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Panel calls to impose restrictive measures to curb expat numbers

Govt details mega-projects, development plan, but MPs unimpressed

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The government's higher population committee has made a series of recommendations, including linking residence permits to education and clamping down on domestic helpers, with the aim to reduce the number of expatriates in the country. The committee recommended that a residence permit must be linked to the applicant's level and type of education which means that the profession of an expatriate must match his or her type of university education.

It called for imposing restrictions on dependent visas for wives and children and also on visit visas for relatives. It also called for applying certain regulations and caps on the number of domestic helpers and imposing certain fees on additional maids, raising the fees gradually with the number of maids employed.

The committee, which consists of representatives from almost all ministries and government departments concerned with employment and the demographic policy, called for resolving the problem of "absconding" workers by giving them a grace period for up to three months, increasing fines and issuing stringent laws to penalize those who employ absconding expats. It called for activating fingerprint devices at border points to

prevent barred people from entering the country by changing their passports.

Other recommendations called for automating the labor recruitment process to prevent cheating and apply strict measures against employing employees in jobs they were not recruited for. The committee called for forcing contractors working on government contracts to send back all their workers after completing the project.

Meanwhile, lawmakers criticized the government yesterday for not providing significant information about the mega projects in the Silk City, the northern economic zone and the five islands, which the government said will require some \$600 billion in investments. Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah headed a large government team to provide economic and financial explanations to the Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee, but lawmakers came out of the meeting disappointed.

Sheikh Nasser said the meeting also discussed the development plan, adding that the government will finalize the draft law for the Silk City mega project within the coming few weeks and send it to the Assembly.

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KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah holds a joint press conference yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Hero refugee chased gunman from mosque

CHRISTCHURCH: When Afghan refugee Abdul Aziz saw a man brandishing a gun outside his mosque in Christchurch, he ran towards the attacker armed with the only weapon he could find - a hand-held credit card machine. Seven people were killed when a white supremacist stormed Linwood Masjid - the second mosque he attacked on Friday - as worshippers knelt to pray. But the death toll could have been much higher if not for the heroic actions of Aziz, an Australian citizen, whose efforts to distract and chase the gunman away have attracted widespread praise.

"You don't have much time to think, whatever you

think of, you just do it, you know," Aziz told AFP, brushing off the "hero" tag as local Muslims gathered to thank him for saving relatives and friends. "I just wanted to save as much lives as I could, even if I lose my life." Aziz and his four sons were worshipping at the mosque when they heard the loud cracks of gunfire outside the building.

Initially thinking someone was setting off firecrackers, Aziz became suspicious and ran out of the mosque, grabbing a small credit card processing device. Outside, he was stunned to find an armed man wearing military-style fatigues. "At first, I didn't know if he was the good guy or the bad guy."

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Abdul Aziz

Survivor says Quran shelf saved his life

CHRISTCHURCH: As the bullets tore into worshippers during Friday prayers, taxi driver Abdul Kadir Ababora threw himself to the floor and wedged himself under a bookshelf used to hold Holy Qurans, praying he would see his wife and kids again. Somehow that decision saved his life and he emerged from the carnage unscathed. "It's just a miracle," he told AFP on Sunday as he revisited the scene. "When I woke up to the left and right of me it was just dead bodies."

Like so many who attended weekly prayers at Christchurch's Al Noor mosque, Ababora had come to New Zealand from a troubled overseas homeland hoping to find peace and prosperity. The 48-year-old said

he arrived from Ethiopia in 2010 and made a life for himself in the placid city of Canterbury. Two weeks ago he and his wife celebrated the birth of their third son. Then on Friday a self-proclaimed white supremacist, wielding an armory of semi-automatic rifles scrawled with racist ideology, walked into the Al Noor mosque and unleashed a rampage that left at least 50 dead and dozens more with life-changing injuries.

Ababora said the mosque's imam had just started delivering the English translation of the khutbah - the sermon during Friday prayers - when the gunfire erupted outside.

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Abdul Kadir Ababora

News in brief

KD 8 departure tax frozen

KUWAIT: A decision to impose a surcharge of KD 8 on air tickets from April 1, 2019 has been frozen, a lawmaker said yesterday. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said he had contacted the ministry of commerce and industry on the recent ministerial decision imposing the new airport and passenger service charge, stressing that the decision has been frozen. "Instead of adding new fees, I urge the government to improve public services," he said. Notably, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation had informed all carriers departing from Kuwait to collect an extra KD 8 from the beginning of April to be paid to the DGCA. — A Saleh

Catering van runs over student

KUWAIT: Education Ministry Undersecretary Saud Al-Harbi yesterday ordered an investigation into an incident in which a primary school student was run over by a catering services vehicle near the canteen inside his school in Mishref, said educational sources, noting that the boy was immediately rushed to Mubarak Hospital in critical condition. The sources added that Harbi and the Hawally educational zone director visited the pupil in hospital, where they announced they are awaiting the results of the investigation to hold those responsible accountable. — Hanan Al-Saadoun

Goa chief minister dies

NEW DELHI: India's former defense minister and serving chief minister of the western state of Goa, Manohar Parrikar, died yesterday, officials said. A technocrat turned politician, 63-year-old Parrikar was a senior member of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He had been suffering from cancer. Parrikar passed away at his residence in Goa, local news channels reported. As defense minister, he oversaw the controversial deal to buy 36 Rafale fighter jets from French aircraft manufacturer Dassault Aviation for around \$8.7 billion. — Reuters

Kiwis pay tribute as families clamor for return of dead

CHRISTCHURCH: New Zealanders flocked to pay tribute yesterday to the 50 worshippers slain in two mosque attacks, as families clamored for the return of their dead. Coroners said they hoped to let grieving relatives fulfill Islamic burial customs soon, but insisted they had to move carefully through their investigation into the horrific multiple murders. As New Zealand grappled to come to terms with the slaughter - the worst attack on Muslims in a Western country - tales of heroism, suffering and incredible grace began to emerge.

Farid Ahmad, whose 44-year-old wife Husna was killed as she rushed back into a mosque to rescue him, refused to harbor hatred toward the alleged gunman, Australian-born, self-avowed white nationalist, Brenton Tarrant. "I would say to him 'I love him as a person'," Ahmad, who uses a wheelchair, told AFP. Asked if he forgave the 28-year-old suspect, he said: "Of course. The best thing is forgiveness, generosity, loving and caring, positivity."

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KUWAIT: The Kuwait Towers display the flag of New Zealand yesterday in solidarity with the victims of the Christchurch mosque attacks. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

India, Pak had threatened to unleash missiles

NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD: The sparring between India and Pakistan last month threatened to spiral out of control and only interventions by US officials, including National Security Advisor John Bolton, headed off a bigger conflict, five sources familiar with the events said. At one stage, India threatened to fire at least six missiles at Pakistan, and Islamabad said it would respond with its own missile strikes "three times over", according to Western diplomats and government sources in New Delhi, Islamabad and Washington.

The way in which tensions suddenly worsened and threatened to trigger a war between the nuclear-armed nations shows how the Kashmir region, which both claim and is at the core of their enmity, remains one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints. The exchanges did not get beyond threats, and there was no suggestion that the missiles involved were anything more than conventional weapons, but they created consternation in

official circles in Washington, Beijing and London.

Reuters has pieced together the events that led to the most serious military crisis in South Asia since 2008, as well as the concerted diplomatic efforts to get both sides to back down. The simmering dispute erupted into conflict late last month when Indian and Pakistani warplanes engaged in a dogfight over Kashmir on Feb 27, a day after a raid by Indian jet fighters on what it said was a militant camp in Pakistan. Islamabad denied any militant camp exists in the area and said the Indian bombs exploded on an empty hillside.

In their first such clash since the last war between the two nations in 1971, Pakistan downed an Indian plane and captured its pilot after he ejected in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. Hours later, videos of the bloodied Indian pilot, handcuffed and blindfolded, appeared on social media, identifying himself to Pakistani interrogators, deepening anger in New Delhi.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi facing a general election in April-May, the government was under pressure to respond. That evening, Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval spoke over a secure line to the head of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), Asim Munir, to tell him India was not going to back off its new campaign of "counterterrorism" even after the pilot's capture, an Indian government source and a Western

diplomat with knowledge of the conversations told Reuters in New Delhi. Doval told Munir that India's fight was with the militant groups that freely operated from Pakistani soil and it was prepared to escalate, said the government source.

A Pakistani government minister and a Western diplomat in Islamabad separately confirmed a specific Indian threat to use six missiles on targets inside Pakistan. They did not specify who delivered the threat or who received it, but the minister said Indian and Pakistani intelligence agencies "were communicating with each other during the fight, and even now they are communicating with each other". Pakistan said it would counter any Indian missile attacks with many more launches of its own, the minister told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We said if you will fire one missile, we will fire three. Whatever India will do, we will respond three times to that," the Pakistani minister said.

The crisis unfolded as US President Donald Trump was trying to hammer out an agreement with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Hanoi over its nuclear program. US security advisor Bolton was on the phone with Doval on the night of Feb 27 itself, and into the early hours of Feb 28, the second day of the Trump-Kim talks, in an attempt to defuse the situation, the

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Amir receives top officials, National Assembly delegation

Amir offers condolences to Indonesia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe presidents



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying delegation that participated in the PUIC conference.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met yesterday at Bayan Palace His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received Kuwaiti Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, and his accompanying delegation that participated in the conference of Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Member States (PUIC). His Highness the Amir later met His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. In addition, His Highness the Amir received Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem and members of the parliament's delegation who participated in the PUIC conference. His Highness Sheikh Nawaf also received His Highness the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh. Moreover, His Highness received Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Crown Prince received Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri and Acting

Undersecretary Shafiq Al-Sayed Omar. During the encounter, they presented to His Highness a copy of a youth national political project. His Highness the Crown Prince thanked them and affirmed that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is interested in empowering youth and supporting them in order to achieve Kuwait's vision of 2035. Minister Jabri also presented the youth national project to His Highness the Prime Minister.

Condolences

Separately, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Indonesian President Joko Widodo. In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed sincere grief towards victims of the flash floods that swept through the country's easternmost province of Papua. His Highness wished the injured quick recuperation and hoped the nation would be able to cope with consequences of the natural disaster. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables to the Indonesia president, while Speaker Ghanem sent a cable of condolences to the Speaker of Indonesian People's Representative Council Bambang Soesatyo.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir sent two cables of condolences to the President of Mozambique Filipe Nyusi and the President of Zimbabwe Emmerson Mnangagwa. In the cables, His Highness expressed sin-

cere sentiments and prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy on the victims of Cyclone Idai that hit Mozambique and Zimbabwe, wishing swift recovery for the injured. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables, while

Speaker Ghanem sent condolence cables to his counterparts in Mozambique Veronica Macamo, and Zimbabwe Jacob Mudenda and to the Zanu PF Women's League's Secretary in Zimbabwe Mabel Chinomona. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a copy of a youth national political project.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives a copy of a youth national political project.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



RIYADH: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud meets with the newly-assigned Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Saudi King receives credentials of new Kuwaiti ambassador

RIYADH: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud received yesterday the credentials of newly-assigned Kuwaiti ambassador to Saudi Arabia Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Sabah. Sheikh Ali Al-Sabah said in a statement to the press that it is a great

responsibility to work on the development of bilateral cooperation in all fields. He also stressed the deep-rooted and historical relations between both countries, expressing his hope for further prosperity for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. — KUNA

Amir invited to attend NAM summit in Baku

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received a letter from Azeri President Ilham Aliyev, inviting him to attend the 18th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) due in Baku in October. Counselor of the Azeri Embassy in Kuwait Vidadi Hasanov handed the letter to Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah yesterday. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah receives the letter from Counselor of the Azeri Embassy in Kuwait Vidadi Hasanov. — Amiri Diwan photo

Jarallah meets Omani diplomatic delegation

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday the visiting Chairman of GCC Department at Oman's Foreign Ministry Ambassador Mohammad Al-Wahaibi and Chairman of the Diplomatic Institute at Oman's Foreign Ministry Ambassador Zainab Al-Qasemya. The meeting dealt with bilateral relations and ways to boost cooperation between Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwaiti Diplomatic Institute and Omani Diplomatic Institute, in addition to issues of common interest and the latest developments. The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministry's officials and Omani Ambassador to Kuwait Adnan Al-Ansari. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with members of the Omani delegation. — KUNA

Local

Kuwaiti charity launches initiative for New Zealand victims' families

To help ease out the anguish of 'martyrs' families: IICO chief



KUWAIT: New Zealand's flag is displayed on Kuwait Towers yesterday in solidarity with the victims of the Christchurch mosque attacks. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: The International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) has launched a humanitarian initiative to alleviate the woes of families of the victims of recent mosque shootings in New Zealand. "Out of our human and ethical responsibility, we have launched this initiative in order to help in easing out the anguish of the affected families whose sons got 'martyred' or injured in this horrible terrorist incident," IICO Chairman Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq said in a press statement.

The Kuwait-headquartered charity's humanitarian initiative includes relief programs involving medicine and basic needs in general, said Maatouq, who is an advisor at Amiri Diwan. At least 50 Muslim worshippers were killed and over 48 others wounded in attacks on two mosques in Christchurch in New Zealand on Friday. Australian Brenton Tarrant, 28, on Saturday appeared before a court in Christchurch where he was charged with murder. The attacks on the two mosques have sparked wide-scale condemnations and denunciations

from world leaders, mainly Arab and Muslim ones.

