month of February and the celebration of Kuwait's national days, provides customers with 6 chances to win: The first winner will win 100 percent of the value of his purchases up to KD 1000 and the second to the sixth winners will win the value of their purchases up to KD 500. The draw will be held and the names of the lucky winners will be announced on March 13.

AUB customers who shop outside Kuwait during campaign's period the by using the ATM cards of Ahli United Bank for KD 100 or more, and have

the opportunity to recover up to 100 percent of the value of their purchases. In a press statement, Ahli United Bank said: The timing has been chosen to coincide with the month of February and Kuwait's celebration of its national days during which many like to travel to spend the holidays abroad, thereby increasing their shopping worldwide.

This unique campaign complements the package of unique prizes with which AUB rewards its customers for their confidence in the services and products offered by the Bank which has always been keen to present its customers with exceptional value through its various remarkable promotions that cater for their needs and even exceed their expectations.

In addition to the exciting campaign benefits, customers who spent using AUB credit cards automatically benefited from the Pearls reward program as well as AUB's instant discount program. These offers provided customers a real added value that rewards the AUB Credit Card and ATM card holders through unique discounts at major well-known companies and retail outlets in Kuwait."

## X-cite launches amazing February discounts with daily winners!

**KUWAIT:** X-cite by Alghanim Electronics, Kuwait's largest electronic retailer and one of the largest showrooms in the Middle East, announced the launching of its newest February discounts and exceptional campaign "You Buy, We Pay" in celebration of Kuwait's National & Liberation Days, with exclusive discounts on thousands of electronics and products ranging from smartphones, laptops, house appliances and all latest electronics.

Throughout the month of February, X-cite will be extending its warmest wishes to the people of Kuwait with its much-anticipated sales campaign on thousands of products at incredible prices. Additionally, X-cite will offer its customers the chance to win valuable prizes as 28 lucky winners will be chosen in 28 days whenever they benefit from the special prices and promotions available in all showrooms across Kuwait. All you have to do is shop from any X-cite showroom or online through www.xcite.com and you could win all your purchases in coupons! Who says it stops here? With credit purchases, you can double your winning purchases simply by buying on installments.

Customers may even avail X-cite's latest "You Buy, We Pay" campaign's unique promotions by shopping on the go or from the convenience of their home thanks to the ultimate online shopping experience. Moreover, products will be delivered directly from the store to their doorstep at no additional cost!

Through its customer-centric concept, X-cite offers customer's competitive quality and prices to serve every segment, providing them with the highest level of service, engaging with them, and earning their trust through supporting services and offerings. X-cite also enable customers to shop from the comfort of their homes through its free mobile app and



shopping website at www.xcite.com

X-cite has established itself as a leading brand in providing the latest products to customers as it continues to build strong relations with international brands in the electronics sector. Continuously seeking to satisfy the needs of its customers, X-cite provides them with diverse services that enable customers to experience products and interact with them, and the service of buy online and pick the product in store, whether in their 26 showrooms or through the website, designed to make online shopping a fast and easy experience. X-cite also offers premium maintenance and purchase services at most of its major showrooms throughout Kuwait and other services such as free delivery and X-care packages.



What's On



# Treat your loved ones this Valentine's Day at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa offers all couples an opportunity to enjoy a memorable and romantic evening celebrating their love on Valentine's Day. Couples get to indulge in a vast array of meals and delicacies in atmospherically romantic settings either publicly or privately. The love in the air will be the scent of a lavish buffet and the sound of live music playing in Garden café, while Pepper's love will be expressed through a set menu of fine cuts of flame grilled meat, cakes and roses.

Salt restaurant offers a set menu uniquely crafted for the sole purpose of impressing your Valentine, with the option of a private dining venue. Olio restaurant has

brought your travels right to Kuwait where you can treat your loved one to an "Evening in Venice" with a mesmerizing set menu, and a captivating live violin performance. Couples can also spend a lovely Valentines by the pool in red and white at Mint.

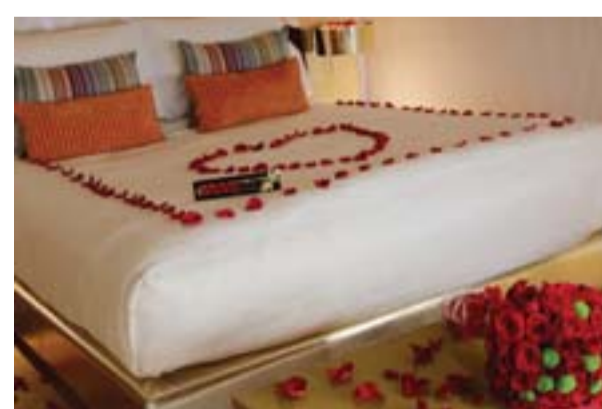
Kuwait's idyllic resort also provides couples with offers to exclusive private settings, in which services are personalized and the setting is beyond romanticized. Dinner in the Gazebo by the pool is a perfect setting to spoil your loved one with a romantically themed gazebo experience in which you are served with an exquisite four course menu.

The Secret Garden provides you and your loved one a

lovely treat where the true luxury of privacy can be experienced with the choice of a mouth-watering five course menu or breathtaking live barbeque under the romantic tunes of live violin in the background. However, if you and your dearest are lovers of nature, then the breeze by the sea in the Gazebo will surely take your breath away as you dine under a blanket of stars in the company of your loved one. "The celebration of love is a feeling that lives and stays with us in our memories, and here at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, we seek to create the most beautiful and vivid memories for all couples seeking to celebrate their love." Expressed Director of Sales & Marketing, Georges Akar.



Members of the Jordanian community in Kuwait recently took part in the 'Plant a Tree in My Country' event that was organized at the Boulevard Park in Salmiya. The event was held on the 9th of February.



## Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait celebrates Valentine's uniquely

Valentine's Day is all about spending it with the people you love the most, and you cannot go wrong at the most romantic corners in the fanciest restaurants at Symphony Style Kuwait, A Radisson Collection Hotel. The hotel is offering its guests the perfect romantic staycation with amazing culinary experiences and the best gift options, allowing you and your Valentine partner to live the moments of romance in just the right way.

The hotel's award-winning Luna restaurant is offering the ultimate, loving prepared Valentine's dinner, a set menu of Tuscan classics designed exclusively for this unique occasion. An exceptional dining experience full of authentic Italian flavors and mastered by expert chefs while enjoying the distinctive sounds of live piano music created for the occasion for a more wonderful celebration.

If you are aiming to celebrate love with a more extravagant dinner, Cucina restaurant is offering a very special PINK buffet, in a warm ambiance reflecting the romantic moments of the Valentine's Day. In Chococafe & Garden, you can still mingle even if you're single with a thoughtfully crafted a la carte menu with the alluring restaurant music in the background. For those looking to celebrate Valentine's Day with a simple yet perfect way, choose the hamper from Symphony Gourmet to be the ideal gift to your beloved. Including a chocolate box, non-alcoholic bubbly juice, red candle, macarons, and a small toy.



## Jaber Al-Ali High School takes part in flag parade

By Hassan Abdel Bari

Within the ongoing celebrations of Kuwait National Day and Liberation Day anniversaries, Jaber Al-Ali High School for boys took part in the event organized by Mubarak Al-Kabeer Educational Zone to parade with the world's longest flag carried by 4000 students and teachers on Sunday in Sabhan. Jaber Al-Ali school director, Dr Abdullah Al-Ajmi led a group of the school teachers and around 170 of the school students in the event and thus contributed in setting a Guinness World Record for parading with the longest flag in the world. Unlike his peers in the educational area, Al-Ajmi actually dressed in sportswear and joined his teaching staff member and students in carrying the flag himself.





Health & Technology

# Facebook restructures their kids team in quest for youth

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Facebook recently announced it had restructured its team devoted to products or features designed to increase the social network's appeal to younger generations. Nascent projects such as a "LOL" platform for funny memes were taken off the board at the "youth team," which shifted focus to more promising products such as a Messenger Kids app launched more than a year ago, according to the leading social network.

"The Youth team has restructured in order to match top business priorities, including increasing our investment in Messenger Kids," Facebook said in response to an AFP inquiry. Facebook in December 2017 introduced a version of its Messenger application designed to let young children connect with others under parental supervision. No in-app purchases are allowed. The social media giant said at the time that it created the app, available in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Peru and Thailand, because many children were going online without safeguards.

"We found that there was a need for a video chat and messaging app that lets kids connect with the people they love while putting parents in complete control," product management



**NANTES:** In this file photo taken on January 15, 2019, a man shows the logo of social network Facebook displayed on a smartphone. — AFP

lead Jennifer Billock said in a blog post marking the app's one year anniversary. "We conducted parent roundtables in each country and have continued gathering feedback from parents and outside experts." Facebook's rules require that children be at least 13 to create an account, but many are believed to get around the restrictions.

California-based Facebook has been working to attract and keep young internet users being lured away from the social network by apps such

as photo- and video-oriented Snapchat. Facebook said the reorganization of the team was not related to recent controversy regarding a research app that paid users, including teens, to track their smartphone activity as part of an effort to glean more data that could help the social network's competition efforts. The youth team was not involved with the research project nor did it use any of the data collected, according to Facebook. — AFP

## Gender funding gap grows when research pitches get personal

**PARIS:** Women are less successful in receiving research funding than men if the selection process focuses on the scientist making the pitch rather than the science presented, according to a new research. In an edition of The Lancet medical journal dedicated entirely to gender issues in health and science, the paper showed that the gap between male and female success rates in grant acceptance grew when things got personal.

The experiment analyzed nearly 24,000 grant applications over five years at the Canadian Institute of Health Research — Canada's main public medical research funder. In 2014 the body changed its application process, splitting funding reviews into two separate schemes — one with an explicit focus on the applicant, the other evaluating the science. In doing so, they created a "unique natural experiment", according to the authors of the study.

When assessments were based solely on the quality of the science, the gender gap between grants accepted was a mere 0.9 percentage points. But when the assessments were based on an evaluation of the principal scientists pitching the project, the gap between male and female acceptances grew to 4 percent. "This shows us

that men and women proposed science is evaluated to be of similar quality, but men and women are not evaluated similarly as scientists," said Holly Witteman, associate professor at the Department of Family and Emergency Medicine at Laval University, Quebec. Witteman said there may be a number of reasons behind this, including individual or systemic biases. Whether consciously or unconsciously, reviewers may "tend to think as men being better scientists than women," she told AFP.

### 'Purely on merit'

Friday's edition of The Lancet also featured studies into sexual harassment within scientific and medical fields, and how women are poorly represented in the research community despite making up 75 percent of health workers worldwide. "Something has gone badly wrong in global health," said the journal's editor-in-chief, Richard Horton. "The global health community has abdicated its responsibility for achieving gender justice in health."

Witteman said that despite some progress — notably the awarding of last year's Nobel Prizes for physics and chemistry to women — science and medicine had a long way to go to redress their trenchant gender imbalances. "I would like this to be done and solved and for us not to have to worry about bias getting in the way of assessing science and awarding grants based purely on merit," she said. "I believe that prizes should be awarded on merit and I believe that merit should be free of bias."

In October, Canadian scientist Donna Strickland became just the third woman in history to win the Nobel Physics Prize. — AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE

248 33 199

### Dr Sahar Ghannam

**Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser**

**Timing: Saturdays and Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm**  
Sunday, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 am until 5 pm  
**Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm.**

**Friday is a holiday.**

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

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

[saharpolyclinic](#) [Dr.saharghannsmclinic](#) [Email: drsgderma@gmail.com](#)

**To advertise on this Page, Call: 24833199 ext:101,102**

### Dr. Ala' Groof

**Consultant Surgeon**  
Canadian board certified.

**General Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Endoscopic/laparoscopic Surgery, Obesity/Metabolic Surgery, Tumor Surgery**

- Treat patients with problems in the arteries and veins- varicose veins, narrowing/occlusion or ballooning of vessels.
- Treat patients with diabetic foot wounds and leg swelling.
- Treat patients in need of hemodialysis access and associated problems.
- Treat patients with gall bladder stones, abdominal swellings/tumors/hernias.
- Treat patients with problems of overweight- Sleeve Gastrectomy and gastric bypass.

**We cover GIG insured patients- KPC/AFYA**

**Meidan Hawally - End of Fourth Ring Road - behind the Gas Station - Sabaek building, seventh floor**  
**Tel: 25626000 - 65966000**

**WELCOME**

**Dr Tammam Abou Ali**  
Consultant ENT, Head & Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon.

*Fellowship of the royal college of surgeons in UK and Ireland.*  
*10 years work experience in King Fahad Hospital Kuwait.*  
*In Head of ENT Department in Herwadia Hospital Jeddah Kuwait*  
*10 years work experience in UK and Ireland.*

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

**1 888 883**  
www.qmc-kuwait.com

[qmcKuwait](#)

**To advertise on this Page**

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

### Dr. Husain Alenezi

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

**Expert in diagnosing and treating:**

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

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088    94449452    Twitter: @DrHusain\_Urol

**Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family**

*Book your appointments today!*

**Dr. Kiran Turaka**  
Ophthalmologist

**Dr. Zareena Zahir**  
Ophthalmologist

**Dr. Hassan Khan**  
Senior Cardiologist

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

**50721507**  
**24551555**  
www.exircenterku.com

**EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER**  
Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

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



# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

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

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

**Salmiya, Belajat Street, Tel: 1881122**

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

**ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:**

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

**SPECIALIZED IN:**

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

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

**To advertise on this Page**

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

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

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

**مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital**  
Tel: 1802 555

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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

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

**Specialized in:**

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

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

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

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

**Scope of Clinical Practice:**

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

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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

**مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital**  
Tel: 1802 555

**DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM**  
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

**Academic Certificates - Training**

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

**Scope of clinical Practice.**

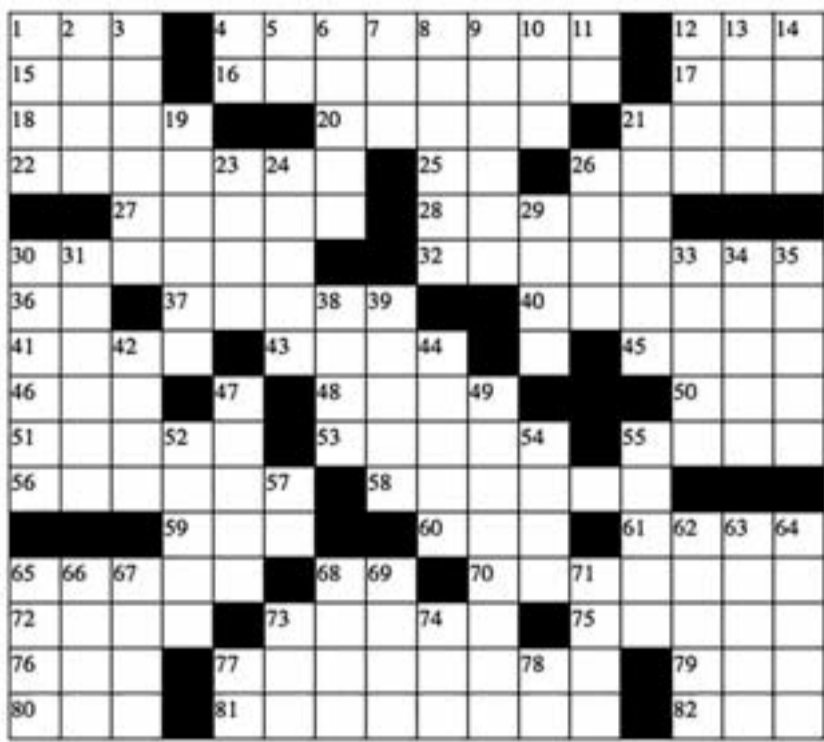
- ◆ Bariatric surgeries.
- ◆ Gallbladder stones surgeries.
- ◆ Abdominal wall and hernia surgeries.
- ◆ G.I. surgeries.
- ◆ Thyroid and para - thyroid surgeries.
- ◆ Anal surgeries.