Maatouq condemned the incident as a terrorist attack on peaceful worshippers and a heinous aggression on human values. He stressed that terrorism has no homeland, color, religion or ethical and geographical boundaries, calling on the international community with all its organizations to resolutely fight terrorism. "What has happened is an appalling terrorist crime that breaks all moral and human values and that was perpetrated by people who have lost their human sentiments and favored the policy of hatred and extremism," he lamented. He urged the world to exert concerted efforts to fend off the discourse of racism and intolerance and to uproot terrorism and fight all platforms that instigate hatred, violence and extremism. Instead, the values of people-to-people peaceful coexistence should be observed, the IICO chief emphasized. Maatouq concluded by underscoring that such criminal and brutal acts against innocent Muslims target world destabilize security and stability and trigger off tensions. — KUNA



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the fifth meeting of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development in 2019. — KUNA

Defense Minister chairs SCPD meeting

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired yesterday the fifth meeting of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) in 2019. The

Council reviewed a memo about its human development and constructional committee's opinion regarding the strategy of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, SCPD said in a press release. The meeting was attended by senior SCPD officials. —KUNA



First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs meeting.

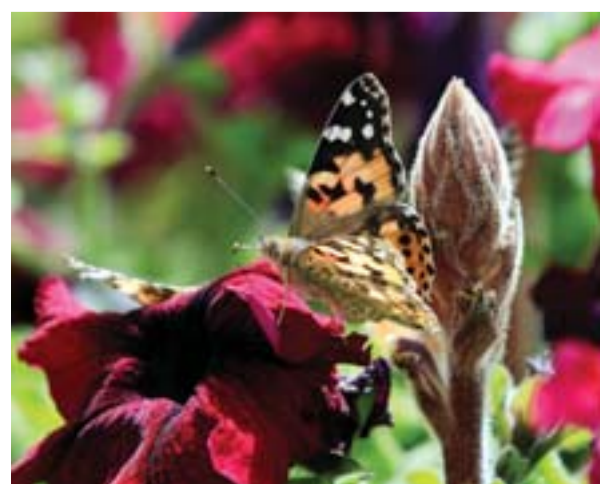
Kuwait's spring blooms with 'Painted Lady'



KUWAIT: Spring flourished this year due to heavy rains that provided a fertile environment for the migration of butterflies, especially the colorful 'Painted Lady'. Flying around with distinctive colors, the Painted Lady

butterflies are observed this time of the year in Kuwait, flashing their beautifully elaborate patterns of reddish orange, brown, white and black scales.

—Photos by Joseph Shagra



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Local

Ministry to announce teachers' vacancies online; expats can apply

Co-ops union to build 'Kuwait's largest' logistics warehouses

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Ministry of Education (MOE) Undersecretary Saud Al-Harbi yesterday approved an online ad to be posted on the ministry's website to officially declare the ministry's requirements to recruit teachers, including expatriates, to work in public schools during the 2019-2020 school year. The ad said English, French, Science, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Geology and Physical Education teachers are needed, said official sources, noting that online applications will be possible once the ad is uploaded on the MoE website today.

Logistics warehouses

Chairman of Kuwait Union of Consumers Cooperative Societies (KUCCS) Khaled Al-Hudhaiban said construction of the union's logistics warehouses located over a total area of 6,000 square meters in Suliabiya, the largest in Kuwait, have been completed, adding these warehouses will secure the supply of food supplies to various co-ops. He said the union's emergency plan entails providing at least six months of supplies in stock and that the new warehouses will use the latest technologies and follow the highest international standards.

Tobacco shipment

Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf said that in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the customs department managed to foil an attempt to fake documents needed to release a shipment of 700 cartons of a tobacco company and referred the matter to the public prosecution. Responding to a parliamentary inquiry from MP Khalil Al-Saleh, Hajraf explained that custom inspectors and MoH's tobacco testing inspectors investigated charges of manipulation against the accused company, filed a citation and referred the matter to the public prosecution to investigate both the forgery and evasion.

Inactive teams

The Ministry of Social Affairs' manager of community development Nadia Al-Azmi said 30 voluntary teams had been inactive and had not contacted the ministry since their establishment, noting that the ministry is currently studying the cases pending a decision to write them off or allow them to continue operations after giving them warning notices. Azmi added that the total number of voluntary teams registered with the ministry is 180, in addition to 16 pending ones and four that had been annulled on their requests. Azmi said a meeting will be held tomorrow with various charities and voluntary teams registered to discuss the system to be followed in collecting donations during the month of Ramadan.

Information ministry building catches fire

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Capital and Hilali fire stations battled a blaze at an information ministry building along with the security and safety and television production departments. The fire was in a room of the graphics and editing department. The fire did not affect radio and TV broadcasting. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) lauded the role of the security and safety department of the information ministry and the support of the National Guard in facilitating entry of the firemen to the site. Information Ministry Undersecretary Munira Al-Huwaidi was at the scene.



KUWAIT: Firefighters battle a blaze reported at an Information ministry building yesterday.

Drug smuggling

Customs officers busted around 2 kilograms of hashish hidden in a trailer truck that arrived at Abdali border outlet yesterday. The truck's Asian driver was sent to concerned authorities to face drug smuggling charges. Meanwhile, a passenger was arrested with possession of drugs he tried to smuggle through Terminal 5 (T5) of Kuwait International Airport yesterday morning. Customs officers found six hashish rolls and 60 drug tablets hidden inside the Arab man's luggage.

Service center closed

The Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department said Naeem service center in Jahra was closed starting from yesterday to carry out maintenance of the building. It said Saad Al-Abdullah service center will work two shifts, while Jaber Al-Ahmad center will be open on Saturdays.



Around 2 kilograms of hashish found hidden in a trailer truck that arrived at Abdali border outlet yesterday.



Drugs found with a passenger arrested at Terminal 5 (T5) of Kuwait International Airport yesterday morning.

Preachers fined for 'promoting sectarian strife'

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The court of cassation yesterday fined two preachers KD 20,000 each over charges of promoting sectarian strife through their sermons. In its verdict issued against clergymen Hussein Al-Maatouq and Othman Al-Khamees, the court stressed that provoking sectarian conflicts and/or showing contempt towards any social sect is against the law and subject to legal penalties. In other news, lawyer Yousif Al-Muhaish, who ran as a candidate in the third electoral constituency in the parliamentary by-election, filed yesterday a contest questioning the election's results.

Palestinian govt receives \$2 million from Kuwait

GAZA: The Palestinian government said yesterday it has received more than \$2 million from Kuwait as part of its previous pledge to help in Gaza reconstruction efforts. The \$2.150 million sum has been allocated for infrastructure projects in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Minister of Public Works and Housing Mufid Al-Hasayna said in a press statement. The minister thanked the Kuwaiti government and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) for their relentless support to the Palestinian people. Kuwait had pledged \$200 million for Gaza reconstruction efforts during a conference held in Cairo in 2014.

In other news, Secretary General of the Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Society Dr Saleh Al-Suhaibani praised humanitarian and relief work of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS). In a statement after his meeting with KRCS Deputy Chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi, Suhaibani hailed the clear vision of KRCS in humanitarian work and efforts in facing crises. He also expressed appreciations for efforts and field moves in Yemen, Iraq and Syria, and keeping pace with the humanitarian situation there and dealing with them with high responsibility and efficiently. Suhaibani is looking forward to more strategic cooperation with KRCS to serve humanitarian and relief work. His meeting with Hasawi also tackled humanitarian work fields and preparations for the 44th Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Society meeting to be held in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Hasawi said in a similar statement that KRCS attaches great importance to cooperation with international humanitarian organizations, especially the Arab Red Crescent and the Red Cross. KRCS is looking forward to strengthening its partnership with the Arab Red Crescent and the Red Cross to improve the situation of those affected by crises, Hasawi said. During the meeting, they also reviewed the most important Kuwaiti humanitarian activities through KRCS to assist people in the Philippines. —KUNA

News in brief

SMEs involved in visa trafficking

KUWAIT: Some owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have gone against the government's goals to eradicate unemployment and support youth by using subsidized government projects and other advantages to be involved in visa trafficking, which has harmed Kuwait and its reputation. Informed sources said inspection campaigns by the Public Authority for Manpower revealed that the majority of violating workers entered Kuwait due to visa trafficking carried out by owners of small and medium enterprises. The sources said visa traders used facilities given by the government to support the youth for visa trafficking. —Al-Rai

Extremism factors

An educational study found extremism in the Kuwait society is minimal. The study drew attention to 33 reasons and factors for extremism in high schools, including the spread of violence, social deviation, sabotaging government facilities, not accepting others' opinion and adopting 'takfiri' ideologies. The study was conducted by the social services team in Jahra Educational Zone and covered 16 schools. Peer influence was on top of the reasons with 77.6 percent, along with lack of awareness lectures, poor educational role of some teachers, weak school programs, strict implementation of school rules, lack of mosques' role in the issue and lack of dialogue between teacher and student. —Al-Rai

Strategic payroll

The oil sector's labor union was quick to react to newspaper reports on a government-parliamentary bid to revive the strategic payroll alternative. After its statement rejecting it, the union announced a sit-in protest with MPs' participation to demand the government to negotiate with and give guarantees to workers to exclude the oil sector from the plan. —Al-Rai

Fights

A heated fight between an Indian grocer and an unidentified customer resulted in severing the tendons of the grocer's hand, as a sharp object was used. The dispute erupted after the grocer did not come out to the customer waiting in the car. When the grocer told him he was busy, the customer surprised him with a knife and beat him before escaping. The Indian was taken to hospital in critical condition, as detectives took over the case. Separately, an Egyptian man failed to rob an Indian driver, so he stabbed him. The Indian stabbed him back. A security source said the Egyptian stopped a roaming taxi, and as soon as he got in the car, pulled a knife and asked the cabbie to hand over his money. He resisted and was stabbed, but was able to snatch the knife and stab the assailant. Passersby intervened and called police, and prevented the Egyptian from escaping. —Al-Rai

CONDOLENCES

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief,
management and staff convey their
deepest condolences to

**Sayed Ashri Awad
Allah Hussein**

on the sad
demise of his

Father

May Allah Almighty bestow His mercy on him

Local



KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah receives the accreditation certificate of the 'Yarmouk health city.' — KUNA



Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah attends an event to launch Kuwait's first internet-based remote therapy network for surgeons.

Minister says Yarmouk named healthy city due to compliance

MoH launches first remote therapy network

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah said Kuwait's achievements in implementing health cities initiative contributed to approving Yarmouk city as first healthy city in Kuwait by World Health Organization (WHO), due to compliance with relevant standards. This came in Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah's speech yesterday during a WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region meeting in Kuwait, and on the sidelines of handing the accreditation certificate of 'Yarmouk health city.'

Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah appreciated the ministry's role to achieve this accreditation, stressing the importance of managing the health cities program within the ministry, government and state development plan work program. Meanwhile, Assistant Undersecretary for National Medical Services at the ministry, Dr Fatima Al-Najjar, said

this accreditation is success for the ministry represented by the health cities office to achieve its goals, adding the ministry chose health cities initiative as one of the ministry's target for 2015-2020 development plan. Najjar underlined the ministry's interest in implementing the health cities initiative, boasting that Yarmouk was chosen as a health city.

Remote therapy

In other news, Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah launched on Saturday Kuwait's first internet-based remote therapy network for surgeons. The network materialized the keenness of Kuwait Association of Surgeons (KAS) on leveraging state-of-the-art systems and technologies in medical learning with a view to improving the performance of surgeon, the minister said in his inaugural speech to the KAS

conference on remote therapy.

Sheikh Dr Bassel appreciated the efforts of the KAS board chair and members to share experience and build the capacity of the medical personnel in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. He reaffirmed support to the KAS initiatives for organizing the current conference and launching the remote therapy network, noting that they are key partners of the Ministry. "The Ministry continues planning and implementing programs of action to improve the healthcare system as part of the state plan for sustainable development and Kuwait Vision 2035," he pointed out. Sheikh Dr Bassel reiterated the need of upgrading the performance of surgeons and updating the healthcare policies to ensure the safety of patients.

Meanwhile, KAS Chair Sheikh Dr Salman Al-

Sabah said the Association chose remote therapy as main theme of the current conference to highlight the importance of experience sharing in addressing the challenges facing the medical profession. "The accelerated development of modern technology put the onus on the Association to make better use of the hi-tech and provide quality service for patients," he said. Sheikh Dr Salman reaffirmed the commitment of KAS to implement the Ministry's programs and strategies for development and leverage the remote therapy system across the health facility countrywide. The new system will complement the comprehensive medical coverage, he said, noting that this initiative coincided with the inauguration of promising healthcare projects, including Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Hospital, Al-Jahra Medical City and the new Amiri Hospital. — KUNA

Dasman Institute hosts 'Collaborative Advantage' symposia

KUWAIT: Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), founded by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) has recently hosted a full-day symposia titled 'The Collaborative Advantage,' in collaboration with Mount Sinai and Jaber Al-Ahmad Center for Molecular Imaging. The symposia were held in the institute yesterday.

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health, Dr Mustafa Reda inaugurated the event with an opening speech welcoming the speakers and participants. Dr Reda as well expressed his gratitude to the Institute for organizing important events such as these symposia. Dr Reda on a final note highlighted the benefits of having collaborations with such esteemed organizations like

Mount Sinai. The Undersecretary's speech was followed by a presentation delivered by Dr Adnan Shihab Eldin, the Director-General of KFAS, where he outlined the opportunities for research partnerships with KFAS. The symposia consisted as well of a presentation delivered by Dr Qais Al-Duwairi, Director-General of DDI, titled "State-of-Art Diabetes from Bench to Bedside at DDI," who emphasized on the benefits of research collaboration, and the world-standard integrated facilities under DDI's roof.

The symposia comprised of many other valuable lectures and presentations delivered by guest speakers from Mount Sinai and Dr Fahad Marafi, Director-General of Jaber Al-Ahmad Center for Molecular Imaging. DDI was honored to have the American Ambassador to Kuwait, Lawrence Silverman, who delivered a presentation titled 'Welcome to International Collaboration.'

At the end, Prof Hilal Al-Sayer, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at DDI, thanked the distinguished guest speakers from Mount Sinai, Jaber Al-Ahmad Center for Molecular Imaging and the US Ambassador for making this collaboration and symposia a huge success.



KUWAIT: A group picture of officials attending the symposia.

Conference recommends linking hospitals' labs

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: A medical conference held in Kuwait recently stressed the importance of establishing electronic linking between hospital laboratories and primary care centers, in addition to linking reference laboratories and hospital labs.

Head of the second scientific conference of medical labs Dr Nasser Al-Awadhi said experts who attended the conference called for applying health ministry rules, which are related to infectious diseases' tests for all pregnant women



KUWAIT: Minister of Health Sheikh Dr Bassel Al-Sabah attends the conference.


in order to reduce fetal deformities and infectious diseases of the fetus. They also called for starting the program of examining the pre-cancer stages and early detection of cancerous cells of the cervix, he added. He also noted the importance of spreading awareness on sexually transmitted diseases such


as AIDS and hepatitis through doctors' intensive workshops.


Dr Awadhi also stressed the importance of flu and whooping cough vaccines for pregnant patients to reduce risks on the health of both the mother and fetus. He said 20 lectures and five workshops by 10 advisors were delivered.



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Flash floods kill 58 in Indonesia's Papua province

Resist, forgive, submit? Afghan youth on hopes for peace



CHRISTCHURCH: Farid Ahmed, who survived the Al Noor mosque shootings but his wife Husna was killed, speaks to the media in Christchurch yesterday, two days after a shooting incident at two mosques in the city. —AFP

'Horror and anger' at Christchurch hospital

Doctors, surgeons and nurses battle to save lives

CHRISTCHURCH: In a city battered by quakes, Christchurch's medics were tragically well-schooled in tackling mass casualty events - but none could have prepared for the injuries unleashed by a white supremacist with assault rifles bent on mass murder. Doctors, surgeons and nurses have been working around the clock at Christchurch Hospital since Friday's mass shooting at two mosques, frantically trying to stem bleeding, patch up shattered bodies and save lives.

Yesterday, 34 patients remained in the hospital in Christchurch, twelve of them still in critical condition. Another of the injured - four-year-old girl Alin Alsati - was in intensive care at a specialist children's hospital in Auckland. Greg Robertson, the chief surgeon at Christchurch Hospital, spoke yesterday of the sheer magnitude of Friday's massacre.

"Horror, stunned, anger," he said, describing how his team of doctors, nurses and surgeons felt as the wounded poured in - initially in private cars and then in an ever-increasing stream of ambulances. This is not the first time the city has dealt with mass casualties. A series of earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 killed more than 180 people and left many more injured,

honing the medical skills of the city's doctors to deal with a sudden influx of complex wounds.

"I don't think there's any doubt the earthquake did have a bearing on it - the old adage practice makes perfect works on a lot of things and that's part of our processes," he said. But he admitted the horrifying, man-made nature of the latest tragedy had a much greater psychological impact on staff. "The earthquake was something that we couldn't control," he said. "It's the fact that someone has done this to our people, our friends, our colleagues, this is just unbelievable."

Brutal ammunition

The kind of injuries surgeons were facing this time around were also particularly horrifying. Robertson said his teams do sometimes encounter gunshot wounds but never on such a scale. New Zealand usually witnesses only 50 murders a year. Suddenly one

town had that many people murdered in a single day and dozens more wounded - some struck by multiple bullets.

Many of those brought to the hospital have been in and out of operating theatres multiple times, as surgeons prioritize the worst parts of the injuries - such as stemming the bleeding, clearing blocked airways, trying to save limbs - before dealing with the less severe wounds. First responders and paramedics played a crucial role. "I guess that's reflected in the fact we've had only one death in a patient that arrived at the hospital. Those who got here, have a

chance," Robertson said.

It is likely Pakistani national Mohammed Amin Nas only survived because of the paramedics. His son Yasir Amin told AFP they encountered the alleged assailant - Australian national Brenton Tarrant - driving outside the Al Noor mosque. "He took out this

big gun and just shot at us as we were running," Yasir said. His father was struck four times. Yasir called emergency services who spent 10 minutes treating his father where he lay before rushing him to hospital.

He has been into surgery three times and remains in intensive care. On a normal day, Christchurch would have three acute surgery theatres operating. On Sunday, seven were up and running with people working around the clock. Tarrant appears to have chosen ammunition designed to cause maximum trauma, Robertson said. "These are not something that goes through," he said, referring to the type of bullets. "We've got a lot of fragments, shotgun injuries."

He said those treating patients would inevitably have their own traumatic memories. "There will undoubtedly be, as we saw after the earthquakes, a delayed mental stress type response to this whole thing." For now, he said, people were focused on saving lives. But colleagues would keep a close eye on each other in the weeks ahead. "Most people are coping with things pretty well when you're doing things," he said. "It's when you go home and you think about it, that's when the issues start to declare themselves." — AFP



34 in hospital;
12 still in critical
condition

High speed, then a failed climb for doomed flight

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopian Airlines flight 302, which crashed killing 157 people, had an unusually high speed after take-off before the plane reported problems and asked permission to climb quickly, said a source who has listened to the air traffic control recording. A voice from the cockpit of the Boeing 737 MAX requested to climb to 14,000 feet above sea level - about 6,400 feet above the airport - before urgently asking to return, the source told Reuters on condition of anonymity because the recording is part of an ongoing investigation.

The plane vanished from radar at 10,800 feet. "He said he had a flight control problem. That is why he wanted to climb," the source said, adding there were no further details given of the exact problem and the voice sounded nervous. Experts say pilots typically ask to climb when experiencing problems near the ground in order to gain margin for manoeuvre and avoid any difficult terrain.

Addis Ababa is surrounded by hills and, immediately to the north, the Entoto Mountains. The New York Times reported Captain Yared Getachew's voice was on the



ADDIS ABABA: Mourners of victims of the crashed accident of Ethiopian Airlines react beside a funeral car during the mass funeral at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia yesterday. — AFP

recording but the Reuters source was not familiar with his voice or that of the first officer Ahmed Nur Mohammad Nur to verify which man was speaking. However, it was the same voice throughout, the source said.

The US Federal Aviation Administration on Wednesday followed other countries in grounding the 737 MAX, citing satellite data and evidence from the scene that indicated some similarities and "the possibility of a shared cause" with October's Lion Air crash in Indonesia that killed 189 people. On Saturday, investigators began studying the cockpit voice recorder. Along with the flight

data recorder, the information will be evaluated by Ethiopian authorities, teams from Boeing, and US and EU aviation safety authorities to try to determine the cause of the crash.

The Ethiopian flight was set to follow the Standard Instrument Departure (SID) from the airport and followed standard procedure with a first contact just after departure, the source said. Everything appeared normal. After one or two minutes, the voice on the air traffic control recording requested to remain on the same path as the runway and to climb to 14,000 feet, the source said. — Reuters

Pak women march organizers highlight online death threats

ISLAMABAD: Organizers of an International Women's Day march in Pakistan say they have had death and rape threats on social media over the event, which prompted complaints from some conservative groups. Nighat Daad said that the march organizers are looking into filing a complaint with Pakistan's Federal Investigation Authority about the online harassment. "It has gone too far in terms of death and rape threats to the organizers and also to the marchers," Daad said, adding that one of the threatening accounts had been suspended by Twitter.

The event, which attracted tens of thousands of women on March 8, was only the second of its kind in Pakistan, which a Thomson Reuters Foundation poll found to be the sixth most dangerous country for women in 2018. A Human Rights Watch report last year estimated that 1,000 "honor killings"-the practice of relatives murdering girls or women because they think the victim has brought shame or dishonour on the family-take place in Pakistan each year.

Another march organizer, who asked not to be identified, said the backlash

"shows that this collective organization of women has threatened the patriarchal forces". Pakistan has experienced a surge in social media usage with more than 40 million Facebook users. The rapid growth has sparked an online debate about misogyny, with some women highlighting daily hate and pornographic messaging. The days following the march have seen social media attacks on women, while some prominent men have complained about "obscene" signs carried by protesters.

A member of the country's largest religious political party filed a complaint with police, seen by Reuters, in the southern city of Karachi where 7,000 women attended the march, saying the protesters "provoked religious sentiments" and spread vulgarity. The march organizers also said the media had focused on the backlash more than the original aims of the event. "The media played a massively negative role in this campaign ... they just looked at what trolls were saying online and picked up (on) a few placards that were provocative to try and sell their content," Daad said. — Reuters

International

Flash floods kill at least 58 in Indonesia's Papua province

Rescuers battle mud, rocks, fallen trees in the hunt for survivors

SENTANI: Flash floods in Indonesia's eastern Papua province have killed at least 58 people, an official said yesterday, as rescuers battled mud, rocks and fallen trees in the hunt for survivors. The death toll was expected to rise as emergency services struggled to reach people in hard-hit areas, with more than 70 people injured and 4,150 evacuated.

The floods - triggered by torrential rain and landslides on Saturday - damaged numerous homes in the northeastern town of Sentani, said national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho. "The number of casualties and impact of the disaster will likely increase as search and res-



SENTANI: Collapsed houses caused by flash floods are seen in Sentani near the provincial capital of Jayapura, Indonesia's eastern Papua province yesterday. — AFP



More than
70 people
injured

cue teams are still trying to reach other affected areas," he said. The waters had receded but officials were still trying to evacuate people from areas obstructed by "fallen trees, rocks, mud and other material", Nugroho added.

In Doyo, one of the most affected areas, a housing complex was littered with huge rocks believed to have rolled down from a nearby mountain, an AFP reporter at the scene said. Sediment and waste swept by the floods piled up on the pavement. The non-stop wail of ambulance sirens could be heard, as heavy equipment was used to clear the roads. The government has announced a 14-day state of emergency, said Jayapura police chief Victor Dean Mackjap.

Video footage showed rescuers administering oxygen to a victim who appeared to

be trapped beneath a fallen tree. Officers rescued a five-month-old baby who was trapped for hours under the rubble, Papua military spokesman Muhammad Aidi said. The whereabouts of the parents are unknown. A propeller plane lay partly crushed on a runway at the airport of nearby provincial capital Jayapura. "The rain started last night and went on until around 1:00 am this morning," said Lilis Puji Hastuti, a 29-year-old mother of two young children in Sentani.

"Our house was flooded with thick mud... we immediately grabbed our valuables and ran to a neighbor's (two-storey) house to seek refuge. "It's hard to get out of the area because many roads are blocked... I'm worried, sad and scared all at once," she said. In

Sentani, tents have been set up to take in flood victims and treat the wounded. Papua shares a border with independent Papua New Guinea on an island just north of Australia.

Flooding is common in Indonesia, especially during the rainy season which runs from October to April. In January, floods and landslides killed at least 70 people on Sulawesi island, while earlier this month hundreds in West Java province were forced to evacuate when torrential rains triggered severe flooding. The Southeast Asian archipelago of some 17,000 islands is one of the most disaster-prone nations on Earth, straddling the Pacific Ring of Fire, where tectonic plates collide. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are common.—AFP

Pak crackdown on militants fails to convince skeptics

ISLAMABAD: At a mosque on a quiet Islamabad street, any reference to the UN-listed terror group which runs it has been removed as Pakistan - once again - comes under pressure to demonstrate its sincerity about eliminating militancy. The first wave of militant detentions was announced by Islamabad on March 5, as tensions were still cooling between India and Pakistan after their latest confrontation over the disputed Kashmir region.

New Delhi has long accused Islamabad of harboring militant groups, which it says are used by Pakistan intelligence agencies to attack India. The February 14 suicide blast in Indian-administered Kashmir - claimed by Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed - is the latest example, and the attack which ignited the recent crisis between the nuclear-armed neighbors. Since March 5, Pakistani authorities have arrested hundreds of suspected Islamist militants and shuttered more than 700 madrassas, mosques, and clinics linked to banned groups.

Mosques like the Al-Quba mosque visited by AFP in Islamabad - which is run by Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), seen by the UN as a charity front for an anti-India militant group - have had all signs announcing their links to such organizations removed. Instead, a green sign clinging to a post proclaims the new management of the premises by the "Government of Pakistan". "This government will not allow Pakistan's land to be used for any kind of outside terrorism," vowed Prime Minister Imran Khan

earlier this month. But the crackdown is reminiscent of previous efforts, and Pakistan has yet to convince the international community that their latest thrust is sincere. Cracks have already begun to emerge after Pakistan's long-time ally China this week blocked measures by the UN Security Council to blacklist JeM leader Masood Azhar. It was the fourth time China has blocked such attempts, reinforcing suspicions that it was acting on Pakistan's behest. If so, observers said, the move undermined the sincerity of the crackdown.