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



Stars

CROSSWORD 2134



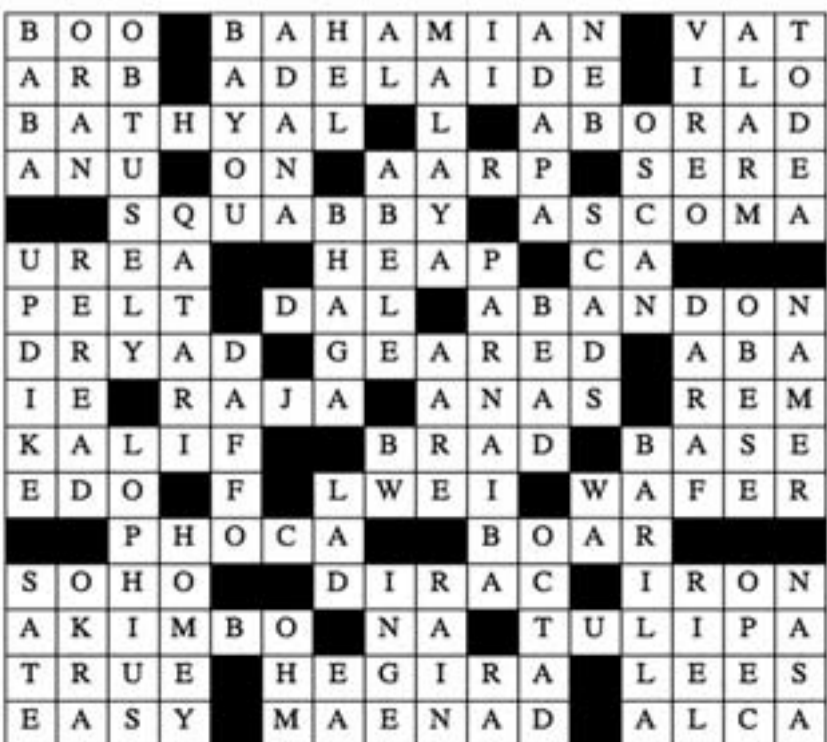
ACROSS

1. 3 to 30 gigahertz.
4. A refuge from attack.
12. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
15. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
16. (physics) Involving a transfer of heat.
17. Step on it.
18. A city in northwestern Syria.
20. (trademark) An alloy of iron and nickel having a low coefficient of thermal expansion.
22. (informal) Someone who is unsuccessful.
25. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
27. Unpleasantly stern.
28. A fine strong sheer silky fabric made of silk or rayon or nylon.
30. United States space station.
32. Striped hyena of southeast Africa that feeds chiefly on insects.
36. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
37. A large number or amount.
40. An implement used to erase something.
41. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
43. A city in southwestern Switzerland at the western end of Lake Geneva.
45. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
46. The cry made by sheep.
48. A small ball with a hole through the middle.
50. Related by blood.
51. Any plant of the genus *Erica*.
53. Small genus of plants constituting the family Batidaceae.
56. In a highly insane manner.
58. The basic unit of money in Zambia.
59. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
60. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
61. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
65. How a result is obtained or an end is achieved.
70. Under a moral obligation to do something.
72. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
75. Jordan's port.
76. The smallest multiple that is exactly divisible by every member of a set of numbers.
79. An adult male person (as opposed to a woman).
80. Lacking self-confidence.
81. Any of several cultivated sour cherry trees bearing pale red fruit with colorless juice.
82. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. United States humorist who wrote about rural life (1818-1885).
2. Goddess of the dead and queen of the underworld.
3. Usually describes a large person who is fat but has a large frame to carry it.
4. A state in north central United States.
5. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
6. A strong belief in a supernatural power or powers that control human destiny.
7. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
8. Capital and largest city of Cuba.
9. Type genus of the Otariidae.
10. (Irish) The sea personified.
11. The district occupied entirely by the city of Washington.
12. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
13. Costing 10 dollars.
14. Made of fir or pine.
19. Drought-resistant Asiatic tree-like shrub bearing pleasantly acid small red edible fruits commonly used in sherbets.
21. A strip of level paved surface where planes can take off and land.
23. Using speech rather than writing.
24. A member of a Turkic people of Uzbekistan and neighboring areas.
26. A blind god.
29. A recurring sleep state during which rapid eye movements do not occur and dreaming does not occur.
31. A historical region of southwestern India on the west coast.
33. Port city on southern Honshu on Osaka Bay.
34. Russian founder of the Bolsheviks and leader of the Russian Revolution and first head of the USSR (1870-1924).
35. Characterized by disconcerting directness in manner or speech.
38. English writer and a central member of the Fabian Society (1858-1943).
39. Marked by quiet and caution and secrecy.
42. Marked by or showing unaffected simplicity and lack of guile or worldly experience.
44. A ruling on a point of Islamic law that is given by a recognized authority.
47. A pale rose-colored variety of the ruby spinel.
49. At an angle.
52. Comb-plate or locomotor organ consisting of a row of strong cilia whose bases are fused.
54. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
55. A dyed fabric.
57. A period of time containing 365 (or 366) days.
62. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
63. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
66. (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
67. An organization of military land forces.
68. Evergreen tree of eastern Asia and Philippines having large leathery leaves and small green-white flowers in compact cymes.
69. Danish physicist who studied atomic structure and radiations.
71. A cord that is drawn through eyelets or around hooks in order to draw together two edges (as of a shoe or garment).
73. Lacking in light.
74. A metal-bearing mineral valuable enough to be mined.
77. Informal terms for a mother.
78. Being nine more than forty.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have a sense of appreciation for the finer things in life. It's a great time to be thankful. You might find yourself shopping for some items you haven't allowed yourself before. Now is the time to acquire some of those personal and pretty items you love which can make you feel more at home and are your own special delight. It might be new furnishing or a new automobile. Long conversations with friends are savored now with special pleasure. You have the company to share your happiness. Enjoy and relish this special universal gift.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You're running around today with a smile like the "Cheshire" cat, who knows something others only wish they did. What's more you're aware of your special senses today and are using them as you think you should. That smirky grin brings those who want to help you closer, whether its job related or an a more personal note. Friends are ready to assist you with items and events you desire. Be grateful for the help and for those people. You're more self-assured without being self-absorbed now. Your grin is from your sense of enjoyment for the day and the people who're with you.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Today you realize just how much your past experiences have had a hand in making you who you are. Using your history allows you to make better life's decisions now. Real estate is on your mind. Perhaps you're about to purchase a new home or there is the sale of some land or houses on which you're working. At any rate, it's a good thing for you now monetarily. It could even be a refinance on the home in which you live. Right now, Gemini, with your good fortune and fond memories of your life, you're in a great spot to think about the sexual side of your life. Enjoy.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your parents or an older person, such as a teacher who helped you in school, figures greatly in your life today. You find yourself reevaluating your life thoroughly. While reassessing you realize how much you've been helped by your parents. You might want to call if you can and tell them how much you appreciate them. Because you're in a life-investigating mood, others are drawn to you. You find yourself the center of attention with just the right words to help those in need. Call loved ones tonight just to let them know you care.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Opportunities abound. You're in a creative mood which could give way to new inventions or manners of achieving some difficult tasks. Higher ups like the way you think and allow for some of your eccentricities. You find that your more conventional thoughts are mixing with those that others might not understand but they're giving you the impetus for creating a better work environment for all. You might have more money coming soon. At home give your spouse a break. They may not have had as good a day as you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

After yesterday you've been left disenchanted with someone at work. It's created a new desire within you to study how you really feel. You know that you care about your career and want others too as well but you seem to be left by your coworkers to get the work done while they seem to play. It makes you want to go home, cover up in your warm security blanket and let everything go. Virgo, the only problem with that is you don't easily let things go. You want to do the best you can in every part of your life and that wouldn't be doing it.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

While most of your friends give you the accolades you so desperately love and need, there is one at work that can dampen your excitement. Try to be nice when you tell this person to mind their own business. Your thoughts and theirs don't jive. It's better to walk away without issue. Your real friends need to be with you today and tonight. Enjoy their company even though you want to be alone. Thinking is on your mind because you've made some quick decisions and want to be sure of self.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Mentally you find yourself in trouble today at work. Your thoughts seem to escape you once you do get a coherent idea. You wonder if you're in trouble mentally but you're really not. It's the planets. What's not is your ability to make things better for you. Scorpio. Watch your words because you don't want to upset someone you admire at work and you could. If you see someone looking at you incredulously, put it down to your thoughts being inexpressible today. Smile and say you'll talk later. Go home, cover up and have a nice tea or drink of your choice.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Today you may find yourself rearranging furniture, cleaning and filing if at the office. What you're doing is nesting. You need a fresh start and you're willing to put work into it. At home you may even think about remodeling. You look at old television programs wistfully hoping that you can remake your emotional world into that sort of attitude and responsibility. Sagittarius. But time goes on and we can't live in the past. History is a reminder not a place to live. Progress helps us achieve better. Try to live in the real world now. Show your love to those for which you care.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today you want exercise of a romantic nature but you may not have the manner in which to work out this particular need at the moment. Take a fast-paced walk to help clear your mind and work out the bugs, so to speak. You'll be able to attend to this matter more fully later. Appreciation for everything within or about your life is abundant now. You study who you are and how you've made it so far. Capricorn. Make notes for later because you're sure to come up with something useful for the future while your appreciating your life. Get in the hot tub tonight with someone you love and enjoy.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This morning may find you in a loving mood. Your love partner may go to work with a very special disposition too. You feel strong, in control and able to do anything now. This morning is the product of that but getting on with your day with enthusiasm helps too. Today, you make practical decisions look inviting. Your boss might try to make amends for yesterday's behavior because he or she sees the desirability in keeping you on the job. Other coworkers look to you for creating a better work environment and leading them in their manual or mental efforts.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You feel great about your accomplishments and position in life. You may feel as if you need to put forth as much hard work on your physical wellbeing as you put in other areas of your life. This may be a great time to join the gym, take the walk, or start the meal planning you have been thinking about. If you do not care for yourself physically you may not be able to continue the hard work. This a great time to take this seriously and set your goals. You should have much success in this area of your life. You are devoted and determined, and this should work out for you as well. Pisces, this should be just what it takes to make you feel great about yourself.

Wordsearch Puzzle

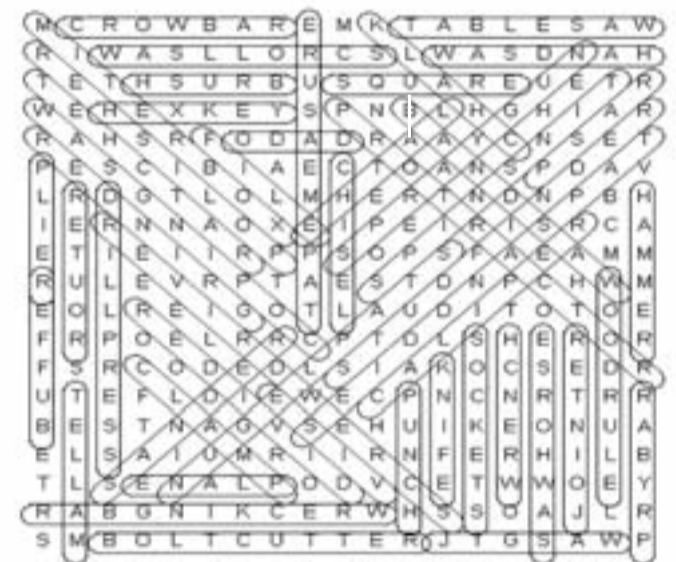
Transportation

Find and circle all of the transportation words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters will reveal an additional method of transportation.