Had Azhar been blacklisted, Pakistan would have been morally compelled to halt his activities, a Western diplomat said. "Is Pakistan just trying to fool us?" the diplomat asked. "I would say yes." New Delhi also remained skeptical. "The widespread presence of terrorist camps in Pakistan is public knowledge within and outside Pakistan," said Indian foreign ministry spokesman Raveesh Kumar last week.

The crackdown has largely targeted the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in 2008. Shuttering groups like JuD - which provides widespread and vital services like healthcare to poor communities in a developing country where government-run social services are sorely lacking - risks a potential backlash. "We were ordered to close the health centres and give our ambulances to the authorities," Akbar Khan, a JuD official based in the north-western city of Peshawar said.—AFP

Resist, forgive and submit? Afghans hope for peace

KABUL: Sitting in his male beauty shop, 25-year-old Zabihullah longs for peace in Afghanistan-but not one that would see religious police beating people in the streets for their hairstyles or outfits. He recalled working in a barber-shop as a child under Taliban rule. "I remember the Taliban religious police would every day bring young men for their hair to be shaven off as a punishment, because they dared to style it," he says, his own hair long and tied back with a bow.

Today it is a different story, and The Saloon-one of many such beauty parlors that have sprung up in urban Afghanistan since the Taliban were deposed in 2001 - buzzes with trendy customers seeking the latest Western styles while loud pop music plays in the background. Afghanistan's estimated 35 million people are overwhelmingly young, with nearly two-thirds of the population under the age of 25. Millions have grown up in cities swollen by refugees during the years of fighting.

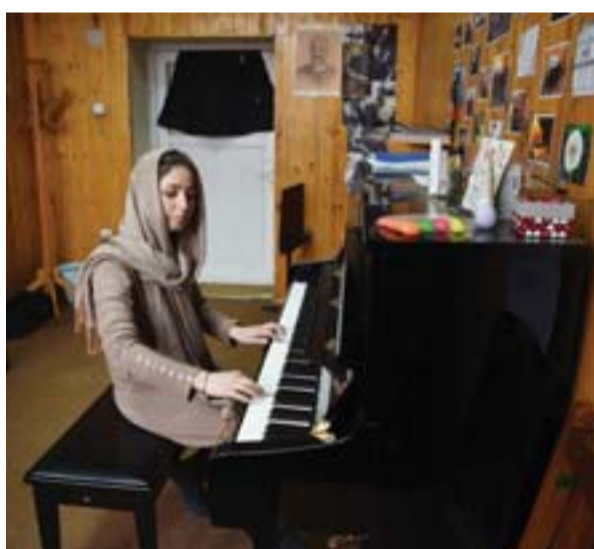
Zabihullah is part of this urban generation-journalists and activists, models, hairstylists and social media stars-who have come of age alienated from Taliban rule and ideology. But as talks between Washington and the Taliban aimed at ending the long war progress, they face the prospect of a peace which could hand the militants some semblance of power in Afghanistan-and they are afraid. "I don't want a peace where I would lose my freedoms," Zabihullah says.

Forgiving atrocities

Youth activist Mohammad Anil Qasemi was a student at the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul when the Taliban attacked the campus in 2016. One militant threw a hand grenade in his classroom, killing many of his peers. The blast wave threw him out of the second-floor window. He survived, but with serious head, stomach and leg wounds. Now, as he watches the progression of talks between Washington and the Taliban in Doha, he fears his generation will not have a say in what comes next. "I am prepared to forgive the Taliban for what they did to me and my classmates... but I can't bargain on the freedom and achievements of my generation," he said.

The stance of young urbanites like Qasemi and Zabihullah contrasts with some of the older generation, who have simply lived through more years of war-Afghanistan has seen nearly constant conflict since the Soviet invasion of 1979 - and crave any respite. "I am prepared to grow back my beard, as the Taliban wants," says 50-year-old Haji Ahmad Shah, a customer in a Kabul shopping mall. "I have lost many friends and family in this war. I just want an end to it," he adds.

Then there is Afghanistan's rural-urban divide. Some young people living in the countryside-where deeply conservative, patriarchal traditions stand in stark contrast to the relative cosmopolitanism of places like Kabul-appear more willing to accept Taliban restrictions to achieve peace. Faridullah, a 23-year-old gardener in rural Kandahar, is relatively liberal, shaving his beard and listening to music. If the Taliban come, he says, he may lose those freedoms-"but it is okay, as I want security. For now I can't even go to my gardens, because they have been heavily mined."



KABUL: Afghan conductor Negina Khpalwak, 22, the first female orchestra conductor in Afghanistan, plays piano at the Afghanistan National Institute of Music in Kabul. Afghanistan's population-estimated at 35 million-is overwhelmingly young, with 63.7 percent under the age of 25. — AFP

Adapting for peace

The Taliban say they have moderated their stance on some social issues, though those living under their rule have told AFP otherwise. The group has not spelled out what role it wants to play in Afghan governance and civil society, other than to say it wants an "Islamic system". Young women, keenly aware of how their gender was banished behind doors and beneath burkas under Taliban rule, are among the most vocal in warning they will not compromise their rights. "For the Taliban, seeing a woman presenter on TV is intolerable, and for me losing my freedom and rights as a woman is intolerable," said 21-year-old Diba, a newsreader for Afghanistan's ZAN TV.

"I might have to leave the country or die of depression living under Taliban rule," she said. But some urban youth say they are nonetheless willing to make peace at any price-while hoping for the best. Farshad, a 23-year-old salesman with a trendy fade haircut who works at a Kabul store selling Western suits and fedoras, said he was prepared to turn it into a shop selling traditional turbans if it meant an end to fighting. "I just hope they don't touch my haircut," he says.—AFP

CHAILLOT PRIZE 2019

The European Union Delegation in Kuwait announces the launch of the eleventh Edition of the Chaillot Prize for the Promotion of Human Rights in the GCC Region. The Prize honours local civil society organisations, public or private institutions, as well as individuals for their efforts in promoting general awareness of human rights and the rights of vulnerable groups in the GCC region.

The deadline for submitting applications for this years edition is 30th of April 2019.

Interested candidates are invited to refer to the Award Rules and Procedures and the Application Form at: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/saudi-arabia/58627/announcement-chaillot-prize-2019_en

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International

Anti-racist map seeks to expose Athens' 'topography of violence'

Racist violence hit the global headlines again

ATHENS: Racist hate crimes come under fresh scrutiny at an Athens exhibition seeking to map out the "topography of violence" targeting migrants and refugees. By using QR (quick response) codes—a type of barcode—which can be opened on a smart phone, the interactive "X them out! A black map of Athens" seeks to take visitors on a trip around the Greek capital to places where violent attacks took place.

The aim is to shed light on the often-unseen crimes of the Greek neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, an ultranationalist party known for its xenophobic violence. Racist violence hit the global headlines again on Friday after an Australian extremist gunned down 49 people at two mosques in New Zealand, sparking a wave of shock and revulsion.

The Athens exhibition was put together by the local branch of the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation, a German organization which fights fascism and racism, and HumanRights360, a Greek civil society group. "With this campaign, we attempt to establish a topography of racist violence. We seek to make its dark dimensions and its deadly nature more familiar to the general public," the exhibitors explain, describing it as an antiracist map. "Our aim is to strengthen the collective memory and never forget these repugnant acts," explains Ilectra Alexandropoulou of the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation.

The map, which is on display at Technopolis, a cultural venue near the city centre, includes some 50 locations where attacks happened, some of which were deadly. Most targeted migrants, and were carried out by those affiliated with the Golden Dawn. Walking the streets in and around Athens, visitors look out for the

brightly-colored sticker bearing a QR code which they then scan to get a short description of the attack. "Once the code is scanned, the website comes up on the screen along with an illustrated description," explains Eleni Takou from HumanRights360.

The project involved working with 25 graphic illustrators, who contributed artwork depicting the violence meted out by Golden Dawn activists who could be seen patrolling the streets of Athens between 2010 and 2014, at the height of the crisis. Dressed in black, their heads shaved and with their trademark swastika armbands, they would kick and punch and wielded iron bars. The illustrations were based on photos that were published at the time by many newspapers and websites. "The campaign.. is designed to pinpoint and highlight the unseen criminality related to racist attacks in the public space," explains the exhibition's website <https://val-tousx.gr/en/>.

It was only in 2013 when an anti-fascist rapper called Pavlos Fyssas was murdered by a Golden Dawn activist in Athens that Greek authorities opened an investigation into the actions of the violently xenophobic and anti-Semitic group. Fyssas was stabbed outside a cafe in the working-class Keratsini district, with his father saying he had been ambushed by Golden Dawn members. Witnesses said police stood nearby but did nothing as the group chased Fyssas and his friends.

Until that point, the police had not cracked down on the faction, despite years of growing concern over its campaign of violence against migrants and political opponents. But the stabbing forced Athens



ATHENS: Activist and migrant women take part in Athens during an anti racism and anti-facism demonstration. —AFP

to open an investigation into the group, with 70 of its members put on trial on a wide range of charges, including the rapper's murder. "We have tried to visualize just a small part of this 'topography of violence' that has its origins in Golden Dawn and fascism, in order to contribute to acquainting the general public with their crimes and in punishing their murderous activity," the organizers said.

Founded in the mid-1980s by a Holocaust denier called Nikos Michaloliakos, the Golden Dawn party

for years glorified Adolf Hitler and the warrior ethos of Nazi Germany in its publications. Formerly on the fringe of Greek politics, Golden Dawn went from 19,000 votes a few years ago to over 426,000 in 2012 when it entered parliament for the first time after pledging to "scour the country" clean of illegal immigrants. Today it is the third largest party in the Greek parliament, with polls predicting it will secure nearly eight percent of the vote when the country goes to the polls later this year. —AFP

News in brief

Gunmen storm camp; 8 die

BAMAKO: At least eight people were killed yesterday in a raid by suspected jihadists on an army camp in central Mali, military and security sources said, warning the toll could rise. Driving cars and motorbikes, the attackers stormed Dioura army camp in the Mopti region at dawn, leaving "many soldiers dead or missing", a military source said. Separately a Malian security source spoke of "a heavy toll of at least eight dead". "There are dead soldiers, others are missing and still others are wounded," he said, but could not confirm reports from local villagers that up to 15 troops had died. A second military source said the troops had tried to fight off the attackers. —AFP

Mexico journalist shot dead

MEXICO CITY: A Mexican journalist shot dead at his home has become the third newsman killed so far this year in Mexico, authorities said yesterday. The killing of Santiago Barroso adds to a toll of more than 100 media workers murdered in the country over the last seven years, coinciding with a wave of violent crime driven by powerful drug cartels and fueled by political corruption. "I regret the cowardly attack in which journalist Santiago Barroso was killed," said Santos Gonzalez, mayor of San Luis Rio Colorado, the town where the journalist lived, in Sonora state which borders the United States. The spokesman for the Mexican president's office, Jesus Ramirez, voiced "outrage at this attack on free speech." Barroso, 47, was shot at home Friday night and rushed to hospital where he was pronounced dead, said Contrasena, the online weekly he worked for. —AFP

Landslide in China kills 10

BEIJING: A landslide in northern China has killed at least 10 people and left 10 missing, state media reported on Sunday, after several buildings were demolished in the disaster. Seven people were found dead at the scene and another three died in hospital, according to official news agency Xinhua. The landslide occurred Friday in northern Shanxi province, Xinhua said. The local government did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment. More than 200 rescuers were at the scene of the disaster, according to state broadcaster CCTV, as the search for the missing continued. Footage from CCTV showed debris strewn in heaps along the mountainside. The landslide took down residential buildings and a public bathhouse. —AFP

Bomb targeting train kills 4

QUETTA: At least four people were killed and seven injured when a remote-controlled bomb exploded on a railway line in southwest Pakistan as a passenger train was passing by, police said. The incident occurred in the troubled province of Balochistan, 311 kilometers southeast of the provincial capital Quetta. "The train was going from Quetta to Rawalpindi when it came over a remote-controlled bomb and four people were killed while seven others were injured," senior police official Irfan Bashir told AFP. "Three carriages of the train also went off the track and rescue work is under way," he said. The incident was confirmed by another senior police official, Rao Munir Zia. —AFP

'It's the apocalypse': Paris rioters run amok at yellow vest rallies

PARIS: The Champs-Elysees avenue in Paris was a sea of black and yellow on Saturday as black-clad anarchists used a "yellow vest" rally to run amok, looting shops and torching businesses in scenes reminiscent of the riots that shook the city late last year. "There are people and there is action. It reminds me of December!" a young protester shouted triumphantly as flames billowed from a bank and thick black smoke rose from burning barricades erected along the famed avenue.

The demonstrator was referring to December 1, when protesters went on the rampage in Paris, smearing the Arc de Triomphe war memorial in graffiti in a frenzy of vandalism, looting and arson. The violence prompted President Emmanuel Macron's government to rescind planned fuel tax hikes and announce billions in measures to assist the working poor.