- |           |            |               |            |
|-----------|------------|---------------|------------|
| AIRPLANE  | FERRY      | RICKSHAW      | SNOWMOBILE |
| BICYCLE   | GONDOLA    | ROCKET        | SUBMARINE  |
| BLIMP     | HORSE      | ROLLER BLADES | TRAIN      |
| BOAT      | JET        | SCOOTER       | TRAM       |
| CAMEL     | MOPED      | SHIP          | TRUCK      |
| CANOE     | MOTORCYCLE | SKATEBOARD    | VAN        |
| CARRIAGE  | PARACHUTE  | SKIS          | WAGON      |
| ELEVATOR  | RAFT       | SLED          | YACHT      |
| ESCALATOR |            |               |            |

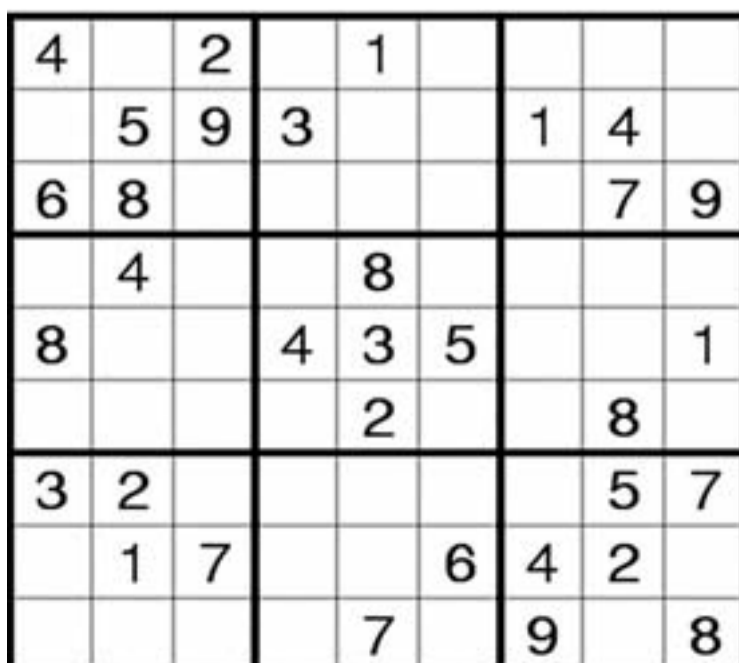
Tools



- |             |           |             |               |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| BAND SAW    | FILE      | POLISHER    | SPRAY GUN     |
| BOLT CUTTER | GRINDER   | PROTRACTOR  | SQUARE        |
| BRUSH       | HAMMER    | PRY BAR     | STAPLE GUN    |
| BUFFER      | HAND SAW  | PUNCH       | STUD FENDER   |
| CALIPER     | HEX KEY   | RASP        | TABLE SAW     |
| CHALK       | JIG SAW   | RATCHET     | TAPE MEASURE  |
| CHISEL      | JOINTER   | ROUTER      | TAPS AND DIES |
| CLAMP       | KNIFE     | SANDER      | TINSNIPS      |
| COPING SAW  | LATHE     | SAWHORSE    | VICE          |
| CROWBAR     | MALLET    | SCREWDRIVER | WOOD RULE     |
| DADO        | MITER BOX | SCROLL SAW  | WRECKING BAR  |
| DIVIDER     | PLANE     | SOCKETS     | WRENCH        |
| DRILL PRESS | PLIER     |             |               |

The hidden sentence is: MEN HAVE BECOME THE TOOLS OF THEIR TOOLS

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019



Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón poses with the awards for a Director and for Best Film for "Roma" at the BAFTA British Academy Film Awards at the Royal Albert Hall in London. — AFP photos



British director and writer Michael Pearce (right) and producer Lauren Dark (left) pose with their awards for an Outstanding Debut by a British Writer, Director or Producer for their work on the film 'Beast'.



British actress Olivia Colman poses with the award for a Leading Actress for her work on the film 'The Favorite'.



US actor Rami Malek poses with the award for a Leading Actor for his work on the film 'Bohemian Rhapsody'.



US musician, actor and director Bradley Cooper poses with the award for Original Music for their work on the film 'A Star Is Born'.



US actor Mahershala Ali poses with the award for a Supporting Actor for his work on the film 'Green Book'.



US Film editor Thelma Schoonmaker pose with her BAFTA Fellowship Award.

## Roma takes Bafta glory in coup for Netflix

Netflix black-and-white production "Roma" triumphed at the Bafta film awards, boosting Oscar hopes for the US streaming giant whose rise poses a serious challenge to the conventional Hollywood business model. The cinematic love letter to director Alfonso Cuarón's 1970s childhood in Mexico City beat black comedy "The Favorite" to win best film and best director. "I'm seriously touched this film has been received the way it's been received," Cuarón said at a star-studded ceremony on Sunday in London's Royal Albert Hall, also attended by Prince William and his wife Kate.

Cuarón thanked Netflix for "having the courage" to get behind his film as he picked up the gong, adding that its success "in an age where fear and anger are proposed to divide us means the world to me". "Roma" portrays domestic strife and social hierarchy amid political turmoil and focuses on a housekeeper and nanny called Cleo, played by indigenous actress Yalitza Aparicio. Netflix UK tweeted its congratulations, saying it was a "deeply moving film and deserves all the love it's getting".

It dented expectations of a clean sweep by "The Favourite" which picked up best actress for Olivia Colman as Queen Anne and best supporting actress for Rachel Weisz playing her confidante and lover. The film, about a cantankerous 18th-century British queen and her scheming court, had been nominated for 12 awards and picked up seven in what Colman described as an "amazing night" for the cast. "This is for all three of us. It's got my name on it but we can scratch on some other ones," she said on stage, also referring to co-star Emma Stone who was nominated in the same category as Weisz.

Colman, 45, was up against Glenn Close ("The Wife") and Lady Gaga ("A Star is Born") — the same power duo she will face at the Oscars on February 24, with Close so far the clear frontrunner. "She doesn't take herself too seriously and she enjoys what she's doing," Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos said of Colman. Weisz and Stone are also in the running for Oscars in a proud year for the British film industry.

### Red carpet for Netflix?

"Roma" is up for best picture at the Oscars-Netflix's first-ever nomination which has propelled it into the Hollywood club of elite filmmakers. While the online service has gradually been welcomed at most major film festivals, Tinseltown's red carpet is not fully rolled out, with cinemas up in arms about its position as a distribution king attracting A-list stars. After the Oscar nominations were announced, theatre megachains AMC and Regal—the top two in America by far—said "Roma" would not be screened in their annual best-picture showcases.

In all, "Roma" was shown in around 900 theatres worldwide—more than any other Netflix film, but far short of a usual big release. Netflix never released any box office data. While Netflix has made some good-faith efforts to gain Hollywood's acceptance, it only waited three weeks after the theatre release of "Roma" to make it available on its platform, far less than the 90 days that cinema owners ask studios to hold back.

### 'Serious allegations'

Last year's Bafta ceremony saw Hollywood stars paint the red carpet black in solidarity with the #MeToo movement. The 2019 edition has also been tinged by scandal. Bafta removed "Bohemian Rhapsody" director Bryan Singer from the Queen biopic's citation in the outstanding British film nomination "in light of recent very serious allegations". That referred to an article in US magazine The Atlantic detailing sexual misconduct allegations that included underage sex.

Singer denies the story and the film itself was still up for the award, although it failed to win. Rami Malek's portrayal of the late Queen frontman Freddie Mercury—a victim of the AIDS epidemic in the days when homosexuality was taboo in rock-and-roll—earned him the best actor award, however.

After winning he paid tribute to Mercury as "the greatest outsider of them all". Having seen off Christian Bale's transformation into former US vice-president Dick Cheney in "Vice", Malek's victory may boost his chances at the Oscars. The two are both in the running for best actor, with Bradley Cooper also nominated for "A Star is Born" in an increasingly tight race as final voting opens Tuesday and closes February 19. Best supporting actor at the Baftas went to Mahershala Ali for "Green Book", a comedy-drama in which he plays a jazz pianist on a tour of America's Deep South in 1962. "Free Solo"—a film about the first person to climb El Capitan in Yosemite National Park without ropes—won the award for best documentary.

Among the glitzy crowd there was one star missing—Lady Gaga, who won the best original music award for "A Star is Born", was instead performing at the Grammys in Los Angeles, where she picked up three gongs.—AFP



British actress Olivia Colman poses with the award for a Leading Actress for her work on the film 'The Favorite'.

## BAFTA winners

- BEST FILM**  
Roma
- OUTSTANDING BRITISH FILM**  
The Favorite
- OUTSTANDING DEBUT BY A BRITISH WRITER, DIRECTOR OR PRODUCER**  
Beast
- FILM NOT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
Roma
- DOCUMENTARY**  
Free Solo
- ANIMATED FILM**  
Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse
- DIRECTOR**  
Roma
- ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY**  
The Favorite
- LEADING ACTRESS**  
Olivia Colman
- LEADING ACTOR**  
Rami Malek
- SUPPORTING ACTRESS**  
Rachel Weisz
- SUPPORTING ACTOR**  
Mahershala Ali
- ORIGINAL MUSIC**  
A Star Is Born
- CINEMATOGRAPHY**  
Roma
- COSTUME DESIGN**  
The Favorite
- BRITISH SHORT ANIMATION**  
Roughhouse
- EE RISING STAR AWARD**  
Letitia Wright



Filmmaker Jonathan Hodgson and producer Richard Van Den Boom pose with their awards for a British Short Animation for 'Roughhouse'.



Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge (L) and Britain's Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge arrive for the BAFTA British Academy Film Awards.



British-Guyanese actress Letitia Wright poses with the Rising Star Award at the BAFTA British Academy Film Awards.





Arwa Falah Al-Eridha, Jaber Al-Ahlia



Hussain Hadi Abbas, Nibras ideal School



Maha Abd Al-Mohsen Al-Qati, Al-Kharafi School



Anfal Basel Bo Hamad, Anfal Group



Naif Bader Nasser, Nibras School



Yousif Mohamed Kalandar, Hope School



Areej Falah Al-Aridha, Jaber Al-Ahlia School



Mariam Ibrahim, Hope School



Manal Fathe Abd Al-Halim, Anfal Group

# Awards, recognition at 'Colors of Palestine' drawing competition

By Ben Garcia

The distribution of awards for a drawing competition organized by the Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) was held on Sunday at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST). The competition with the theme 'Colors of Palestine' was held under the patronage of the ministry of education and the Embassy of Palestine in Kuwait. Hundreds of students and parents attended the ceremony.

Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub congratulated HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the 13th anniversary of his assumption as the ruler of Kuwait and for the upcoming National and Liberation Day celebrations. He was elated over the participation of hundreds of students from various schools in Kuwait - mostly Palestinians - but also students of other nationalities.

Tahboub said this remarkable participation reflects sincere love for Palestine and its rich history and cultural heritage. "Thank you, and I am pleased to welcome you today and share this special Palestinian Day, through which I extend my thanks and appreciation to the Kuwaiti Journalists Association represented by Adnan Al-Rashed, Vice President of the Kuwait Journalists Association, and Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times. Special thanks to the Gulf University for Science and Technology for its generosity in giving us its stage for this ceremony, and Adnan Saad, the General Coordinator of the 'Colors of Palestine Drawing Competition', in which thousands of students participated from all over Kuwait," he said.

Tahboub also thanked all the sponsors, without whom this competition would not have been possible. "The idea of the 'Colors of Palestine' competition came about to make our children of different age groups soar with their imagination in the beloved atmosphere of Palestine, visualize its blessed land, enjoy the beauty of its nature and be familiar of its loyal and devoted people defending its Christian and Islamic faiths," he noted.

The head of the panel of judges, Abdulkareem Al-Enezi, confirmed the participation of over 10,000 students from different age groups representing public and private schools. "A lot of gratitude to all students who participated in the 'Colors of Palestine' competition - we are very happy for what you showed. Students drew amazing creatively-coordinated artistic paintings. They proved their skills of creativity and ingenuity by their touches, artistic creativity, dilettantism of aesthetic values and expression using colors and materials to complete their paintings in joyful atmospheres. They mastered choosing colors that reflected on the grace of the painting, which was a transparent and genuine expression of childish views," he added.

Adnan Saad, the overall coordinator of the competition, was happy over the overwhelming turnout, as the drawing competition's objective was firstly to promote and develop the idea of recognizing peoples and countries. "It promotes the involvement of the new generation by providing them with the means to contribute effectively to the progress of their society," he said. "It also plays a meaningful role in learning about the special friendship between Kuwait and Palestine. The artistic performance of the students impressed me. Their paintings do not only reflect the beauty of the nature of Palestine, but also a new and unique perspective added by their origins and talents upon translating our culture, the struggle of our people and the richness of our history, customs, traditions and cultural heritage," he said.

Kuwait and Palestine share many values that contributed to the consolidation of not only friendship, but also strong mutual partnership in view of the sincere interest and enthusiasm shown by these students - future leaders - in Kuwait and other countries whose students participated in this artistic competition. "The students reflected innovation in their drawings. They took the opportunity to express their feelings, skills and artistic abilities to

enhance their confidence in themselves and express their interaction, abilities, feelings and artistic talent," Saad added. "These expressions bear a lot of meaning. It is not necessary to be a Palestinian to love Palestine because its love does not depend on nationality or identity ... its love is by nature. It is like our love for our mothers without thinking," he explained.

Here are some quotes by students in their drawings:  
Issa Al-Asfour, 10, from Ghars Bilingual School, wrote on his painting in bold: "All of me is Palestinian; I am Palestinian, my name is Palestinian, and my heart is Palestinian. Letters in my name help me, enhance me and feed me with your love, my Palestine."

Fahd Talal Al-Mutairi, 9, from Iqraa School, wrote on his painting: "Homeland smells like martyrs, so how cannot jasmine be jealous of it?"

Aisha Waleed Al-Hajri, 7, from Ramleh Om Al Mo'mnein School, 7 years old, wrote on her painting: "O Jerusalem, your eyes are sad: you are a virgin, shaded and passed by the Prophet (PBUH); and you are the shortest link between the earth and the sky, the holy light of the canons, and city of mosques. You are like a beautiful and sad girl with burned fingers."

Faisal Ghazi, 6, from Al-Nour School wrote: "We are from there, we are alive and will still be alive ... and the dream is continuous. Palestine is free and independent."



Mousa Abd Al-Aziz Hassan, Nibras School



Ghazal Ziad Mohamed Al-Tamimi, Dasman School



Lifestyle | Feature



A group photo of officials, guests and organizers. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Officials cut the cake during the event.



The Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub presents a memento to Adnan Al-Rashed, Vice President of the Kuwait Journalists Association.



The Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub presents a memento to Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times.



(Left) The Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub and Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times (third left) with one of the special needs participants on stage.



Adnan Saad, the General Coordinator of the 'Colors of Palestine Drawing Competition' gives a speech on stage.



Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub delivers a speech on stage.



A group photo of special needs participants.



(Back, from left) Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Editor-in-Chief of Kuwait Times, Adnan Al-Rashed, Vice President of the Kuwait Journalists Association, Adnan Saad, General Coordinator of the competition and Abdulkareem Al-Enezi, head of the panel of judges is seen with special needs participants.



A general view of the audience.



(From left) Ayman Al-Sharaa, Sales Manager of Al-Sanabel Al-Thahabiya, Raafat Hammad, salesman at Al-Sanabel Al-Thahabiya is seen at the Sebamed booth, one of the sponsors of the event.