But on Saturday, the demonstrators returned in their thousands to once again transform the Champs Elysees - a symbol of French power and luxury - into a battlefield. Using banners and construction barriers as shields the "black bloc" protesters ripped up paving stones which they used to smash shop windows and attack the police. The wooden boards nailed over the windows of stores such as Boss and Lacoste were ripped off and thrown

Israeli killed in W Bank attack

JERUSALEM: An Israeli was killed yesterday and two others wounded in stabbing and shooting attacks believed to have been carried out by a Palestinian assailant in the occupied West Bank, the army said. The attacks come at a sensitive time ahead of Israel's April 9 elections, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to apprehend the "terrorists" behind it. Hamas, the Islamist movement that runs the Gaza Strip, welcomed the attack, but did not claim responsibility for it.

"One Israeli is dead," Israeli army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Conricus said of the attacks near the Ariel junction southwest of Nablus, carried out by a "terrorist" who "appears to be Palestinian". The incident began with the perpetrator attacking a soldier with a knife at the Ariel junction, near an Israeli settlement by the same name, and snatching his weapon, Conricus said. "That same assailant fired with that weapon toward three vehicles," he said, with the third car targeted stopping.

"The terrorist took the vehicle and used it to drive" to the nearby Gitai Avishar junction, where he opened fire and wounded another soldier, Conricus said.

The assailant then continued to the nearby Palestinian village of Bruqin. "A manhunt is ongoing," Conricus said. Medics said they evacuated two Israeli men, aged 16 and 20, to hospital with both suffering bullet wounds and in serious condition. Conricus did not provide details on the identity of the person killed, nor say if the person had been stabbed or shot. The army also did not say whether the suspected Palestinian assailant was affiliated with a militant group or had acted alone.

'Deal with them'

Palestinian gun, knife or car-ramming attacks against Israeli settlers and soldiers occur sporadically in the

onto burning heaps as looters emerged, arms laden with stolen clothes, some of which were used to fuel the flames. Cafe tables and seats also ended up on the fire and the famous Fouquet's brasserie — favourite locale of the rich and famous, including ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy who controversially used it to celebrate his 2007 election - was also sacked in an orgy of anti-capitalist destruction. "It's unfortunate but this is the only way we can make ourselves heard," a "yellow vest" who travelled from the southeastern Bourgogne region for a protest billed as an "ultimatum" to Macron, said as he looked on.

'It's the apocalypse!'

The police, which had erected a ring of steel around the Arc de Triomphe, battled for over seven hours to disperse the protesters, using copious amounts of tear gas, stun grenades and water cannon. But for most of the day the protesters, who waved French as well as regional flags and chanted "Macron resign", held the famous avenue which was shrouded in smoke and teargas.

"It's the apocalypse!," one demonstrator shouted with glee. As the day went on, the wave of destruction spread. A bank situated on the ground floor of an apartment building was set alight. A woman who was evacuated with her four children, including a nine-month-old baby, fought back tears as she told AFP of their escape down the stairs from their third-floor apartment.

"We first smelled the tear gas fumes and then saw the fire from the window," she said. "They could have killed someone," her partner Reda added. A Longchamp luxury handbag store was also set alight, along with a restaurant specializing in mussels and the terrace of a large cafe and several of Paris's iconic green-domed news kiosks.



BRUQIN: Palestinian women walk past an Israeli army soldier and vehicle at a checkpoint outside the village of Bruqin near Nablus in the occupied West Bank yesterday, following an attack that killed an Israeli and wounded two others near the Ariel junction southwest of Nablus. —AFP

West Bank. Two soldiers were shot dead in a December 13 attack in the Ramallah area, and another shooting attack nearby on December 9 resulted in the death of a baby and wounded seven others. Speaking at the beginning of the weekly cabinet meeting, Netanyahu said he was certain Israeli security forces would apprehend "the terrorists". "We will deal with them to the fullest extent of the law as we have done in all of the recent incidents," he said.

Hamas called it a response to Israeli "crimes," including its actions at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound, the highly sensitive holy site where there have been scuffles in recent weeks. The compound in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem is the third-holiest site in Islam and a focus of Palestinian aspirations for statehood. It is also the location of Judaism's most sacred spot, revered as the site of the two biblical-era Jewish temples. There have been scuffles in recent weeks between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli police over the use of a side building there known as the Golden Gate. Yesterday, an Israeli court ordered the temporary closure of the side building. —AFP



PARIS: A Yellow Vest protester throws a flag of Europe towards a barricade burning in front of a shop on the Champs-Elysees avenue in Paris, during clashes between riot police forces and Yellow Vest protesters. —AFP

Interior Minister Christophe Castaner blamed the violence on "over 1,500 ultra-violent people who came to smash things up, do battle and attack."

As the evening drew in and the rioters were pushed off the Champs-Elysees into smaller adjacent streets, the walls bore their imprint. One slogan mocked the two-month-long "grand national debate" launched by Macron in mid-January to give voters a forum to air their grievances. "End of the debate, start of the big clearout," it read. The smashed window of a store was scrawled with the words "Open day". By the early evening 151 people had been arrested, of whom 46 were placed in custody. —AFP

China keeps 'education' centers for prostitutes

BEIJING: When Chinese legislators recommended the abolition of "education" detention centers where prostitutes and clients can be held without charge for two years, activists hoped the facilities' days were numbered. They will have to wait longer. The rubber-stamp National People's Congress (NPC) passed only one new law when it ended its annual session on Friday - and it had to do with opening up foreign investment. Under the nearly three-decade-old system, police have unilateral power to detain sex workers and their clients for up to two years in "shelter and education" centers. Critics say the centers have little to do with education.

"There may be resistance inside the regime against abolition, perhaps by the police, as this would take away some of its arbitrary detention powers," said Wang Yaqiu, a researcher at Human Rights Watch. In 2013, testimonies of ex-detainees collected by Asia Catalyst - an organization that defends the health of marginalized groups in the region-revealed the harsh living conditions in the centers. These included ill-treatment, forced labor, and the obligation to pay for subsistence and forced medical examinations at prohibitive prices.

"All this is a matter of money, the talk of rehabilitation or ideological education is hollow, it is just a way of extorting money on behalf of the state and the police", one of the women told the group. Shen Chunyao, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee's legislative affairs commission, said in December that "the time has come to begin the work of abolition". "In recent years, the use of the detention and education system has gradually decreased, the number of people in the centers has clearly diminished and they have been banned in some places," he added. —AFP

International

India confirms five nationals killed in Christchurch attacks

Death toll in NZ mosque shootings rises to 50

NEW DELHI: Five Indian nationals were among the 50 worshippers killed in the Christchurch mosque attacks, with at least two others reported to be injured, officials said yesterday. India's embassy in New Zealand confirmed the deaths in a tweet, following the devastating shootings at twin mosques in the normally peaceful city. Three of the dead from the mass shooting at Al Noor mosque were from Gujarat state. They were father and son victims Asif and Ramiz Vora, and 65-year-old retiree Mahboob Khokhar, who was visiting his son in Christchurch.

Ansi Karippakulam Alibava - a 23-year-old from Kerala, who had lived with her husband in Christchurch since last year as she studied for a masters - was also confirmed dead. The fifth victim, Ozair Kadir, was an aspiring commercial pilot from Hyderabad city. An Indian foreign ministry official in New Delhi told AFP that they are "in process of ascertaining information about all Indians affected by the terror attack". The official denied Indian media reports that claimed seven people were killed in the attack.

Desperate families in India have been trying to confirm the safety of their relatives after 28-year-old Australian white supremacist Brenton Tarrant allegedly launched his murderous rampage. Mohsin Vora, the brother of Asif, told AFP that they were initially told his brother and nephew were injured in the attack, before a family member identified their bodies when they flew to New Zealand. Vora said his 56-year-old brother had gone to meet his new grandchild a month ago. "I and (the) parents of Ramiz's wife have been granted visas. We will be leaving for New Zealand soon," Vora said.

Death toll mounts

The death toll in the attack on two mosques in the city of Christchurch rose to 50 after investigators found another victim as they removed bodies from the crime scenes, the country's police commissioner said yesterday. The bodies of the victims in the attack by a suspected white supremacist in Friday's attacks had not yet been released to families because investigations were ongoing, but police were working as quickly as they could to do that, Police Commissioner Mike Bush said at a media conference in Wellington.

Australian Brenton Harrison Tarrant, 28, a suspected white supremacist, was charged with murder on Saturday. Tarrant, handcuffed and wearing a white prison suit, stood silently in the Christchurch District Court where he was remanded without a plea. He is due back in court on April 5 and police said he was likely to face further charges. Friday's attack, which Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern labeled as terrorism, was the worst ever peacetime mass killing in New Zealand and the country had raised its security threat level to the highest.

"It is with sadness that I advise that number of people who died in this event has now risen to 50," Bush said. "As of last night we were able to take all of the victims from both of those scenes. In doing so we were able to locate a further victim." The body of the 50th victim was found at the Al Noor mosque, where more than 40 people died on Friday after a gunman entered and shot randomly at people with a semi-automatic rifle with high-capacity magazines, before travelling to a second mosque. —Agencies



CHRISTCHURCH: People gather - hoping to find out information about Zakaria Bhulyan who is still missing after the mosques shootings in Christchurch, days after a shooting incident at two mosques in the city. —AFP

New Zealand's Muslims struggle with shock, fear

CHRISTCHURCH: A few months ago, Christchurch's Linwood Mosque proudly laid down new carpets in its halls. On Friday, the light brown carpets were stained red after an gunman stormed the building, spraying bullets at worshippers. "There was blood everywhere. Everything was out of control," Ibrahim Abdellhalim, imam of Linwood Mosque, told AFP. Like the wider Muslim community in Christchurch, Egypt-born Abdellhalim is struggling to come to terms with the violence wrought upon worshippers this week as he waits to bury the dead.

Working together with the local Islamic community, Abdellhalim had sought to refresh the mosque after a trust bought it over in early 2018. Some of the seven worshippers who died at Linwood were among the most enthusiastic contributors, donating their personal time to help in fundraising efforts. One woman, a local Kiwi, fell down beside his wife when she was shot dead, Abdellhalim said. His wife, Falwa El-Shazly, was shot in the arm but survived the attack.

Another man, a Fijian-Indian New Zealander who would regularly bring boxes of food from his restaurant during mosque donation drives, was also killed. "They are dear to me, these are people who offer to us work for free," Abdellhalim said. "It was a very bad day, not just all of us, all of New Zealand." At Hedley College, the main meeting centre for the survivors and victims' families, local Muslims from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds shared wordless hugs and fought back tears as they exchanged news about their loved ones.

With Muslims making up just one percent of New Zealand's population, some members of the

close-knit community raced to the mosques when they heard about the shootings. "I did not go to the prayer yesterday due to work... but received a call from my friends and rushed to the spot," Mohammad Kamruzzaman, originally from Bangladesh, told AFP. "Five of (our Bangladeshi friends) are still missing, only Allah knows where they are. We have lost... a guardian lady for our community, who taught children the Quran for free. It feels like we have lost a parent."

'We are not immune'

Fiji-born Azan Ali, 43, who was in the Linwood Mosque with his Auckland-based father when the attack occurred, trembled when he thought back to crack of the gun shots on Friday. "Will I see my parents, my kids, my loved ones again or not? All the people you pray with, you see beside you..." he added, his voice trailing off. "My kids were scared, you know. You just have to work through it as a community."

His father, Sheik Aeshad, who saw a worshipper shot in the neck, said he could not understand how such violence could take part in New Zealand, a small nation better known for its rolling, green hills and snow-capped mountains. "We never thought in New Zealand, this could happen. New Zealand's so friendly a place, you can leave your door open and go. But not now," he added. "I'm thinking what's going to happen the next time... it could be more people targeting somewhere else."

It was a sentiment shared by Sahra Ahmed, a New Zealander of Somali origin and a nurse active in her local community. Sahra said the attacks showed the South Pacific island nation could not escape the global wave of right-wing extremism. "This is a global movement, for better or worst, it's happened in all parts of the world. And some people like to import ideas from everyone else. So we're not immune from what's happening," she told AFP. "It doesn't matter where you go, the world is very small." —AFP

Mosque massacres revive old wounds in the Balkans

BELGRADE: As the gunman drove to the two New Zealand mosques where he carried out his mass killings, a Serb nationalist song was heard playing in the background of the haunting video he broadcast live on Facebook. The mass shooter's weapons also bore the names of several historical Serb nationalist figures, revealing an unexpected interest in Balkan conflicts that stirred bad blood in a region fractured by war. Hours after 50 people were gunned down in two mosques by the Australian right-wing extremist in Christchurch, Bosnia's ambassador went on local television to express concern about the song heard in the suspected killer's video that went on to show him murder victim after victim.

It was a "Serbian nationalist song in which the name of Radovan Karadzic is mentioned and called on to lead Serbs", he said, referring the convicted war criminal who led Bosnia's Serbs during the 1992-95 war. Karadzic will go before a UN court this week to hear the final verdict on his 40-year sentence for the genocide of Muslims in Srebrenica and other atrocities during the inter-ethnic conflict in Bosnia that left 100,000 dead.

According to the Bosnian diplomat, the song's lyrics also say "Turks must be killed", a term hardline Serb nationalists still routinely use to refer to Bosnian Muslims.

Though linked the 1990s war, the song played by the 28-year-old suspect Brenton Tarrant appears to have more recently been revived as an internet meme in the extreme-right circles he circulated in online. But Tarrant also connected his savage act to figures deep into Balkan history, alongside a roster of other right-wing extremists from across the globe he paid homage to in his hate-filled manifesto.

Ottoman obsession

Among the historical military figures whose names were scrawled on Tarrant's weapons were several Serb nationalist icons. They were men who fought in famous battles against the Ottoman Empire's armies, such as Milos Obilic, a knight in Serb folklore, and Stefan Lazar, a 14th-century Serbian prince. The names of two other 19th century Balkan military leaders against the Ottomans, including Montenegrin general Marko Miljenov, were also written on the guns.

During the Ottoman empire the Balkans was a site of frequent contact and conflict between the Muslim and Christian worlds. That history remains a key reference point for Serb ultra-nationalists today. According to local authorities, Tarrant travelled to the region himself in 2016 and early 2017, passing through Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, and then Bulgaria in November 2018. He also visited Turkey.

'Inspired by Serb nationalism'

In Sarajevo, the Islamic Community of Bosnia said it was alarmed that the "assassin started his bloody escapade to the sound of a song glorifying war crimes in Bosnia". He "was clearly inspired by this same extremist ideology and hatred" of the 1990s, the

group added. The shooter's Balkan references also aroused bad memories in Kosovo, a mostly Muslim and ethnic-Albanian former Serbian province that broke away in a 1998-99 guerilla war. Some 13,000, mostly Albanians, were killed in the conflict. Writing on Twitter, Kosovo's former foreign minister Petrit Selimi said the Australian gunman was "inspired by a particular brand of white supremacist nationalism rooted in #Serbia". He added: "Wars and genocide perpetrated by Serbian ideologues, in Kosovo and Bosnia, seem to have become a point of inspiration for far right across the globe."

'Anti-Serb hysteria'

Officials in Serbia and Bosnia, whose Serb community is semi-autonomous, have been quick to denounce the finger-pointing. Bosnia's ethnic Serb Foreign Minister Igor Crnadak condemned the "anti-Serb hysteria" he felt seized the region after the Christchurch massacres. "It is dangerous and irresponsible to establish a link between the crazy actions of a disturbed and sick person and an entire people," he said in a statement.

The country's Serb co-president Milorad Dodik, who shares the post with a Croat and Muslim counterparts, also criticized the "vile campaign" against his community. Meanwhile in Belgrade, foreign minister Ivica Dacic insisted "Serbia had nothing to do with" the massacre. And the ultra-nationalist Serbian politician Vojislav Seselj, who was convicted of crimes against humanity but still serves in parliament, appeared to see himself as the victim of the story. "The demonization of the Serbs will continue until our country has surrendered," he told the local channel Happy TV. —AFP

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Duque bid to change peace deal rattles sabers, war unlikely

President Ivan Duque's call for changes to key peace legislation has prompted former rebels to warn he has put Colombia on the path to war, but with his government on a weak footing in Congress, major revisions that could reignite conflict seem unlikely. Duque last week objected to six out of 159 articles in the law implementing a 2016 peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas and said he will return it to congress.

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) law - which established a tribunal to investigate war crimes during Colombia's five-decade conflict - has been criticized by Duque for being too lenient on FARC commanders accused of atrocities. Duque, whose 2018 presidential campaign focused on changing the peace deal, said the law was not clear enough that the FARC must fully repay its victims. He also criticized the terms of extradition and rules over sentencing for war crimes.

While Duque's Democratic Center Party is celebrating, others say he is damaging the peace process and deliberately blunting prosecutions that could reveal murky ties between conservative politicians, the military and right-wing paramilitary groups. Duque's powerful mentor, hard-line former President Alvaro Uribe, has repeatedly been named by opposition lawmakers as allegedly having ties to far-right paramilitary groups. Uribe denies the allegations.

While Duque's proposed changes did not explicitly attempt to stifle the JEP tribunal, critics say they could limit its ability to investigate, prosecute and convict. At the very least, they create uncertainty about the JEP's jurisdiction and could slow down investigations for as long as Congress deliberates. "It was a very long, bloody, barbaric war," said lower house opposition deputy Ivan Marulanda, adding that he had "no doubt" Duque's move was aimed at avoiding finger pointing for state crimes. "State crimes were committed. They're proven."

There have been more than 2,000 cases of so-called false positives reported - where the military allegedly killed innocent civilians and passed them off as FARC killed in combat. The JEP tribunal is investigating some of those cases and some military officials have already been convicted and jailed under the ordinary justice system.

Duque's move will probably spook the roughly 7,000 demobilized rebels and prompt some to join dissident FARC fighters - who refused to adhere to the peace accords - as implementation of the agreement may get slowed by efforts to toughen tribunal rules. Indeed, more than two years after the accord was signed, few government reintegration projects to help demobilized fighters are running. Of the roughly 22 government-approved projects, only a handful have received money.

"Duque has sent a lousy message to demobilized guerrillas," said leftist Senator Aida Avella of the Patriotic Union party. "Duque's government is an enemy of the peace process and is working to return us to war." Duque has said he does not want to return to conflict and his objections aim to improve the accords and create a "peace that unites us". Despite tough words on both sides, Duque's weak position in Congress - where he has a slender majority in the Senate and less than half the seats in the lower house - means he is unlikely to win substantive changes.

"It's smoke and mirrors because it's unlikely to be approved," said analyst Sergio Guzman, director of Colombia Risk Analysis, a Bogota-based political risk consultancy. "It looks like he's done this to shore up his base and show that he is not Santos," he said, referring to former President Juan Manuel Santos, who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for clinching the peace deal. Perhaps the biggest impact may be on stalled peace negotiations with the National Liberation Army (ELN) which Duque canceled in January. Guzman noted the prospect of a deal with the group - which carried out a bomb attack in Bogota in January that killed 22 police cadets - appeared further away than ever now.

FARC looking for solutions

While FARC commanders say he has put peace at risk, they are not ready to leave the process that ended their part in a five-decade conflict that killed 260,000 people and displaced seven million. "We consider that what has been done is an incitement to war," said FARC leader Rodrigo Londoño, better known by his alias Timochenko. "But we're here looking for solutions." Duque's announcement has also been criticized by Santos's negotiators and the procurator general. The United Nations has called for the JEP, passed in 2017, to be respected and even strengthened.

While opposition lawmakers have called for a protest march today, others say the FARC has little to fear. "Those who are complying with the corresponding regulations on the abandonment of arms, the abandonment of crime, and the respect for law have absolutely nothing to fear," said ruling coalition Senator Jhon Milton Rodriguez. Established in 1964 and funded by kidnapping, extortion and cocaine trafficking, the FARC grew to a fighting force of 20,000 by 1999 when it reached the mountains above the capital, Bogota, and threatened to seize power. But a US-backed offensive led by Uribe helped bring the rebels to the negotiating table. Under the peace deal, the group formed a political party, kept its famous acronym as the Revolutionary Alternative Common Force, and was awarded 10 seats in congress. The accord allows former rebels who come forward to the JEP tribunal to receive reduced sentences and avoid prison, but they must confess to any crimes and repay victims.

Duque's right-wing coalition says former members of the rebel group continue to commit crimes, and are incensed that they will have seats in congress. They demand jail terms for FARC commanders. "This opens the door ... to put us all in jail," said Reinaldo Cala, a FARC lower house deputy. "The goal of these reforms is to extradite us to the United States." The United States has sought the extradition of some FARC members for drug smuggling. —Reuters



This picture taken on Jan 8, 2019 shows Indonesian officials raiding a bookstore and seizing what they say were communism-related books in Padang, West Sumatra province. —AFP

Indonesia 'Red scare' revived ahead of polls

Bookseller Yanto Tjahaja was tending to his shop when soldiers burst through the door and confiscated a dozen titles over claims they violated one of Indonesia's most sensitive taboos: Communism. Upwards of half a million leftists were massacred across the Southeast Asian nation in the mid-1960s, a bloody spectacle that ushered in the long rule of dictator Suharto, whose fervent anti-communist stance remains decades on. The killings led to the collapse of the now-banned Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), once among the biggest in the world behind China and the Soviet Union.

Jakarta's narrative was that any violence was necessary to rid the Muslim-majority country of a godless ideology. And Indonesians are still warned from an early age about the dangers of a communist revival in the nation of 260 million, now the world's third-biggest democracy. The January raid on Tjahaja's shop - part of a government-ordered sweep - has been slammed by some critics as a cynical ploy to win over voters ahead of April's national elections, as it resurrects one of the darkest chapters in Indonesian history. "They said the confiscated books were about the PKI. But we didn't know. We just sold them," Tjahaja told AFP at his shop in Padang city on Sumatra island. "My wife and I are still traumatised. We were treated like criminals," he added.

Election linked

The images of Latin American revolutionary Che Guevara or

communist symbols like the hammer and sickle may adorn books, t-shirts and posters elsewhere in the world, but such displays can see Indonesians jailed under laws banning communist ideology and political representation. Dozens of bookstores nationwide have been targeted recently with troops taking away titles such as "Chronicle 65" and "Children of the Revolution", which document the violent crackdown.

Rights groups have called on President Joko Widodo, who is running for re-election, to end the raids. "These recent raids were only done to give the impression that the government is not ignoring fears that communism is coming back," said Asvi Warwan Adam, a political history professor at The Indonesian Institute of Sciences. "It's obviously linked to the elections," he explained.

There is little evidence that communism - or the defunct PKI - is mounting a comeback. But fears about a PKI resurrection run deep in Indonesia. In the runup to elections, AFP found numerous false claims online aimed at discrediting Widodo and his challenger Prabowo Subianto - a former general who married one of Suharto's daughters - by suggesting that they themselves are communist sympathizers. Ronny Augustinus, head of online bookstore Marjin Kiri, said Widodo's administration is tapping a well-worn, election-time bogeyman because it's "only concerned about maintaining power". The Attorney General's office did not respond to requests for comment on the raids.

'Communist Treachery'

The PKI, which once had millions of members, was prominent in Indonesia after it won independence from Dutch colonists in the 1940s. Its power grew as a faltering economy left millions impoverished, but the party was blamed for a failed 1965 coup attempt that left top military personnel dead. In response, the Suharto-led military and army-backed paramilitaries massacred PKI members, sympathizers and their families. The bloodshed opened the door for then-general Suharto to seize power from left-leaning president and independence hero Sukarno.

In 2017, declassified US diplomatic documents revealed that a communist-fearing White House was well aware of the bloody purges, which one diplomat described as a "widespread slaughter". The Act of Killing, an Oscar-nominated 2012 documentary, highlighted the brutality through the eyes of unpunished perpetrators as they brazenly re-enacted decades-old murders of leftists. "My friends and I were labeled daughters of the PKI and it went on for years," Uchikowati Fauzia, the daughter of a once-imprisoned communist, told AFP. "Even now the stigma has not gone away," she added. But there is little sympathy at the Suharto-built Museum of the Treachery of the Communist Party, a staple for class trips and domestic tourists. The site in a Jakarta suburb features dozens of graphic dioramas that chronicle gruesome torture and violence carried out by communists, while defiling the dead generals. —AFP

Vote banks and cash top-ups: Political loyalty up for grabs

In his final days as a "Red Shirt" rabble-rouser Suporn "Rambo Isaan" Attawong urged farmers to take up martial arts in defense of Thai democracy as a coup loomed. Now he is contesting national elections for a party aligned to the junta which seized power weeks later - a political volte-face in a nation where pragmatism often trumps ideology and cash coaxes voter loyalty. "Politics is a competition," he says of his political reversal. "We used to be part of previous government and now we are on the other side." Turbulent Thailand is often cast as a country neatly split between political camps representing the pro-democracy movement and the army-aligned establishment. But after two coups in 13 years - featuring rounds of paralyzing protests and the demolition of several parties by the courts - the political landscape is more roughly heven. It is tacked together by influential local politicians with large vote banks and a knack for backing the winning side.

Suporn was dubbed "Rambo Isaan" by the media for his tough guy persona and heritage in Isaan - the poor, rice farming northeast which carries the most votes in parliament. But his fortunes were imperilled by the coup that took out the civilian government of Yingluck Shinawatra. At the time a lawmaker for her Pheu Thai ruling party, Suporn was detained by the military. He emerged contrite, renouncing his previous affiliations on national television.

His about-turn will be complete if he wins his district seat in Nakhon Ratchasima province on March 24 for the junta-aligned Phalang Pracharat party. Rambo says his political resurrection came after he accepted he was "part of the conflict" tearing apart the country. His new side "will bring reconciliation", he added. Early voting began yesterday, with more than 2.5 million reportedly set to cast their ballots.

Playing politics

Phalang Pracharat has poached more than 40 other veteran MPs from Pheu Thai in the hope of lassoing in northeastern voters who mostly back Shinawatra-aligned parties. Junta chief Prayut Chan-O-Cha is the party's candidate for prime minister after the election, which experts say will at best return a straitjacketed democracy with the military still prominent. That power is sharply hierarchical, with patronage networks fanning out from Bangkok, through provincial government and down to village headmen.