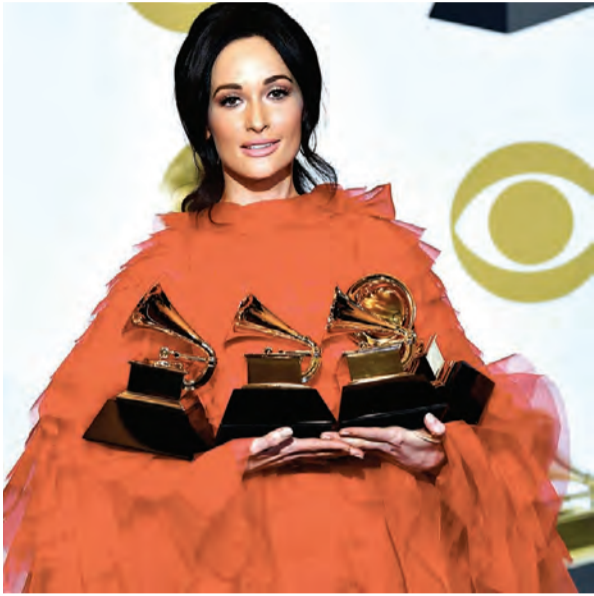




US singer-songwriter Lady Gaga performs onstage.



(From left) US singer-songwriter Lady Gaga, Jada Pinkett Smith, Host US singer-songwriter Alicia Keys, former US First Lady Michelle Obama and US singer Jennifer Lopez speak on stage during the 61st Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. — AFP photos



Kacey Musgraves poses with her awards for Album Of The Year "Golden Hour" and for Best Country Album with "Golden Hour", Best Country Song "Space Cowboy" and Best Country Solo Performance "Butterflies".



Singer Dua Lipa poses with her awards for Best New Artist and Best Dance Recording "Electricity".



Cardi B accepts the award for Best Rap Album with "Invasion Of Privacy" onstage.



Singer/songwriter Brandi Carlile (center), with musicians Tim and Phil Hanseroth, poses with her awards for Best American Roots Performance "The Joke", Best American Roots song "The joke" and Best Americana Album "By the Way, I Forgive You".



US singers Dolly Parton and Miley Cyrus perform onstage.

# Women reign at glitzy Grammys gala that also makes rap history

**A** bold streak of feminism ran through the Grammys gala on Sunday, as women artists dominated in the competition and on the concert stage while rappers Cardi B and Childish Gambino delivered a history-making night for hip-hop. Gambino—the musical alter ego of actor Donald Glover—posted four big wins for his provocative hit "This Is America," but did not attend the star-studded ceremony in Los Angeles. In any event, the night belonged to the ladies. One year after they were largely snubbed in major categories, and the head of the Recording Academy sparked outrage for telling them to "step up," they made their presence felt—and heard.

Country star Kacey Musgraves, one of the genre's most critically praised artists who infuses her classic twang with psychedelia, nabbed four prizes including an upset win for top Album of the Year honors for "Golden Hour." "I think that women have a really necessary perspective to art, to music and it's really nice to see that getting a chance to be included," Musgraves told journalists after the show. "It takes women having the balls to put out art that might not always be liked by everyone, but it also takes people on the other side of that to reach out and give those things a chance to be heard." English synth-pop star Dua Lipa bested a crowded field of female talent to take home the Grammy for Best New Artist. "I guess this year we really stepped up," she said. And rap's woman of the moment Cardi B certainly put her art out there—she made history as the first solo woman to win a Grammy for Best Rap Album for her debut "Invasion of Privacy."

The trembling star, fresh off a rousing performance of her hit "Money," delivered an emotional speech alongside her husband Offset of the rap trio Migos about making the album in the early days of her pregnancy. Gambino's win marked the first time a rap track won either Song of the Year, which honors best songwriting, or the Record of the Year award for best overall song. Musgraves' third studio album bested a crowded field of heavyweights for top honors including rappers Kendrick Lamar and Drake—both of whom ended the night with just one win each.

Gambino and Lamar skipped the ceremony, but Drake showed up—and the Toronto rapper vented his frustration over a common complaint in recent years, that black hip-hop artists are not always given their due. "We play in an opinion-based sport, not a factual-based sport," Drake said as he accepted his lone award for Best Rap Song for his inescapable "God's Plan." "This is a business where sometimes it is up to a bunch of people that might not understand what a mixed race kid from Canada has to say."

### Women on top

Host Alicia Keys got the show at the Staples Center off to an emphatic start when she introduced a few of her friends—including former first lady Michelle Obama. Obama delighted the audience when she came on stage alongside Keys, Lady Gaga, Jennifer Lopez and actress Jada Pinkett-Smith to deliver a strong message about diversity and female empowerment. Brandi Carlile—this year's most nominated woman—won her first three Grammys ever, in the Americana and American Roots categories.

"Tonight gives me hope as a mother of two young daughters," she told journalists backstage. Pop diva Gaga—sporting an off-the-shoulder silver number with a bold ruffle and high-high slit—meanwhile won an award for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for her heart-pounding hit "Shallow" from the blockbuster film "A Star Is Born." The song also won in the visual media group, and Gaga scored a third trophy for best pop solo performance for "Joanne."

"I'm so proud to be a part of a movie that addresses mental health issues," said a tearful Gaga, who thanked her co-star and duet partner Bradley Cooper. "A lot of artists deal with that. And we got to take care of each other."

### Monologues

The night struck a positive note that some change may be afoot at the Recording Academy, which has faced intense backlash over its apparent struggle to embrace diversity. Rising pop star Camila Cabello opened the show with Ricky Martin, J Balvin and rapper Young Thug for an electric bilingual performance.

Pop futurist Janelle Monae wowed the crowd with an edgy performance backed by an entourage of female dancers, dropping the line of the night: "Let the \*\*\*\* have a monologue." And Lady Gaga delivered a stunning rendition of her hit "Shallow"—in a decidedly Gaga-esque bejeweled catsuit and sky-high disco boots.

Songstress Keys, a 15-time Grammy winner, was the first woman to host music's biggest night in 14 years. She performed a rollicking medley of classics on two pianos, while country legend Dolly Parton took the stage with Miley Cyrus, Katy Perry and others after being honored for her musical and philanthropic contributions. Disco legend Diana Ross performed a birthday tribute to herself before Jennifer Lopez wowed with an exuberant ode to Motown that included inflections of salsa. Keys ended the feel-good show with a line to match: "Let's keep listening and loving each other." — AFP



Singer/songwriter Lady Gaga poses with her award for Best Pop Solo Performance with "Joanne", Best Pop Duo/Group Performance "Shallow" and Best Song Written for Visual Media "Shallow".



US singer Gabiella Wilson, aka H.E.R., poses with her awards for Best R&B Performance "Best Part" and Best R&B Album "H.E.R.".



Swedish composer Ludwig Goransson poses with the award for Record Of The Year "This Is America" (by Childish Gambino), for Song of the Year (This is America) and Best Score Soundtrack (Black Panther).

## WINNERS IN KEY CATEGORIES AT THE 2019 GRAMMY AWARDS

- Country star Kacey Musgraves won the top prize of the night, Album of the Year, for her "Golden Hour."
- Album of the Year: Kacey Musgraves, "Golden Hour"
- Record of the Year (best overall song performance): Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
- Song of the Year (recognizing songwriting): Donald Glover (Childish Gambino) and Ludwig Goransson, "This Is America"
- Best new Artist: Dua Lipa
- Best Music Video: Childish Gambino, "This Is America"
- Best Rap Album: Cardi B, "Invasion Of Privacy"
- Best Rock Album: Greta Van Fleet, "From the Fires"
- Best Pop Vocal Album: Ariana Grande, "Sweetener"
- Best Pop Duo/Group Performance: Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, "Shallow"
- Best Urban Contemporary Album: The Carters, "Everything Is Love"
- Best R&B Album: H.E.R., "H.E.R."
- Best Alternative Music Album: Beck, "Colors"
- Best World Music Album: Soweto Gospel Choir, "Freedom" — AFP



Soweto Gospel Choir for Best World Album Music award.



US-Cuban singer-songwriter Camila Cabello performs on stage.



# Classifieds

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY DAY:** Cool and cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening at times variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times and heavy rain over

**BY NIGHT:** Cold and Clouds will decrease gradually with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 35 km/h with a chance for fog forming over some areas.

WEATHER WATCH			Heavy Rain	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 11/02/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	18 °C	14 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	17 °C	13 °C		
ABDALY	19 °C	12 °C		
BUBYAN	00 °C	00 °C		
JAHRA	18 °C	14 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	18 °C	14 °C		
SALMIYAH	17 °C	14 °C		
AHMADI	17 °C	14 °C		
NUWAISIB	18 °C	14 °C		
WAFRA	17 °C	13 °C		
SALMY	16 °C	10 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST				
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures	Wind Direction / Wind Speed
			MAX. MIN.	
Tuesday	02/12	Fair and some high clouds will appear	20 °C 10 °C	NW 15 - 40 km/h
Wednesday	02/13	Fair and some scattered clouds will appear	20 °C 08 °C	NW-VRB 08 - 26 km/h
Thursday	02/14	Fair and Partly cloudy	21 °C 10 °C	SE 15 - 40 km/h
Friday	02/15	Fair and Partly cloudy with a slight chance for scattered light rain	21 °C 13 °C	SE 15 - 40 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:11
Sunrise	06:31
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:11
Sunset	17:34
Isha	18:52

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

### LOST

My Original Marks Certificate and Migration Certificate of Senior Secondary Examination of Year 2018, Roll No. 9104164 issued by CBSE has been actually lost. Walid Mohammed, holder of Passport No. BN0813411, Fahaheel, Block 10, Building No. 10, Al Ahnaf Bin Quas Street, Kuwait / 66260751 & 69941055. (C 5444) 11-2-2019

Original document policy No. 633003889 Saghir Ahmed DV the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with the Manager Kuwait State Life Office - Ph: 22452208. (C5443) 8-2-2019

### Embassy of India Kuwait CAR FOR SALE

Ford Mercury Grand Marquis GS-2010 (White), mileage 2,98,350 Kms, serviced at company authorized workshop only, in good condition. Bids may be sent in sealed envelopes with superscription "QUOTE FOR CAR" by 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 to: Head of Chancery, Embassy of India, P.O. Box 1450, Safat, 13015, Kuwait.

Contact Nos. 22523304, 22550725  
 From 8 am to 4 pm (Sunday - Thursday)

## Airlines

Kuwait Airways	171
Jazeera Airways	177
Wataniya Airways	22.066.536
Turkish Airlines	1884918
American Airlines	22087425
	22087426
	22924455
	22414400
	22423888
	22425747
	22418064/5/6
	22425635
	22430224
	22921555
	22438184
	22424444
	22421578
	22421516
	22426306
	22423073
	22422493
	22421044

Jet Airways  
 FlyDubai  
 Qatar Airways  
 KLM  
 Royal Jordanian  
 British Airways  
 Air France  
 Emirates  
 Air India  
 Sri Lanka Airlines  
 Egypt Air  
 Swiss Air  
 Saudia  
 Middle East Airlines  
 Lufthansa  
 PIA

### Required for a Manufacturing & Trading Co.

#### Sales Executive

- Graduate with 4-5 years experience.
- Familiar with local Contractors & Consultants.
- Sales experience is essential.
- Knowledge of tendering / prequalification procedures and Agencies.
- Fluent in English & well versed in correspondence.
- Computer literate.
- Transferable Residence.
- Kuwaiti Driving License.

Send your CVs to Fax: 00965- 24768994 / 165  
 Email: clic@clicq8.com

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is  
**1889988**

**EMERGENCY 112**

For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL  
**HOTLINE 128**

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

### DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 12/2/2019				Departure Flights on Tuesday 12/2/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	254	Amman	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:15	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:05
THY	766	ISL	00:30	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	734	Cairo	00:50	JZR	409	Delhi	00:50
THY	772	Istanbul	00:50	JZR	707	Luxor	01:00
JZR	722	Alexandria	00:55	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:00	JZR	111	Doha	01:45
KAC	102	London	01:20	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
DLH	625	Dammam	01:25	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	KAC	417	Manila	02:20
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:25
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
IGO	1757	Kochi	01:55	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	IGO	1758	Kochi	02:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	THY	767	ISL	03:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	RBG	212	Sohag	03:45
MSR	612	Cairo	03:05	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
RBG	211	Luxor	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
KKK	1268	Istanbul	03:05	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	QTR	1087	Doha	04:00
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	KKK	1269	Istanbul	04:00
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
KAC	414	Bangkok	04:00	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	LMU	5511	Cairo	05:00
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	JZR	101	Bahrain	05:20
KAC	382	Delhi	05:05	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:10	FDB	070	Dubai	05:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	JZR	215	Jeddah	06:00
JZR	404	Hyderabad	05:10	JZR	713	Sohag	06:15
JZR	112	Doha	05:25	JZR	141	Al Najaf	06:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	JZR	121	Dubai	06:35
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	THY	771	Istanbul	06:40
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:05	KAC	623	Doha	06:50
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:10	KAC	167	Paris	07:10
KAC	362	Colombo	06:10	RJA	643	Amman	07:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:25	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	JZR	115	Doha	07:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:55	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:10
BAW	157	London	07:05	KAC	165	Rome	08:20
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	THY	6376	Dubai/ISL	08:35
JZR	708	Luxor	07:15	FEG	442	Asyut	08:40
KAC	358	Kochi	07:35	FDB	054	Dubai	08:50
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	KAC	501	Beirut	09:00
FEG	241	Alexandria	07:40	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:05
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	JZR	731	Cairo	09:10
KAC	304	Mumbai	08:20	BAW	156	London	09:15
JZR	102	Bahrain	08:25	KAC	691	Muscat	09:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	541	Cairo	09:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	101	London	09:45
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	JZR	151	Mashhad	09:50
JZR	142	Al Najaf	09:50	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
JZR	410	Delhi	10:00	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	617	Doha	10:35
KAC	624	Doha	10:40	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
JZR	122	Dubai	11:10	JZR	211	Jeddah	10:40
JZR	116	Doha	11:10	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
QTR	1074	Doha	11:35	IRA	674	Lar	10:40
JZR	216	Jeddah	11:45	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:45
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	QTR	1071	Doha	10:45
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:25	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	JZR	611	Tbilisi	11:10
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	KAC	117	New York	11:25
JZR	714	Sohag	12:35	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	KAC	515	Tehran	12:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:10	JZR	221	Riyadh	12:00
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:00
QTR	1078	Doha	13:35	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55



# 'Priyanka magic' draws thousands at India rally

**LUCKNOW:** India's powerful Nehru-Gandhi dynasty yesterday unleashed its newest star with thousands turning out to see Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speak at her first rally as the country gears up for a general election. Crowds showered rose petals on the great-granddaughter of India's founding leader Jawaharlal Nehru as she took an open bus tour through Lucknow, capital of the key northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

The opposition Congress party is counting on the 47-year-old daughter of assassinated premier Rajiv Gandhi to boost its campaign against nationalist Hindu Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is expected to call an election in April. Priyanka and elder brother Rahul Gandhi, the Congress president, waved at cheering supporters who chanted their names while dancing to drums. Many wore pink t-shirts emblazoned with her picture.

At a rally she called for supporters to join a campaign to build "a new future" for India and a "new kind of politics where everyone is a stakeholder". The Nehru-Gandhi family has dominated Indian politics since independence in 1947 but Priyanka had for years resisted calls to enter the political fray. This ended last month when she accepted a key party post. Priyanka opened a Twitter account yesterday and drew more than 85,000 followers in hours.

Congress, tainted by scandal, was obliterated in the 2014 polls by Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, is banking on "Priyanka magic" to win votes. It especially needs a breakthrough in Uttar Pradesh where the BJP won 71 of the state's 80 seats in 2014. Analysts say Modi faces a tougher fight this time from Congress which won a clutch of state polls in late 2018, tapping into discontent over the lack of new jobs and farm debt. The prime minister has repeatedly called on voters to shrug off "family rule"

which he says has ruined India.

Since the announcement of Priyanka's entry into politics, India's financial crime-fighting agency Enforcement Directorate has questioned her husband, Robert Vadra, in a case relating to alleged ownership of \$2.45 million in undisclosed assets abroad. His lawyer and Congress have dismissed the charges as politically motivated.

Priyanka - she is usually referred to by just her first name - bears a striking resemblance to her grandmother, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and is known for her gifts as a speaker able to connect with voters. Congress hopes that the eyeballs she's able to generate will turn into votes. "It's like Indira Gandhi has come back," said Fuzail Ahmed Khan, 45, a Congress supporter. "The state's farmers want Rahul Gandhi to be prime minister, Priyanka to be chief minister."

At a stopover, Rahul Gandhi grabbed a microphone and said the appointments of Priyanka and lawmaker Jyotiraditya Scindia as state party leaders were aimed at beyond the general election and bringing Congress into power in Uttar Pradesh. "If there is a heart of the country, it is Uttar Pradesh," he said to loud cheers, Priyanka standing by his side. "They're definitely focused on the parliamentary election but the aim also is to form a government in the state. We'll bring a government of youth, poor and peasants."

Although Priyanka has helped manage elections for her brother and her mother, former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, she has never held an official party post until now. "I hope that we can together start a new kind of politics," she said in an audio message shared by Congress, but she did not make a speech in Lucknow amid fears, political analysts say, she could overshadow her brother. — Agencies



**LUCKNOW:** Indian Congress Party leader Rahul Gandhi (left) looks on at a political rally as his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra waves to supporters yesterday. — AFP

## Emirati in limbo after Macedonia rejects asylum

**SKOPJE:** A 42-year-old Emirati woman who says she was threatened by her family for wanting a divorce is now stuck in a Macedonia migrant center after the Balkan state rejected her asylum request, rights lawyers and activists said yesterday. After filing for asylum in Macedonia in October, Hind Albolooki's application was rejected the following month by the interior ministry which said her desire to "to live a normal life" was not grounds for granting protection. The decision was upheld by courts last week in a final ruling.

Amid fears she could be sent back home to Dubai, lawyers stepped in and secured an injunction from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg that bars her deportation while the tribunal processes her case. "For now, she is safe from deportation," said Zoran Drangov from the Association of Young Lawyers in Macedonia, which filed the case.

Earlier this month, Albolooki posted a video on YouTube describing her ordeal. "I came to Macedonia running away from Dubai as I have been threatened by my father, his big brother, my brother, that they will

make my life hell, and that's all because I asked only for divorce," she said in the plea for help. "I am the mother of four children, no mother would leave her kids like this, but I had to leave my kids, I had no other choice," she added with a quivering voice.

Uranija Pirovska, the director of Macedonia's chapter of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, condemned what she said was an unusually swift rejection of the application by Macedonia. "This is a case of gender-based violence, which, unfortunately, was not recognized by our institutions," she told AFP. She added that Albolooki "told me that she only wanted to live in a society where she could live and work freely, something she could not do in her home country".

In a statement published on Friday, the United Arab Emirates' embassy in Rome, which oversees Macedonia, said it was "aware" of Albolooki's social media posts and would "collect evidence of illegal threats made against her". "Domestic abuse is a serious crime, and has no place whatsoever in the UAE," it added. The divorce process for Muslims is governed by sharia law in the UAE. While the country is not as conservative as some neighboring Gulf states like Saudi Arabia, women still battle discrimination on many levels.

The case comes several weeks after runaway Saudi teen Rahaf Mohammed Al-Qunon captured the world's attention by tweeting about her plight from Bangkok, where she was stopped by Thai authorities which blocked her travel on to Australia. — AFP

world governing body FIFA, said, "My thanks go to the wonderful people of Thailand for your support and to the Thai government for upholding international law." Araibi has said he wants to return to Australia, where he has lived since 2014 and plays for a Melbourne football club. He was convicted of vandalizing a police station during 2011 anti-government protests in Bahrain and sentenced in absentia after he fled. Araibi denies the charges, saying he was playing in a televised soccer match at the time of the police station attack.

New York-based Human Rights Watch has said Araibi was tortured by Bahraini authorities because of his brother's political activities during the 2011 protests. Bahraini authorities deny allegations of torture. The reversal comes a day after Thailand's foreign minister met with Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa in Manama to "discuss... areas of interest", according to Bahrain's state-run news agency.

Calling his detention a "grave mistake", Kasit Piromya, a board member of the lobby group ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, said the footballer's case showed the failings of Thailand's "outdated" laws and policies. "Hakeem should never have been put through this ordeal in the first place," Piromya said. Thailand's treatment of refugees has been thrust under international scrutiny in recent weeks. In January, an 18-year-old Saudi woman who ran away from her family arrived in Bangkok's airport, and armed with a smartphone and a captive Twitter audience, managed to outmaneuver Thai authorities and gain refuge in Canada following her pleas for asylum from her "abusive" family. — Agencies

building and fully equipping two schools in Amman. In a statement to KUNA yesterday, KFAED Director-General Abdulwahab Al-Bader said the fund is giving the grant on behalf of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS). He added that the grant is part of KFAS' pledge to donate \$50 million during a three-year period to help host countries provide proper education to Syrian refugees.

HH Sheikh Jaber also inaugurated a new Kuwaiti Embassy building yesterday in the presence of Razzaz. During the ceremony, the PM praised the Kuwaiti embassy's efforts in strengthening relations between the two countries, which reflects Kuwaiti diplomacy established by HH the Amir. He also lauded its role in taking care of Kuwaiti citizens by providing them with all services they need. Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and a number of diplomats attended the ceremony. — KUNA

## Thailand frees Bahrain player...

Continued from Page 1

However, authorities in Bahrain, which has accused Araibi of crimes committed during the Arab Spring protests of 2011, said the country reaffirmed its right to pursue legal action against him. In a statement, Bahrain's foreign ministry said it had noted the halt of legal proceedings and the verdict against the footballer remained in place. Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it had no comment on the case. The detention of Araibi, who appeared with his feet in shackles at a court hearing last week, drew international criticism, with Australian authorities and fellow footballers urging Thailand to release him. He says he faces torture if returned to Bahrain.

In the Australian capital of Canberra, Prime Minister Scott Morrison welcomed the decision of the Thai government. "We greatly respect the process that they have had to work through and we greatly appreciate their listening to the issues that have been raised by our government and many others," he told a news conference. "Now the next step is for him to return home. But as it always is in these cases, people aren't home until they're home," Morrison told reporters.

On social network Twitter, former Australia soccer captain Craig Foster, who had helped lobby officials at

## Jordan King appreciates...

Continued from Page 1

A number of bilateral deals were sealed after the talks, covering a vast array of areas such as energy, housing, social affairs, media and the environment. A separate deal comprised a Kuwaiti grant worth \$6 million to fund the construction of two sprawling schools in the Jordanian capital, in addition to other agreements over education, aviation, tourism, industry and legal cooperation.

The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed the agreement with Jordan to provide the grant to meet the educational needs of Syrian refugees the country is hosting. The grant will cover

## Egypt tunes in to golden...

Continued from Page 1

"Modern songs are a hit for a day or two, a month, or maybe a year, but then we do not hear about them anymore. But Abdel Wahab and (Egyptian diva) Umm Kulthum have lasted until today," said Adel, before his performance in the tiny Mamluk-era hall at the Arab Music Institute.

Egypt, a cultural powerhouse in the Arab world, has long enjoyed a booming music industry. In the past, the rise of revered singers, such as Umm Kulthum, Abdel Wahab and another Egyptian Abdel Halim Hafiz among others, saw Cairo billed as the Hollywood of Arab song, attracting talent from across the region. But in the 1990s, Gulf countries vying for cultural dominance emerged as rivals to Egypt's music industry, and Rotana, the Arab world's largest record label, was formed in 1987. The company is currently owned by businessman and Saudi prince, Alwaleed bin Talal.

The 2011 uprising in Egypt that plunged the country into political and economic chaos also saw a downturn in the domestic music industry. Yet the Egyptian metropolis remains alive with the sound of music. Every day, in local cafes and homes the melancholic songs of Syrian-born star Asmahan and the tender rhythmic melodies of Egyptian singer Najat Al-Saghira mix with animated conversations, modern pop music and Islamic chants.

Torn between stage fright and joy, Adel performs regularly at the Arab Music Institute paying tribute to his music idols. During events such as the "Khulthumiat" (the music of Umm Kulthum) or "Wahabiyat" (the music of Abdel Wahab), organised by the 100-year old institute, Adel is often the lead singer with an entire troupe from the Cairo Opera House accompanying his powerful vocals. "These events are very successful," said Jihan Morsi, the seminal director of the opera's Oriental Music department.

And to soar above Cairo's 24-hour cacophony, she doesn't just look to golden oldies. "I bring (pop stars

like) Angham, Saber El-Robai, Wael Jassar. They are beautiful voices that have an audience among the youth," said Morsi. Music production companies are also seeking to preserve the country's music heritage through younger generations.

Sawt Al-Qahira, or Sono Cairo, a historic record company, is betting on the internet despite financial setbacks and ongoing legal battles over the copyright to Umm Kulthum songs. Known as the "Star of the Orient," Umm Kulthum's voice is still considered the Arab world's finest, more than four decades after her death. And with its wide variety of classics, the record label has struck deals with YouTube and other mobile application companies to keep this heritage alive.

Younger generations have also shown a renewed interest in the classics thanks to popular televised talent shows. "Arab Idol, The Voice and others show people singing old songs," said Doaa Mamdouh, the company's internet services head, adding this has prompted many fans to dig out the original versions. Classic black and white music video clips struggle, however, to compete against today's torrent of slick, ultra-modern videos.

Rising artists from such places as Lebanon, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates harness millions of views on YouTube, usually singing in their own dialects. Egypt's music scene remains vibrant, including electro Shaabi music, an exuberant popular blend seen by purists as too raucous. And there is a new genre known as alternative, or "underground", which has emerged in recent years.

The band Massar Egbari, which roughly translates as Compulsory Detour, rose to fame with a relaxed style of rock and a distinctive performance of classics, such as by Sayed Darwish often called "the father of modern Arab music". Although the rock stars say they are influenced by classics, they don't want to live in the past. "Nowadays you can record something at home at a low cost," said bassist Ahmed Hafiz. "After every era, something new appears, these are phases."

The band, whose style its guitarist and vocalist Hani el-Dakkak describes as a blend of Sayed Darwish and rock band Pink Floyd, is also trying to distinguish itself through its message. "We try in our lyrics to talk about social problems or things that nobody else will speak about," said Dakkak. —AFP

## Iran taunts US on 40th 'versary...

Continued from Page 1

Speaking from a flower-festooned stage overlooking the square, the president warned that Iran was now far stronger than when it faced off against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in a devastating conflict from 1980-88.

"Today the whole world should know that the Islamic Republic of Iran is considerably more powerful than the days of the war," Rouhani said. Seemingly reaching out to his political critics within the country, the president added: "The more we allow different ideas, beliefs and (political) factions the stronger our system will be."

Iran displayed its ballistic missile capabilities during the march, including the Zolfagar, a ground-to-ground missile with a 700 km range and the Qiam, with a range of 800 km, according to Tasnim news agency. Yadollah Javani, the Revolutionary Guards' deputy head for political affairs, said Iran would demolish cities in Israel to the ground if the United States attacked the Islamic Republic. "The United States does not have the courage to shoot a single bullet at us despite all its defensive and military assets," he was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA.

The events yesterday were the culmination of official celebrations called the "10 Day Dawn" that mark the period between Feb 1, 1979 and Feb 11 when Shiite cleric Khomeini returned from exile and ousted the shah's last government. The state has played up this year's anniversary as 40 is symbolic of maturity in the Islamic tradition and the age at which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received revelations from God. But despite the

official festivities today's Islamic republic faces acute economic challenges as it struggles with a mix of domestic hardships and US sanctions.

State television offered blanket coverage of the commemorations, showing marches in cities ranging from Abadan in southwestern Iran to Mashhad in the northeast. Banners held by marchers or hung along the streets bore slogans including "Death to America", "Death to Israel", "We will trample on America" and "Forty years of challenge, forty years of US defeats". A number of Israeli and American flags were set on fire by the crowds. An anchor on state television warned of hostile foreign media trying to downplay the participation of Iranians in the march but expressed confidence that "they would be confounded by the unprecedented level of attendance".

Those who took to the streets were bullish despite the economic problems in the country, made worse by Washington's punitive measures. Former public servant Saaghi insisted that it remained paramount for Iranians to stick by the revolution. "We are here to support the revolution," the 57-year-old pensioner, who refused to give his first name, told AFP at the event in Tehran.

He compared the US sanctions and economic hardships to "riding a bicycle when someone puts a stick in the wheels" but pointed to advances in other fields as more than making up for them. "On the revolution's 40th anniversary we are at the top for scientific achievements like nanotechnology or accurate missiles," he said.