The Shinawatra political clan perfected the art of pulling in provincial votes. Universal healthcare, farm subsidies and village funds boosted incomes and aspirations in long-neglected rural areas of the country, bolstering the popularity of local politicians. Many of the MPs to recently jump ship from Pheu Thai grew powerful under the Shinawatras but flipped as the political tleaves augured a long stay in power for the generals and their allies.

The defectors are "vote magnets in their constituencies, because they are the local providers", according to Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a politics professor at Chulalongkorn University. This entrenched system of patronage disadvantages newcomers who choose to "play politics" - as Thais describe the dash for office. The task of convincing grassroots voters to swap sides falls to trusted canvassers who often sit under politicians' wings.

The Election Commission punishes vote-buying and cash inducements during campaign season with up to 10 years in prison, but the system is deeply embedded in local politics. "Canvassers are like salesmen approaching clients," an experienced practitioner of the dark political arts in the northeast told AFP. "No matter how loyal voters are, money can change it," he added.

The "vast majority" of the country is already under the control of these canvassers, analyst Thitinan added, citing Bangkok as the exception. "The more up-country and the poorer the area is, the more it is exposed to vote-buying," he said. Historically payments can reach up to 1,000 baht (\$31) for a pledged vote, a large sum in areas where the monthly wage can dip well below \$100.

'Dogs howl'

Thais have not voted in a general election since 2011. Some fear beefed up laws will threaten the time-honored election ritual of paying voters top-up sums (up to 500 baht) the night before polls open. Dubbed "the night the dogs howl" - canvassers normally go door-to-door across remote villages trying to outbid rivals. This year they expect greater monitoring and possible election bans. So "the payments will be made a few days before", one told AFP.

Voters are also wise to the changing game. "Where candidates are neck-and-neck, parties will employ every tactic," said Laddawan Tantivitayapitak of poll monitoring group Open Forum for Democracy Foundation. "But the people know their politicians, they have learned their lesson." One voter in Nakhon Ratchasima told AFP he "earned" around 2,000 baht (\$62) from several different parties right before the 2011 election. But his political loyalty cannot be rented, the 33-year-old insisted, requesting anonymity. "We will take the money but will vote for whoever improves the economic situation of our area," he said. —AFP

Biden, tease of 2020 campaign

What a tease. Veteran Democrat Joe Biden campaigned for president in all but name Saturday, declining to announce his 2020 plans but dropping hints, including a significant gaffe that suggests he will soon be all in. As the number of White House hopefuls keeps growing - at least 14 Democrats are officially in the race - Biden is now the last major politician who is contemplating jumping in.

But the former vice president has maintained the suspense. He received a hero's welcome in his home state of Delaware, where he told nearly 1,000 party brokers and leaders at a Democratic dinner that it was time to restore America's "backbone," but also that political "consensus" was necessary to move beyond the toxic tone of the Trump era. "Our politics has become so mean, so petty, so vicious, that we can't govern ourselves - in many cases, even talk to one another," he said.

Then, a startling slip by the notoriously gaffe-prone Biden - perhaps an accident, perhaps a perfectly placed tease as he inches towards a presidential campaign. "I'm told I get criticized by the new left. I have the most progressive record of anybody running for the United" - and then he catches himself. "Anybody who WOULD run."

A murmur rippled through the crowd, and within moments his diehard supporters rose to their feet, chanting "Run Joe run." "I didn't mean it!" he chuckled, looking down before crossing himself as the applause lingered. "Of anybody who would run," he repeated. "Because folks, we have to bring this country back together again."

Biden, 76, sounded as if he was rehearsing a campaign speech, repeating lines about the promise of the 21st century and American resolve that he had used earlier in the week at a Washington speech to firefighters. "There's so much at stake," he said about the next election, calling it the most important in a century. "Our core values are being shredded."

The Democratic senior statesman has been mulling a challenge against Trump for months. While he tops nearly all early polls for the

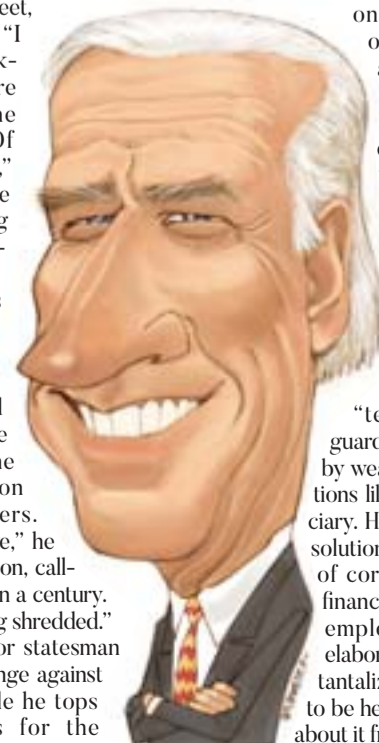
Democratic nominations race, he is under pressure to enter the field soon, or bow out. One of his potential rivals, the former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke, launched his presidential bid Thursday and spent three straight days campaigning in the early voting state of Iowa, sucking up much of the political oxygen.

Biden, a consensus-building pragmatist and Washington establishment fixture, is almost certain to kick off his campaign by mid-April, sources recently told The New York Times. "Folks, as I said, we're literally in the battle for the soul of America, and an overwhelming need to restore the backbone of America: The working class, the middle class," he said in the unmistakable rhetoric of a candidate.

Biden mulled a presidential bid after eight years as Barack Obama's deputy, but he declined after his son Beau died of cancer in early 2015. For many, it was a relief to hear their state's favorite son sounding like a candidate once again. "He doesn't just look like he's back, he looks like he's ready for a fight," Delaware Governor John Carney said, firing up the crowd. "In my humble opinion, we have never needed Joe Biden more than we need him right now."

Other Democrats in the audience agreed. "Let me tell you something, it's Joe time," Stefanie Thompson, a vice president at a financial services company, told AFP as she rattled off several Biden attributes she sees as crucial for the next president. "Civility, experience, professionalism, and grace - qualities that only Joe has out of this very crowded field." But not everyone agreed that Biden ought to remain eloquent and above the fray should he take on Trump. "I think we tried eloquent before. Maybe we need to fight harder this time," said Jeffrey Sytsma-Sherman, a Delaware Health and Social Services employee.

Biden was ready with lines of attack, assailing Trump for "tearing down the guardrails of our democracy" by weakening hallowed institutions like the independent judiciary. He also slammed the dissolution of the "basic bargain" of corporations shared their financial successes with their employees. Biden wouldn't elaborate, but dropped a final tantalizing hint: "You're going to be hearing a hell of a lot more about it from me." —AFP



Business

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019

12 Brexit date extended amid solid economic data in UK**13** KAICO opens first of its kind Mazda Boutique showroom in Avenues**14** Huawei Mate X's unprecedented features open up infinite possibilities

KUWAIT: Sheikh Saud bin Nasser Al-Thani, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al-Thani and board members Abdullah Ahmed Al-Zaman, Yousuf Al-Sumait, Bader Al-Humaidi, Fahad Al-Saeed and Fatima Al-Kuwari during the annual general assembly in Kuwait City.

Ooredoo's revenues soared to KD 240.9m in 2018

We achieved great success in digital transformation strategy across Ooredoo Group: Al-Thani

KUWAIT: National Mobile Telecommunications Company K.S.C.P "Ooredoo" presented its achievements and financial results for 2018 during its annual general meeting, which was held at the company's headquarters in Kuwait City last Thursday. The meeting was attended by the company's Chairman, Sheikh Saud bin Nasser Al-Thani, General Manager and CEO, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulla Al-Thani and board members Abdullah Ahmed Al-Zaman, Yousuf Al-Sumait, Bader Al-Humaidi, Fahad Al-Saeed, Fatima Al-Kuwari, and Sheikh Fahih Ali Al-Thani. The Annual General Assembly saw an attendance of 92.803 percent of the shareholders. The Chairman of the Board of Directors declared that the Board agreed to distribute cash dividends to the Company Shareholders valued at 50 percent of the nominal value of share, which is equivalent to 50 fils per share.

Sheikh Saud Bin Nasser Al-Thani commented that Ooredoo's customer base in Kuwait increased to 2.3 million in 2018, up by 4 percent compared to 2017.

Revenues for 2018 were KD 240.9 million, an increase of 8 percent compared to KD 222.7 million in 2017. Higher handset sales led to an increase in revenue, while at the same time negatively impacting margins. EBITDA was KD 55.0 million for 2018, compared to KD 54.3 million for the previous year.

The B2B in Kuwait was enhanced by a partnership with SAP to provide best in class enterprise cloud services and by leveraging Ooredoo's state-of-the-art data centers to provide end-to-end IT solutions to strategic enterprise clients.

Ooredoo's Operations in 2018

Ooredoo - Tunisia

Ooredoo's customer base in Tunisia increased 8 percent to reach 9.1 million customers in 2018, compared to the previous year. Growth was supported by digital offerings such as 'Tedallel,' an in-app multi-platform offering providing users with the flexibility to choose between voice, data or value-added services such as music, video and gaming.

The Tunisian dinar depreciated by 9.8 percent year on year, leading to a decrease in revenues from KD 127.5 million in 2017 to KD 126.6 million in 2018. In local currency terms, revenues were up by 9.0 percent. EBITDA was KD 49.3 million in 2018 compared to KD 50.5 million in 2017.

Ooredoo - Algeria

Ooredoo Algeria added 1400 4G sites to its LTE network creating the first 4G network to serve 48 wilayas covering 48 percent of the country's population. Data traffic increased 117 percent in 2018 compared to the previous year.

Business in Algeria was negatively impacted by the devaluation of the Algerian dinar, intense price competition and a weak economic environment. Customer base declined by 3 percent to 13.9 million in 2018, compared to 2017. Revenues also decreased to KD 228.9 million in 2018, compared to KD 285.1 million in the previous year. EBITDA was KD 85.3 million in 2018, down from KD 125.5 million in 2017. Algerian

dinar depreciated by 5.5 percent year on year.

Ooredoo - Palestine

Ooredoo Palestine made good progress in 2018, with the launch of the 3G network in the West Bank in January 2018. Customer numbers increased by 27 percent to 1.3 million, benefiting from the Gaza launch in October 2017. Revenue increased to KD 30.3 million, up by 17 percent compared to KD 26.0 million in 2017. EBITDA was strong, increasing to KD 8.0 million in 2018 compared to KD 5.7 million in 2017.

Ooredoo - Maldives

Ooredoo Maldives reported a 5 percent increase in revenues to KD 38.2 million in 2018, compared to KD 36.3 million in 2017. EBITDA was stable at KD 19.7 million in 2018. Ooredoo Maldives now serves a total of 440k customers. Ooredoo Maldives entered the content space with the launch of Amazon Prime Video and OpenMiTV, an application allowing television to be viewed anywhere.

Germany's two top banks launch merger talks

BERLIN: Germany's two biggest lenders, the ailing Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank, said yesterday they would launch formal talks toward a possible merger that could create a "national champion" in financial services. Chancellor Angel Merkel's government has been urging the two Frankfurt firms to explore a cross-town tie-up to avoid either one being swallowed up by a foreign competitor and to create a muscular player that can finance Germany's export-driven companies.

The lenders, both grappling with painful restructurings after years of falling profits, have long been the subject of merger rumors. Deutsche Bank said yesterday it was "reviewing strategic options and confirms discussions with Commerzbank", adding that "there is no certainty that any transaction will occur". Commerzbank said both banks had "agreed today to start discussions with an open outcome on a potential merger".

If they did tie the knot, they would create

a European banking behemoth with some 1.8 trillion euros (\$2 trillion) in assets, close to France's largest bank BNP Paribas.

Deutsche Bank's market capitalization is 16.1 billion euros while Commerzbank's is 8.9 billion euros.

Deutsche Bank's CEO Christian Sewing said in a letter to staff that "we have to assess opportunities as they arise" and that "consolidation in the German and European banking sector is an important topic for us". "Our stated aim remains to be a global bank with a strong capital markets business-based on a leading position in our home market in Germany and in Europe, and with a global network."

"Two guys on crutches"

A week ago Finance Minister Olaf Scholz sent up shares in both banks by confirming that "there are talks about the situation as it is" between the lenders, with the government a "fair companion" to the discussions. Yesterday, his ministry said only that it had "taken note" of the start of formal talks and remained "in regular contact with all sides".

Critics of a potential deal have pointed to both Deutsche and Commerzbank's weakened state in the wake of the financial crisis, saying combining two ailing firms would not produce a healthy one.

"Putting two guys on crutches together

doesn't make a sprinter," Markus Kienle of SdK, an association representing small retail shareholders, quipped earlier this year. Commerzbank is still part-owned by the German state, after Berlin had to step in following its 2009 acquisition of troubled Dresdner Bank, and is part-way through a tough restructuring.

Deutsche is also reorganizing, and only returned to the black last year after many years spent fighting the financial and legal fallout of its breakneck pre-crisis expansion.

Mass job cuts feared

Any potential tie-up would have to overcome a slew of hurdles—from the headache of marrying the IT systems to dealing with cultural differences between the lenders, and the potential market challenges of recapitalizing a giant with feet of clay. Two German unions last Wednesday firmly rejected the idea of a merger between the top lenders.

Service workers' union Verdi charged the merger would make the combined banks "more attractive for a 'hostile' takeover, for example from France".