Cleric Hossein Firouzi told AFP Iran's revolution had achieved everything it set out to in terms of military power, political identity and scientific achievements. "Iran has changed from a backwards nation to a world power," said the 50-year-old. Current supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is set to publish "a detailed statement explaining the 'second step' of the progress of the Islamic revolution", his official website said. — Agencies



Sports

# Louis Domingue wins 10th straight start as Lightning beat Panthers

## Blues' Tarasenko gets hat trick, OT goal defeats Predators

**FLORIDA:** Backup goalie Louis Domingue won his 10th straight start as the Tampa Bay Lightning defeated the host Florida Panthers 5-2 on Sunday night in Sunrise, Fla. Domingue (18-4-0), who made 25 saves, is 3-0 against the Panthers this season and hasn't lost to anyone since Nov. 27.

Tampa Bay got two goals and one assist from Nikita Kucherov, who has 24 goals this season and leads the NHL with 84 points. Tampa Bay also got goals from Steven Stamkos (No. 29), Ryan Callahan (his sixth) and Brayden Point (team-high No. 32). Florida got goals from Frank Vatrano, his 19th, and Denis Malgin, his sixth this season and his first in exactly one month. Vatrano leads the Panthers in even-strength goals with 17.

### ISLANDERS 2, WILD 1

Devon Toews scored the decisive goal early in the second period and host New York continued its remarkable performance in the second game of back-to-back sets by edging Minnesota. Anthony Beauvillier scored in the first period for the Islanders, who have won three straight and are 9-0-0 in the second game of back-to-back sets this year. Goalie Thomas Greiss made 26 saves for the Islanders. Mikael Granlund scored in the second period for the Wild, who have lost five of six (1-3-2). Goalie Devan Dubnyk recorded 32 saves.

### BLACKHAWKS 5, RED WINGS 2

Dominik Kahun had two goals and an assist and host Chicago extended its winning streak to seven games by topping Detroit. Dylan Strome supplied a goal and two assists for the Blackhawks, who have climbed to 23-24-9 to reinvigorate their playoff hopes. Patrick Kane stretched his point streak to 14 games with a third-period goal and added an assist. Jonathan Toews also had a goal and an assist. Cam Ward made 43 saves. Christoffer Ehn and Gustav Nyquist scored for Detroit, which has dropped three straight. Jonathan Bernier made 31 saves.

### BLUES 5, PREDATORS 4 (OT)

Vladimir Tarasenko recorded a hat trick, including the game-winner 16 seconds into overtime, as visiting St. Louis won its sixth straight game and its second over Nashville in 24 hours. Alex Pietrangolo and Tyler Bozak also scored goals, and Ryan O'Reilly and Jay Bouwmeester each had two assists for the Blues, who broke a six-game losing streak in Nashville. Viktor Arvidsson tallied a pair of goals, Roman Josi had a goal and an assist, and Filip Forsberg scored for Nashville. Ryan Ellis and Ryan Johansen each had two assists. Blues goalie Jake Allen got the nod in net for the first time since Jan. 17 and made 40 saves, while Juuse Saros stopped 24 shots for the Predators.

### JETS 3, SABRES 1

Blake Wheeler scored the go-ahead goal at 16:05 of the third period as Winnipeg snapped a season-worst three-game losing streak by beating host Buffalo. Andrew Copp also scored and Mark Scheifele added an empty-netter for the Jets, who salvaged the finale of their three-game trip. Winnipeg had been outscored 13-6 during its skid, including a 5-2 defeat Saturday at Ottawa. Wheeler and Scheifele each had a goal and an assist and goaltender Connor Hellebuyck made 35 saves. Buffalo goalie Carter Hutton stopped 26 of 28 shots, and Jack Eichel scored the Sabres' lone goal.

### DEVILS 3, HURRICANES 2

Marcus Johansson scored two goals as New Jersey snapped a three-game losing streak by defeating Carolina in Newark, N.J., the Devils' only victory as they concluded a four-game homestand. Pavel Zacha also scored for New Jersey, and Nico Hischie supplied three assists. New Jersey goalie Keith Kinkaid made 33 saves. He had played in only one of the team's previous four games, but he improved his record to 15-16-6 this season. Dougie Hamilton and Teuvo Teravainen scored for the Hurricanes. Nino Niederreiter assisted on both



**NEW YORK:** Nick Seeler #36 of the Minnesota Wild holds up Anders Lee #27 of the New York Islanders during the third period at the Barclays Center on Sunday in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. — AFP

goals. Carolina goalie Petr Mrazek stopped 18 shots.

### BRUINS 2, AVALANCHE 1 (OT)

Brad Marchand scored at 4:03 of overtime, Jaroslav Halak had 35 saves and John Moore also scored for host Boston, which edged Colorado. Marchand got the winner when his shot went off the

skate of Colorado forward Matt Calvert and past goaltender Semyon Varlamov. It was Marchand's 21st of the season. Boston is 4-0-3 in its last seven games. Nathan MacKinnon scored and Varlamov had 34 saves for the Avalanche, who have lost seven in a row, the last three in overtime. Colorado is 1-11 in games decided after regulation. — Reuters

## Kuwait grabs silver, bronze at Amir's 8th International Shooting Grand Prix



By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait grabbed silver and a bronze medal on the first day of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah 8th International Shooting Grand Prix, being held at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Shooting Complex, as shooters from Serbia had control of the gold medals.

In the 50 meters pistol for men Hamad Al-Namshan from Kuwait won silver with a score of 537 points while Saad Al-Ajmi won silver 536, as the gold medal went to world champion in 2019, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 from Serbia Damir Mikec who scored 567 points.

The second place finisher during the 2016 World

Cup did not have any difficulty in winning the gold medal of 10m air rifle by scoring 247.9 points leaving the silver to Oman's Hamad Al-Khateri who scored 242.8 and the bronze was taken by Egypt's Mohammad Hamdi with a score of 221.5. Serbia's Andrea Arsovic won the 10m air rifle by scoring 246 points, followed by Kazakhstan's Violetta Starostina while Bahrain's Sara Al-Dosari took the bronze with a score of 224.5.

President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Eng Duaij Al-Otaibi appreciated the support of HH the Amir for the Arab Shooting Federations, which helped improve the game significantly.

Al-Otaibi also thanked member of the Arab Federations who attended the general assembly, which

had very good results due to the cooperation between all those present. Al-Otaibi conveyed greetings of heads of delegations to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his support and hosting the Arab Federation premises here in Kuwait.

He said the general assembly approved the financial and administrative reports for 2018 and discussed plans for the coming period and championships agenda.

It was agreed Egypt will host a tournament in 2020, while UAE will host a tournament in rifle, pistol and shotgun, while Morocco will host in January 2020.

Secretary General of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations lauded the results of the ASF meeting and the general assembly.



## Paris tops combined downhill, Pinturault with all to do

**ARE:** Italian Dominik Paris put himself in a strong position for a shot at another medal at the World Ski Championships after topping the downhill section of the men's alpine combined event yesterday.

Paris stormed to an impressive super-G victory last week and again impressed on the Olympia course, timing 1min 07.27sec down the race track shortened to 1.8km due to wind up top. Although his last competitive stand-alone slalom dates back to Kitzbuehel in 2013, in which he failed to finish the first run, Paris did enough to manage joint fourth in the last world combined in

2017 alongside Norway's Aleksander Aamodt Kilde, third in the downhill here at 0.38sec.

But the 29-year-old Paris faces a test of character, having bombed out of the slalom in last month's Wengen combined and also at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics. The Italian will also be up against it as the slalom specialists show their spurs in the technical event, scheduled for 1530 GMT.

Austrian Marco Schwarz, winner of the Wengen combined last month, was just 1.25sec off Paris, and defending world combined champion Luca Aerni of Switzerland was also primed for attack, at 1.23sec.

France's Alexis Pinturault, who claimed Olympic silver last year, left himself with it all to do in the slalom. 'Pintu' could only finish 24th in the downhill at 1.52sec, just behind Victor Muffat-Jeandet, who won bronze in Pyeongchang.

But Pinturault remained positive. "I'm a little off Marco Schwarz and Victor, but my goal was to be in contact," he said. "Paris has given himself a little lead,

but everything remains possible." Leading the French charge in the downhill was instead Maxence Muzaton, in ninth at 0.72sec.

American Ted Ligety, 2013 combined champion and 2006 Olympic gold medalist in the discipline, had a shocker in the speed event, coming in 41st at 2.57sec, a deficit even the most optimistic of skiers would say was a bridge too far.

But also giving themselves a fighting chance for at least a push for a podium spot were Italian 2014 Olympic bronze medalist Christof Innerhofer, Swiss pair Carlo Janka and Mauro Caviezel, Austrian Romeo Baumann and Vincent Kriechmayr, the latter having already won super-G silver and downhill bronze in Are.

In the absence of now-retired Aksel Lund Svindal and the absent Kjetil Jansrud, the best placed Norwegian apart from Kilde was Adrian Smiseth Sejersted, in ninth at 0.67sec. Austria's reigning Olympic champion and 2015 world gold medalist Marcel Hirscher is not competing in the combined. —AFP

## Mickelson leads by three as Pebble Beach heads to close finish

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Phil Mickelson was closing in on a fifth Pebble Beach Pro-Am title when darkness halted play in the final round of the weather-hit US PGA Tour tournament. Mickelson will return to play the last two holes today holding a three-shot lead over playing partner Paul Casey.

Red-hot Mickelson and Casey had opposing views on whether to continue as darkness fell. Mickelson putting out for a par at the 16th and saying he was ready to head to 17 as Casey opted to call it a day with a three-foot putt for par in front of him. "I can see fine," Mickelson told a rules official on the 16th green. But he said he understood Casey's perspective. "I get exactly where Paul's coming from," Mickelson said. "It's dark and we're going to have a good chance tomorrow to come out on fresh greens. They got pretty rough this afternoon so I totally get it."

"But I have pretty good vision, I can see fine and I'm playing well so I wanted to continue, that's all there is to it. Casey said he didn't see why they should continue in the gathering darkness when they wouldn't be able to complete the round."

"From my angle it was are we going to get 18 done," he said. "We weren't going to get 18 done." The last two groups didn't tee off until after two weather delays, with rain postponing the start of play for an hour and a hailstorm bringing another two-hour hold-up.

Mickelson, gunning for a 44th US PGA Tour title, was unfazed by the uncertainty. He started the day three shots off Casey's lead but roared to the top of the leaderboard with six birdies that put him 18-under for the tournament with two holes remaining.

He gained ground with birdies at the par-five second and the fourth, then made back-to-back birdies at the ninth and 10th-two of the toughest holes on the course. He curled in a seven-footer for birdie at 13 and drained a six-footer at 14.

Casey, meanwhile, struggled to get anything going. A birdie at the second was followed by eight straight pars before back-to-back bogeys at 11 and 12. A birdie from the fringe at 14 left him even for the day and 15-under par for the tournament.

American Scott Stallings was in the clubhouse on 15-under after a six-under par 66 with Jason Day of Australian and South Korean Kim Si-woo tied for fourth on 13-under. Casey called Mickelson's effort "a phenomenal round of golf" but added: "It's not over yet". Mickelson, who could join Mark O'Meara as the only five-time winners of the tournament, is no stranger to the fickle February weather on the Monterey Peninsula.

The last time the final round was played on Monday was in 2000, when Tiger Woods rallied from a five-shot deficit. In 2009, rain prevented a planned Monday finish and Dustin Johnson was declared the winner after 54 holes.

Mickelson's first Pebble Beach title back in 1998 came when the weather was so bad that the final round was actually played on a Monday in August-six months after the tournament began. "That's probably a good omen," Mickelson said. — AFP



## Sports

# Wood's first five-wicket innings haul send West Indies reeling

## England in control on second day of final Test

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the third and final Test between the West Indies and England at the Darren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia yesterday:

England 1st Innings	
R. Burns lbw b Paul	29
K. Jennings c Bravo b Paul	8
J. Denly lbw b Gabriel	20
J. Root c Dowrich b Joseph	15
J. Buttler b Gabriel	67
B. Stokes c Dowrich b Roach	79
J. Bairstow b Roach	2
M. Ali c Bravo b Joseph	13
M. Wood c Joseph b Roach	6
S. Broad not out	0
J. Anderson c Paul b Roach	0
Extras (b5, lb11, nb6, w16)	38
Total (101.5 overs, all out)	277
Fall of wickets: 1-30 (Jennings), 2-69 (Burns), 3-69 (Denly), 4-107 (Root), 5-232 (Buttler), 6-256 (Stokes), 7-270 (Bairstow), 8-275 (Ali), 9-277 (Wood), 10-277 (Anderson)	
Bowling: K. Roach 25.5-11-48-4 (1w), S. Gabriel 24-6-49-2 (2w), A. Joseph 17-2-61-2 (1nb, 3w), K. Paul 21-7-58-2 (5nb, 2w), R. Chase 10-0-40-0, K. Brathwaite 4-0-5-0.	
West Indies 1st Innings	
K. Brathwaite c Anderson b Ali	12
J. Campbell lbw b Ali	41
S. Hope c Burns b Wood	1
D. Bravo c Root b Wood	6
R. Chase c Burns b Wood	0
S. Hetmyer c Root b Wood	8
S. Dowrich lbw b Broad	38
K. Paul stpd Bairstow b Ali	9
K. Roach not out	16
A. Joseph c Broad b Ali	2
S. Gabriel b Wood	4
Extras (lb4, nb3, w10)	17
Total (47.2 overs, all out)	154
Fall of wickets: 1-57 (Brathwaite), 2-57 (Campbell), 3-59 (Hope), 4-59 (Chase), 5-74 (Hetmyer), 6-79 (Bravo), 7-104 (Paul), 8-145 (Dowrich), 9-148 (Joseph), 10-154 (Gabriel)	
Bowling: J. Anderson 9-3-31-0 (1nb), S. Broad 15-4-42-1 (1w), M. Ali 15-4-36-4, M. Wood 8.2-2-41-5 (2nb, 1w).	
England 2nd Innings	
R. Burns not out	10
K. Jennings not out	8
Extras (nb1)	1
Total (10 overs, 0 wkt)	19
To bat: J. Denly, J. Root, J. Buttler, B. Stokes, J. Bairstow, M. Ali, M. Wood, S. Broad, J. Anderson	
Bowling: K. Roach 4-3-4-0 (1nb), S. Gabriel 3-0-9-0, K. Paul 3-1-6-0.	

**GROS-ISLET:** Mark Wood answered West Indian pace with fearsome heat of his own as the fast bowler claimed his first five-wicket innings haul in Tests and put England in control on the second day of the third and final Test in St Lucia on Sunday.

Playing his first match of the series, Wood tore through the heart of the home side's batting to finish with five for 41 as the West Indies, replying to England's first innings total of 277, crashed from 57 without loss in mid-afternoon to 154 all out an hour before the close of play. A day which saw 16 wickets tumble ended with the tourists' opening pair of Rory Burns and Keaton Jennings safely navigating ten overs to be 19 without loss at stumps, an overall lead of 142 runs going into day three as they seek the consolation of victory following heavy defeats in the first two matches of the series. Wood's raw speed unsettled the West Indies middle-order batsmen after Moeen Ali ended another half-century opening partnership by accounting for stand-in captain Kraigg Brathwaite and partner John Campbell off consecutive deliveries. Ali supported Wood's hostility at the other end with subtle variations to finish with figures of four for 36.

However it was the introduction of Wood, who came on as the fourth bowler in the England armoury, which had the greatest impact on an eventful day.

He dismissed Shai Hope and Roston Chase off successive deliveries, both taken at gully, in his opening over and added the scalp of Shimron Hetmyer, caught at the second attempt by England captain Joe Root at first slip, off the final delivery of the afternoon session. Darren Bravo perished shortly after the resumption to another Root slip catch and the delighted fast bowler returned after some resistance from Shane Dowrich (38) to polish off the innings and complete the five-wicket haul when he yorked last man Shannon Gabriel.

At the start of the day England's batsmen collapsed to the West Indian fast bowlers yet again, this time operating effectively with the second new ball, as the visitors lost six wickets for 45 runs to be dismissed just before lunch.



**SAINT LUCIA:** Mark Wood (L) of England celebrates the dismissal of Shai Hope (R) of West Indies during day 2 of the 3rd and final Test between West Indies and England at Darren Sammy Cricket Ground, Gros Islet, Saint Lucia, on Sunday. — AFP

Wicketless on the first day when an unbroken fifth-wicket partnership of 124 between Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes lifted the tourists to 231 for four, Kumar Roach stole the spotlight in scything through the middle and lower order to finish with figures of four for 48. He now has 17 wickets in series.

It was Gabriel though who made the first strike of the morning by bowling Jos Buttler on his overnight score of 67 with just one run added to the total.

That was the trigger for the slide and a reinvigorated

Roach quickly got involved by dismissing Stokes for the innings topscore of 79 when the attacking left-hander miscued an attempted pull and wicketkeeper Dowrich sprinted 30 metres to backward square-leg in clinging on to a superb diving catch. Jonny Bairstow laboured for 33 deliveries in managing just two runs before Roach breached the right-hander's defence while last man James Anderson proved easy prey for the rampant bowler, fending his second delivery into the waiting hands of Keemo Paul at third slip. — AFP

## Romania stun champs Czech in Fed cup

**PARIS:** Romania reached the Fed Cup semi-finals for the first time on Sunday with a 3-2 win over defending champions Czech Republic as Irina-Camelia Begu and Monica Niculescu stunned Wimbledon and French Open winners Barbora Krejickova and Katerina Siniakova in a marathon doubles decider.

Begu and Niculescu triumphed 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 6-4 in a thrilling rubber in Ostrava which lasted just seven minutes short of three hours. Krejickova and Siniakova, the world's leading pair, trailed a break early in the final set before hitting back to 4-4.

But the Romanian pair broke straight back for 5-4 before Begu, ranked at 35 in doubles, served out the tie. The result ended the 10-time champions Czechs' hopes of making the Fed Cup semi-finals for an 11th successive year and represented their first home defeat in a decade.

Earlier, Simona Halep won the battle of the former world number ones with an epic 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 triumph over Karolina Pliskova, the Czechs' highest-ranked player in the absence of world number three Petra Kvitova. "I am happy to have won against such a tough opponent," said Halep after winning her second singles of the weekend. "It was my best and biggest win in the Fed Cup."

Siniakova, who won both her singles rubbers in the 2018 final triumph over the United States, pulled the Czechs level by seeing off Mihaela Buzarnescu 6-4, 6-2. French Open champion Halep had said that winning a first Fed Cup for Romania was now the top priority on her "bucket list" having finally broken her Grand Slam drought in Paris last year.

Romania will now travel to France in April's semi-finals while the other last-four clash sees Belarus up against Australia. In Liege, Caroline Garcia crowned her comeback from a two-year Fed Cup exile by leading France past Belgium and into a fourth semi-final in five years.

French number one Garcia brushed aside Belgium's top player Elise Mertens 6-2, 6-3 to follow her opening



**OSTRAVA:** Romanian Irina-Camelia Begu and Monica Niculescu (R) play during their doubles match against Czech's Barbora Krejickova and Katerina Siniakova in their first round Fed Cup tennis match between Czech Republic and Romania on Sunday, in Ostrava. — AFP

day three-set win over Alison Van Uytvanck. Her win gave two-time champions France an unassailable 3-0 lead in the tie before Belgium grabbed a consolation point in the dead doubles rubber.

"Two years is not that long in a tennis career," said Garcia who opted out of the Fed Cup in 2017 following an ugly public spat with her teammates. "But I always said that I would come back and that it was important to me."

### AUSSIIES EDGE USA

At Asheville, North Carolina, won in both singles and doubles as Australia edged the 18-time champion United States 3-2 in a tie that came down to the wire. Barty notched up a 10th successive win in the tourna-

ment by seeing off Madison Keys 6-4, 6-1 to give Australia a 2-1 lead.

Danielle Collins levelled the tie when the Australian Open semi-finalist, making her Fed Cup debut, saw off Daria Gavrilova 6-1, 3-6, 6-2. Barty then teamed with Priscilla Hon to beat Collins and Nicole Melichar 6-4, 7-5 in the decisive doubles.

Belarus coasted into the semi-finals when world number nine Aryna Sabalenka defeated Laura Siegemund 6-1, 6-1 for an unassailable 3-0 lead over Germany in Braunschweig. "I am so happy and our team is so happy. It's unbelievable to win," said the 20-year-old Sabalenka who dropped just five games in four sets all weekend. The semi-finals take place on the weekend of April 20-21. — AFP

## Middlesex sign Afghan teen for T20 Blast

**LONDON:** Afghan spin-bowling teenage sensation Mujeeb Ur Rahman will play for English county Middlesex in their T20 campaign next season, the club announced yesterday. The 17-year-old who has taken 54 international wickets in all formats since making his debut aged 16 — will hope to make the same impact his compatriot Rashid Khan did at Sussex last year.

Khan took 17 wickets at an average of 14.35 to play a major role in Sussex reaching the knockout stages for the first time since 2015 — although he was unable to play in the latter rounds due to international duty.

Rahman has enjoyed a successful Big Bash campaign with Brisbane Heat, picking up 12 wickets and returning best figures of three for 16. "Middlesex Cricket is today delighted to announce the signing of Mujeeb Ur Rahman for this season's Blast campaign," the county said in a statement.

"The 17-year-old spinner becomes head coach Stuart Law's first signing of the summer and will be available for the entire Blast campaign. "He will join up with the Middlesex squad in early July to prepare for the tournament ahead."

Law said Rahman, who played for Hampshire in the competition last year, would add a unique style to the bowling attack. "It is with great pleasure to say that Mujeeb has agreed to play for Middlesex in the Blast," said Law. — AFP

## Froome up against altitude on season debut in Colombia

**MEDELLIN:** Four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome will have his work cut out dealing with the altitude when he tackles the Tour Colombia starting today, his rivals and team-mate said. "Having Froome will be interesting because, apart from the rivalry, we'll see how these riders go at altitude, how they feel, what they think," Colombian Nairo Quintana, who has twice finished runner-up to Froome at the Tour de France, told sports daily Marca.

Altitude will be an important feature of July's Tour with seven climbs rising above 2,000-meters including the Col de l'Iseran, the highest paved mountain in Europe at 2,770m. While Quintana raced in last week's Tour of San Juan in Argentina, where he finished eighth, 33-year-old Froome will be competing in his first race this season.

But with four of the six stages taking place over 2,000m, Tour Colombia is going to be good preparation for what the riders will face in France in five months time. Froome's 22-year-old Colombian team-mate Egan Bernal won the inaugural Tour Colombia last year, but he says his illustrious Team Sky leader won't be taking a back seat in the Andes.

"He wants to ride the Tour Colombia well. At the time and during the race we'll see who the leader is, if it's him or me," said Bernal, 22. Another rival, Rigoberto Uran, a former Froome team-mate at Sky and runner-up to the Briton at the 2017 Tour when riding for his current outfit Education First Drapac, can't see the Kenyan-born rider winning in Colombia. — AFP

## Smith and Warner bans to end during Pakistan ODI series

**PERTH:** Steve Smith and David Warner could be in line for an immediate return to the Australian team when their bans expire midway through the upcoming one-day international (ODI) series against Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates. The five-match Pakistan series will be held from March 22-31, Pakistan's Cricket Board said. Smith and Warner, who were banned for their roles in last year's Cape Town ball-tampering scandal, are eligible for selection again on March 29, meaning they can be called up for the fourth ODI against Pakistan.

Australia face Pakistan in the first ODI in Sharjah on March 22, with the second match scheduled for two days later at the same venue. The teams will then move to Abu Dhabi for the third match on March 27, with the final two games in Dubai on March 29 and 31.

The confirmation of dates for the Pakistan series also gives Australian players with lucrative Indian Premier League (IPL) contracts a measure of clarity, as players called up for the series will not be immediately released for the IPL. The 2019 season of the IPL is scheduled to begin late March, with Australian players selected for the Pakistan series expected to be unavailable until April 2 at the earliest. — Reuters



Steve Smith



## Sports

# Ronaldo scores as Juventus soar 11 points clear in Serie A

## Paqueta dedicates his first goal in Italy to ten victims of the fire

**MILAN:** Cristiano Ronaldo headed in his 18th league goal this season as Juventus bounced back from last week's stalemate to soar to an 11-point lead in Serie A on Sunday with a 3-0 win at Sassuolo. Ronaldo proved decisive, scoring after 70 minutes as Sami Khedira found the net first in Modena with fellow German Emre Can slotting in the third four minutes from time.

The Serie A champions had been held by Parma last week despite the Portuguese forward's double. Now they have left second-placed Napoli trailing after Carlo Ancelotti's side were held to a goalless draw at Fiorentina on Saturday.

Paulo Dybala again started on the bench coming on late for the champions, to help set up the third goal, with coach Massimiliano Allegri saying he needed to find the right balance. "Ronaldo and Dybala can certainly play together and they will do, but we need everyone to work hard in order to keep the team balanced," said Allegri.

"It all depends on who you are playing against. Sassuolo have a strong midfield, so I had to balance my team that way today. "Players are disappointed, but every now and then sitting on the bench is necessary to recharge batteries and rediscover the right mental toughness."

Juventus had started slowly with goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny saving twice in the opening minutes as the champions were without injured defenders Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini.

The pair are fighting to be fit for Juventus's European Champions League last 16 trip to Atletico Madrid in 10 days' time. Juventus broke through after Sassuolo goalkeeper Andrea Consigli rushed out to parry a Ronaldo shot leaving the way clear for Khedira to turn in the rebound after 23 minutes.

It was the German international's second league goal of his injury-hit campaign, after scoring the opening goal of the Serie A season against Chievo on August 18. Consigli denied Federico Bernardeschi just before the break with a Khedira header flying wide.

But Portuguese star Ronaldo jumped highest after 70 minutes to meet Pjanic's corner for his fourth goal in his last three league games to bring his tally to 20 goals for Juventus in all competitions.

The 34-year-old celebrated by mimicking Dybala's 'mask' goal celebration. Argentine Dybala came off the bench seven minutes from time along with Can and was involved in the buildup for the final goal with Ronaldo proving the assist.

Inter Milan are third — 20 points behind Juventus—after beating Parma 1-0 on Saturday, for their first league win of 2019. But city rivals AC Milan are just four points behind Inter in fourth after beat struggling Cagliari 3-0, with new signings Lucas Paqueta and Krzysztof Piatek both scoring.

Cagliari defender Luca Ceppitelli gave the hosts their first with an unfortunate own goal after 12 minutes. Brazilian Paqueta volleyed in the second after 22 minutes with Polish forward Piatek again finding the net after 62 for his fourth goal in all competitions.

Paqueta dedicated his first goal in Italy to the ten victims of the fire that ripped through buildings at Rio club Flamengo, where he started his career. "It was a very difficult time for me," said the 21-year-old. "I am living a dream playing for Milan and scoring my first Serie A goal, but it was also a dream for me to be in the Flamengo youth academy and I can't forget those who were experiencing the same thing."

The battle for elite European football remains tight with Atalanta, Roma and Lazio all just a point



REGGIO EMILIA: Sassuolo's midfielder Manuel Locatelli (R) defends against Juventus' German midfielder Sami Khedira (L) during the Italian Serie A football match Sassuolo vs Juventus on Sunday at the Mapei Stadium - Citta del Tricolore stadium in Reggio Emilia. — AFP

behind AC Milan.

The side from Bergamo battled to a 2-1 win over SPAL, with Roma beating Chievo 3-0 and Lazio seeing off Empoli 1-0 during the week. "I've liked the

team for a while now," said coach Gennaro Gattuso.

"Milan haven't fought for many years for a place in the Champions League, now we are here we need to work to stay." —AFP

## Rising star Zaniolo, Roma, Italy's big hope

**ROME:** Nicolò Zaniolo may be only 19 but the Roma midfielder is already living the dream in a breakthrough season which has seen the youngster from Tuscany emerge as the next big hope of Italian football.

Having played for Inter Milan's youth side last season, Zaniolo joined Roma as part of the deal last summer that sent Belgian Radja Nainggolan in the other direction. The towering teenager, who stands at 1.9 metres (6ft 2in) tall, was only supposed to be a squad player for Eusebio Di Francesco but has emerged as one of the breakout stars in a difficult season for the Roma coach.

Today, he will line up in his sixth Champions League match for Roma as they host Portuguese giants Porto in their last 16, first-leg tie at the Stadio Olimpico. On Instagram, Zaniolo showed his delight by sharing two photos, one of him as a football-mad child, the other with the Roma jersey, alongside the message: "Always believe in your dreams."

The past five months have been a whirlwind for the player from Massa, rejected by Fiorentina after coming through their youth system. He is already being compared to club legend Francesco Totti after becoming the youngest Roma player to score his first three senior goals for the club since Totti, aged 18 in 1995.

"He's like Totti, one who speaks little and always wants the ball," said Di Francesco of the youngster. "Mentally he's in a good place at the moment and I want to make the most of his youthful energy, his desire and determination."

Italy coach Roberto Mancini had already spotted the potential of the versatile midfielder as he rebuilt after the four-time World Cup winners' failure to qualify for Russia 2018. It was Mancini who gave Zaniolo his first call-up for Italy on September 3 without him having even played a



ROME: File photo shows AS Roma Italian midfielder Nicolò Zaniolo celebrates after scoring an equalizer during the Italian Serie A football match AS Roma vs AC Milan on February 3, 2019 at the Olympic stadium in Rome. — AFP

single game in Serie A.

His Roma debut came later on September 19, playing on the biggest stage against European champions Real Madrid, before getting his league start against Frosinone. "I'm happy that Di Francesco is playing Zaniolo," said Mancini.

"I had followed him in the Under-19 team and I realised that he had uncommon qualities for such a young boy, and he wasn't even a professional player yet. "With respect to others, he had more physical presence and more quality. I think that the facts have proved I was right. "Zaniolo is the

talent of the future."

Zaniolo's father Igor was also a professional footballer playing as a forward for lower league sides in Italy. Zaniolo Jr. came through the Fiorentina youth system but was released by the club in 2016, joining then-Serie B side Virtus Entella where he made his professional debut in March 2017.

He was signed by Inter Milan the following July, but did not play any competitive games for the first team before moving to the capital club. Zaniolo says his father's experience and advice has helped him. — AFP

## Australian coach admitted problems before sacking: FFA

**SYDNEY:** Football Federation Australia yesterday hit back at sacked Australian women's football coach Alen Stajcic claims that he was in the dark about his sudden dismissal, saying he had admitted the team environment was "dysfunctional".

An emotional Stajcic earlier yesterday spoke for the first time since he was dumped last month, telling reporters in Sydney he was considering legal action against governing body FFA after his ousting. "My career is in tatters and my reputation has been ruined," the 45-year-old said, adding that the decision took him by surprise.

"I still do not know the reasons why my employment was terminated aside from (FFA chief David) Gallop told me that the Matildas had a poor culture and I, as head coach, was responsible."

The FFA dismissed Stajcic just months before the World Cup, citing concerns over "workplace" and "player welfare" issues following two confidential surveys about the team environment and culture, as well as interviews and other information. Stajcic said the governing body told him he was terminated "without cause" and that "no actions of misbehaviour or misconduct could be attributed to me". "I've taken legal advice about these matters which includes potential action on defamation and breach of contractual obligations by the FFA," he said.

"I'm here today to clear my name... and I'm here to repair what I can of my reputation after having spent 20 years coaching the game."

Gallop—who has refused to give a detailed explanation about Stajcic's termination—said Monday in a statement



Alen Stajcic

that Stajcic knew "the team environment, contrary to today's comments, was not satisfactory". FFA chairman Chris Nikou added in the same statement that its board disagreed with and were surprised by Stajcic's claims.

Citing comments made during a meeting between Stajcic, Gallop and an FFA lawyer a day before the sacking, Nikou added that the former coach "said that the team environment was 'dysfunctional' and was 'always going to be this way'". "In those circumstances we decided to act in time to put the team's FIFA Women's World Cup campaign back on track. "Our decision to act was driven out of care and concern for our players and people. It was and remains our sole motivation."

There have been calls for an investigation into the dismissal, and Stajcic backed them, saying there was a lack of clarity, transparency and due process from the FFA.

Several Matildas players took to social media after his removal, saying they were shocked, shattered and disappointed. Stajcic, who took over as head coach in 2014, guided the Matildas to as high as fourth in the FIFA world rankings in one of their most successful eras. Gallop said Monday that Stajcic's replacement would be announced "in the coming weeks". — AFP



### Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

#### UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AS Roma v FC Porto	23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Manchester United v Paris Saint-Germain	23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 1	

## Barca give fresh hope to La Liga rivals after Bilbao stalemate

**BILBAO:** Lionel Messi was short of fitness and Barcelona lacked spark as a goalless draw away to Athletic Bilbao on Sunday offered fresh hope to their rivals in the title race.

A thigh injury had limited Messi to 27 minutes against Real Madrid on Wednesday and while he played the full match at San Mames, Barca's assistant coach Jon Aspiroz had admitted before kick-off he was not yet 100 per cent.

In all likelihood, he stayed on because his team needed him but Messi was not at his best and neither were Barcelona, who would even have lost had it not been for Marc Andre ter Stegen's stunning late save to deny Inaki Williams. "He saved us," coach Ernesto Valverde said. "It was a great stop." The draw makes it three games without a win for La Liga's leaders, whose advantage is still six points but now with Real Madrid their closest challengers, after they beat Atletico on Saturday.

"We were first last week and we are still first, and if my maths is right, we will be again next week," Valverde said. But Real's victory at the Wanda Metropolitano was their fifth on the bounce and just as they have gained momentum, Barca appear to be losing theirs, at a crucial juncture, with more stern tests to come.

After Real Valladolid at home next weekend, Valverde's side travel to Lyon in the Champions League and Sevilla in the league. They then face two Clasicos in four days, one in the Copa del Rey, and both at the Santiago Bernabeu.

"We are playing a lot of games at the moment and that shows," Luis Suarez said. "We also lacked communication today—it is the little details that make a difference." Injuries have not helped either. Messi was picked but not fully recovered while Ousmane Dembele was fit enough only for the bench, having shaken off an ankle injury.

The struggling Philippe Coutinho retained his place alongside Suarez and Messi up front but Arturo Vidal came in for the injured Arthur Melo and Nelson Semedo started at left back, with Jordi Alba suspended.

Bilbao had the better of the early stages as Yuri Berchiche flashed just wide after a poor pass from Vidal while Markel Susaeta's drive forced the leaping Ter Stegen into an acrobatic save.

Barcelona settled into the game but were never in control. Still, they twice should have scored, with Messi and Suarez both guilty of missing. First, Suarez peeled free at the back post but glanced wide from Messi's cross and then Messi hit the crossbar, the goal gaping after Iago Herrerin had rushed out to intercept Nelson Semedo.

The game was frantic and Bilbao were more than holding their own. Raul Garcia's finish was blocked and Mikel San Jose's effort whistled inches outside of the post. In between, Barca had enjoyed their best spell at the start of the second half but the gaps always seemed to close around the penalty area and they struggled to find a way through. Dembele replaced Coutinho with just over 10 minutes left but Bilbao had the best chance to win it. Iker Muniain squared for Williams, who looked certain to score after wriggling free of Gerard Pique. Instead, Ter Stegen shot out his right hand, somehow denying the striker from eight yards. De Marcos received a second yellow card in injury-time for a handball but there was no time for Barca to feel the benefit. Bilbao held on. — AFP

## Disqualified Egypt club reinstated in Champions League

**CAIRO:** Egyptian club Ismaily have been reinstated into the African Champions League after disqualification last month when fans forced the abandonment of a home fixture against Club Africain, the Confederation of African Football said yesterday.

Ismaily supporters threw stones and water bottles towards the field, which forced Cameroon referee Neant Alioum to order the teams into the changing rooms in stoppage time with the visitors leading 2-1.

CAF's appeal board ruled in favour of Ismaily on Sunday saying there had been no invasion of the playing area nor evidence it was directed at the visiting team and therefore no grounds for disqualification. The appeal board made no recommendation on the outcome of the match against Club Africain.

Ismaily had already lost their opening game in Group C at TP Mazembe Englebort of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Egypt were named as hosts of the 2019 African Nations Cup last month despite a number of incidents involving unruly fans in recent years that forced local officials to limit the number of spectators at domestic fixtures to 5,000. — Reuters



**25** Louis Domingue wins 10th straight start as Lightning beat Panthers



**26** Romania stun champs Czech in Fed cup



**27** Ronaldo scores as Juventus soar 11 points clear in Serie A



## Warriors escape with win over Heat

Magic cruise past Hawks for second straight road win



OAKLAND: Draymond Green #23 of the Golden State Warriors dunks the ball during the game against the Miami Heat on Sunday at ORACLE Arena in Oakland, California. — AFP

**OAKLAND:** DeMarcus Cousins made two tie-breaking free throws after retrieving a Kevin Durant missed 3-pointer with 5.4 seconds remaining Sunday night, allowing the Golden State Warriors to survive a 3-point-shooting assault by the Miami Heat for a 120-118 victory in Oakland, Calif. The game marked the final Oakland appearance by Heat standout Dwyane Wade, who contributed 10 points, six rebounds and nine assists to a remarkable Heat effort. Kevin Durant led all scorers with 39 points. Klay Thompson backed Durant with 29 and Stephen Curry had 25 for Golden State, which won its fourth straight. Josh Richardson recorded season-highs in points with 37 and 3-pointers with eight for the Heat, who were coming off a narrow loss at Sacramento on Friday. Dion Waiters also had season-bests in points (24) and 3-pointers (six) for the Heat, the only team in the league with a winning record on the road and a losing record at home.

**KINGS 117, SUNS 104**

Rookie Marvin Bagley III scored a career-high 32 points as host Sacramento coasted past Phoenix. Bagley shot 10 of 15 from the field and 11 of 13 from the free-throw line to eclipse his previous high of 24 points, which he recorded Monday in Sacramento's win over San Antonio. Buddy Hield chipped in 18 points while Bogdan Bogdanovic added 14 for the Kings. Devin Booker collected 27 points and eight rebounds in his return from a two-game absence due to a hamstring injury for the Suns, who have lost 14 in a row.

**MAVERICKS 102, TRAIL BLAZERS 101**

Rookie sensation Luka Doncic scored 28 points, with five coming in the decisive final 2:27, to lead Dallas past visiting Portland. Doncic scored 13 points in the fourth quarter, a stanza in which Dallas trailed 96-81 with 10:43 to play. Portland built that lead on

Damian Lillard's incredible 21-point third quarter, all of which came in the final 5:19 of the period after Dallas came back from a 10-point halftime deficit to tie the game at 67. Newcomer Tim Hardaway Jr., acquired in the deal with the New York Knicks along with Kristaps Porzingis, scored 24 points on 9-for-18 shooting. Dwight Powell had 13 points off the bench and Dorian Finney-Smith added 11 points and six rebounds.

**76ERS 143, LAKERS 120**

Joel Embiid scored 37 points and grabbed 14 rebounds to lead host Philadelphia to a high-scoring win over Los Angeles. It was the 23rd game for Embiid this season with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds, the most such games by any Philadelphia player since Charles Barkley had 27 in 1987-88. Tobias Harris added 22 points and JJ Redick had 21 for the Sixers, who won their second game in a row. Kyle Kuzma led the Lakers with 39 points while JaVale McGee added 21 points and 13 rebounds. LeBron James contributed 18 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists.

**MAGIC 124, HAWKS 108**

Center Nikola Vucevic scored 19 points to lead seven Orlando players in double figures in a win over host Atlanta. Vucevic was 8 of 13 from the field and added 12 rebounds. The Magic also got 18 points from Terrence Ross, 17 each from Jonathan Isaac and Evan Fournier, 14 points from D.J. Augustin and 12 from Aaron Gordon, who played despite a sore back. Wes Iwundu added 10. Augustin played a flawless floor game, handing out 10 assists and not committing a turnover. Alex Len scored 16 points off the bench to lead Atlanta, and John Collins and Kevin Huerter added 15 apiece. Collins, playing despite a sore right knee, added four rebounds for the Hawks, who have lost three straight overall and five consecutive home games. — Reuters

### Scholes appointed manager of Oldham

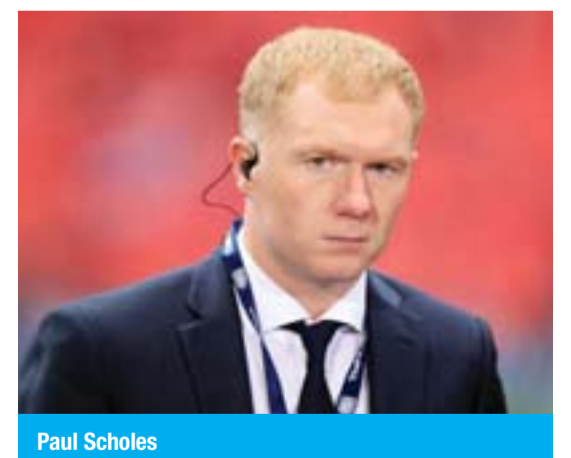
**LONDON:** Former Manchester United and England midfielder Paul Scholes has been appointed as manager of Oldham Athletic, the club announced yesterday. Scholes, 44, is taking on his first managerial role, signing a contract with the club he supported as a boy after spending his entire playing career at Old Trafford.

The former Premier League club are languishing in mid-table in League Two, the fourth tier of the English game. "Oldham Athletic are delighted to announce footballing legend Paul Scholes as the new first-team manager on a one-and-a-half-year-deal," the club said in a statement.

"Paul has won everything there is to win in football," said owner Abdallah Lemsagam. "He is a man who will bring a lot of footballing knowledge and his hunger to succeed in management will be there for everyone to see."

"It's no secret how much he has wanted this job in the past and how much he loves this club, so I'm very happy to bring him into our family at Oldham Athletic." Manchester United wished Scholes luck, saying in a message on Twitter: "Best of luck to Scholesy in his new role as first-team manager of @OfficialOAFCL!"

Scholes, who owns a stake in non-league Salford, will step down from his role as director of the National League club. The English Football League gave Scholes the go-ahead last week to



Paul Scholes

take charge of Oldham, ruling that there was no conflict of interest.

"I couldn't be any happier at the minute," he told Oldham's official website. "It's been a while. Obviously there's been talk of it when I finished my (playing) career. "It wasn't something I was quite ready to do and there's obviously been three or four times over the last six years where it could have happened and I've not been quite ready."

Scholes, a member of Manchester United's famed "Class of '92" alongside David Beckham and Ryan Giggs, said he wanted to entertain Oldham's fans. "I want my team to be aggressive and focused on winning first and foremost," he said. "I know it's not going to happen every week, but I go into every game expecting to win." Scholes will take charge of his first match against Yeovil at Boundary Park today. — AFP