It warned that "at least 10,000 further jobs would be in grave danger" on top of thousands already slated to go amid the far-reaching restructuring projects.

Nonetheless, marrying off Germany's two biggest private banks would fit with Berlin's



This combination of file pictures taken in Frankfurt am Main shows (left) the logos of German bank Commerzbank and Deutsche Bank. — AFP

new-found fervour to build up such titans. Economy Minister Peter Altmaier has joined his French counterpart Bruno Le Maire in calling on the EU to relax merger rules and allow the creation of world-spanning businesses, after Brussels rejected a tie-up between Siemens' rail division and French train-maker Alstom.

European banking supervisors have long

urged mergers between lenders to create a more resilient financial sector—but prefer cross-border marriages to avoid bundling together national problems. A Frankfurt banking source with close ties to the public sector has told AFP that Berlin clearly wanted to avoid the banks, whose low valuations have made them takeover targets, "falling into the hands of a foreign player". — AFP



KUWAIT: The management teams of Kuwait Automotive Imports Co WLL (KAICO) (Al Shaya & Al Sagar) and Mazda during the celebration to commemorate their five decades of partnership in Kuwait. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

KAICO (Al Shaya & Al Sagar) opens first of its kind Mazda Boutique showroom in Avenues

Celebration marks five decades of successful partnership

KUWAIT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co WLL (KAICO) (Al Shaya & Al Sagar), the exclusive distributors of Mazda vehicles in the state of Kuwait celebrated their 50th anniversary by commemorating the five decades of partnership.

KAICO has grown the Mazda brand in Kuwait as one of the major mobility providers serving three generations of customers and a wide customers base of individuals, companies and the government sector, as stated by Yousef Al-Shaya, CEO during the opening.

Yousef Al-Shaya, CEO also thanked all the stake holders who have been part of the Mazda journey over five decades and re-committed KAICO's endeavor to provide the best products and services to our customers.

He also stated that Mazda's vision of building great cars with higher engineering, KODO designs, JINBA ITTAI handling, powered by fuel-efficient SKYACTIV engines sets the brand apart from its peers. We aim to provide a CX experience - a premium customer experience by providing an environment that will encourage browsing, test-driving and finally ownership in an environment, which is a MALL.

H. Inoue, Senior Managing Executive Officer of Mazda Motor Corporation mentioned that he is very impressed with KAICO management by their serious attitude for not only brand building but also delivering their customers high satisfaction through their investment in their facility and their never ending challenge has just been actualized by their state of the art "Mazda Boutique" at this Avenues Mall.

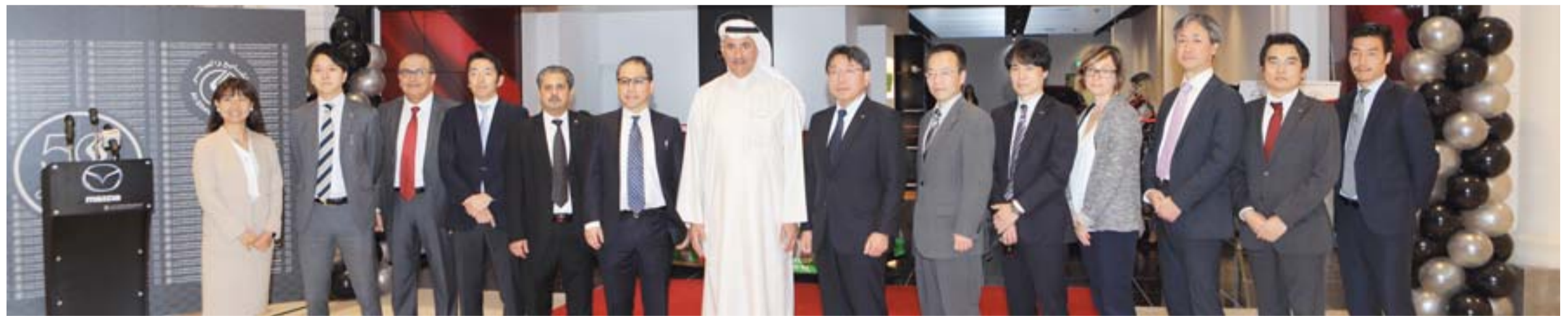
He also said that Mazda will become a strong brand chosen by the customers repeatedly and



KAICO and Mazda will enjoy the next prosperity together, through the strong collaboration between No 1 Customer satisfaction delivered by KAICO and next generation Mazda cars or 7G.

Ashish Tandon, General Manager, KAICO, thanked Inoue San and all the visitors from Mazda Motor Corporation, Itochu Corporation, Vehicles Middle East and His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan in Kuwait and the Commercial Attache for sparing their valuable time to be part of this celebration. He also mentioned that he looked forward to inviting them all for the 60th anniversary celebrations.

Nader Salmeh, Senior Executive Manager, VSG, mentioned that the Mazda Boutique is a great strategic move for the Mazda brand and it will fulfil our ambitions to increase our Market share and provide customers to buy a Mazda car in a life style concept.



Business

Huawei Mate X's unprecedented features opening up a world of infinite possibilities

A revolutionary technology unfolding before our eyes

KUWAIT: The launch of the HUAWEI Mate X 5G foldable smartphone was a natural step in today's direction towards a more closely connected world with the 5G technologies while being clear demonstration of Huawei's deep understanding of today's consumer needs, and how the latest innovations can be applied to empower users and improve the quality of their lives.

The smartphone won 31 awards when it first launched in Mobile World Congress Barcelona 2019 thanks to its novel design and state-of-the-art technological advancements, becoming a tangible which ushers the world into a new digital era.

The HUAWEI Mate X can act as a tablet or smartphone, depending on users' needs. Thanks to its highly intricate Falcon Wing Mechanical Hinge, which enables it to unfold the same way a falcon extends its wings. Unfolding the smartphone transforms it into an eight-inch tablet, giving users almost double the viewing area for highly immersive experience.

Designed to be highly durable, the tablet maintains its aesthetics and practicality by remaining thin (5.4mm thick). It features a new flexible 6.6-inch dual OLED display equipped with superior heat dissipation for a maximum of safety and practicality. In order for the display to achieve its purpose of giving users the ultimate viewing experience, it features Huawei's bezel-less FullView Display technology, which has annihilated notches and holes on the panel, leaving nothing but a smooth, uninterrupted screen for users to fully immerse

themselves in work or entertainment.

The purpose behind the HUAWEI Mate X was to create a tool that caters to users' needs as opposed to just act in a traditional, 'mechanical' way - hence emphasizing on user-device interactivity, making it one of the device's most useful features. The larger screen gives users the ability to immerse themselves deeper in entertainment, or work more efficiently with a larger viewing area. Users can also they can drag and drop images from the photo gallery to their email in split screen mode. The Mirror Shooting feature displays the user-device interactivity further through a digital view finder being exhibited on both the primary and secondary displays, allowing the subject to also see themselves while their photo is being taken, allowing them to take part of the creative process. As for safety and security, the 2-in-1 fingerprint sensor/power button offers an efficient, safe and minimalistic way for user identity authentication when powered up.

The HUAWEI Mate X features the world's first multi-mode 5G SoC with 7nm process chip, the Balong 5000. It supports 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G and is highly powerful and performant, despite its small size - having the ability to reduce delay and power consumption caused by data exchange between modes, support sub-6G full frequency band support and provide large network coverage, becoming one of the device's main elements, responsible for moving the world through a new digital age.



The Balong 5000 is the first chip to achieve the industry's benchmark in 5G peak download rate, offering 4.6Gbps in Sub-6GHz, and is the world's first chipset to support SA and NSA simultaneously, with the ability to adapt to different hardware requirements

and formats for users and telecom operators. The HUAWEI Mate X houses four sets of 5G antennas despite its slim and foldable body, giving users the ability to make the most of 5G connectivity by enjoying its high quality along with large volume data transmission.

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi draw

KUWAIT: The lucky winners are:

- Mohammad Khajah
- Maasoumah Ali Akbar Makhseed
- Fatmah Abduljaleel Redha
- Waleed Saleh Hasan Al-Ali
- Aabdulwahhab Hamad Bogris

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.

CBK announces winners of Al-Najma draws

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank conducted the weekly and monthly draws on Al-Najma Account and the draw on the "Salary and Cash on Top" campaign. The draws were conducted in the presence of Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative Abdulaziz Ashkanani.

The results of the draw were as follows:

- 1) Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5000 was for the share Lafi Monther Lafi Shaber
- 2) The campaign "Salary & Cash on Top" the prize KD 1000 and was for the share Ahmad Humoud Al-Dhafeeri.

The bank stated that the account prizes this year is featured by the highest cash prize and diversity of prizes throughout the year clarifying that Al-Najma Account will offer weekly prize of KD 5000, monthly prize of KD 20,000 and a semi-annual prize of KD 500,000 in addition to the largest prize - linked bank account payout of KD 1,500,000. Al-Najma Account can be opened by depositing KD 100, and customer should maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 to be eligible to enter all draws on Al-Najma Account prizes. As for the chances of winning, the more balance a customer maintains in Al Najma Account, the more chances the account holder will get to win, where each KD 25 will give the customer one chance to win, the account also offers additional benefits like the ATM card, a credit card against customer's account and all CBK banking services that customer can enjoy.

As regarding "Salary & Cash on Top" campaign designated for Kuwaiti and expatriate employees as well as the retirees and which is valid until 31 December 2019 and the mechanism of joining this campaign for availing its benefits, the Bank explained that Kuwaiti employees with a salary of KD 500 and above whether newly recruited or in service can transfer their salary to the Bank and avail the benefits of this campaign by getting instant cash gift of KD 250 or an interest free loan 5 times the salary up to KD 10,000, add to this they will automatically enter the weekly draw on KD 1,000. As for the expatriate customers categorized under Premier Banking Account with a salary of KD 1,700 and above, they will get instant cash gift. The retirees with pension KD 1,000 and above will also get an instant cash gift of KD 150 when transferring their pension to the Bank and automatically enter the weekly draw on a prize of KD 1,000 and avail the benefits of this campaign designated for Kuwaiti and expatriate employees working in private and public sector as well as the retirees. Further, the campaign provides customers with the opportunity to get additional benefits and take advantage of the advanced and unrivalled services and products the Bank provides to its customers to meet their needs and expectations.

VIVA's board appoints a new CEO Al-Harbi as successor to Al-Badran

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced that VIVA's board has approved during its meeting held on 14 March 2019, the appointment of Eng. Mazyad Bin Nasser Al-Harbi, as Chief Executive Officer, effective 14 April 2019.

Dr Mahmoud Ahmed Abdulrahman, Chairman of VIVA, said: "The appointment of Eng Mazyad Al-Harbi marks the culmination of a series of successes and achievements ten years after the inception of VIVA." He

added: "The new CEO will receive the torch today from Badran who has been struggling for over a decade with the support of a professional team to make VIVA a leading telecommunications company in the region, and we are confident that Al-Harbi who owns high competency and strong bio will lead the company to rise its performance and the quality of services, support the digital transformation and the launch of 5G commercially in Kuwait that will radically transform the concept of communications and internet."

Al-Harbi has held numerous positions in prestigious companies in Saudi Arabia, recently the CTO at Mobily since 2015. At STC, he served as vice president of the residential sector between 2011 and 2014 and general manager of network services solutions between 2007 and 2011, and "Al-Jawal Implementation Manager in 2007.

He served as Deputy General Manager of Services at Huawei from 2005 to 2006, Senior Manager - Worldwide Sales Services at Lucent Technologies between 2003 and 2005, Senior Manager -



Implementation between 1999 and 2003 and Senior Engineer between 1996 and 1999. In addition to engineer at the Saudi Electricity Company between 1995 and 1996. He holds a BS in electrical engineering from King Saud University in Riyadh in 1995.

KFH: 10 customers win KD 250 each in Hesabi for youth draw

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the 9th draw of "Hesabi" for Youth. The draw took place under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The draw is part of Win with Hesabi campaign that offers 2 BMW 420i and 120 cash prizes worth KD250.

The winners of the KD 250 prize are: Hamda Alrashdan, Abdullah Alsalmi, Muna alsubaie, Shatha Abo Aljebein, Sarah Alshemaimeri, Kholud Almutairi, Bushra Aldhafiri, Awatef Alsalaifi, Ghadir AlHajeri, and Sahimaa Alazemi.

KFH offers "Hesabi for Youth" with a

variety of privileges as part of its continued endeavor to provide adequate customer care, innovate new products and services and fulfill the needs of all customers of various age categories and interests. Services and products are tailored to suit customers' needs and provide distinguished service as per global standards regarding quality, accuracy and speed.

Hesabi program has been designed to meet the needs of youth and aspire for their active life style. This program presents for youth many exclusive offers and a wide range of privileges including Hesabi ATM card with a unique design, eligibility to issue Hesabi prepaid card (as per credit regulations of KFH), distinguished offers and discounts etc.

KFH continues to launch marketing campaigns to reward youth customers. Hesabi for Youth represents the ambitions and expectations of youth category and copes with KFH aspirations to attract the largest portion of youth who



KFH representatives after the draw

represents the major part of Kuwaiti society. Also, the account represents KFH initiative to diversify banking services and products.

Turkish Airlines and Oman Air extend existing codeshare pact

KUWAIT: Turkish Airlines and Oman Air have revised the codeshare agreement signed earlier. Under the revised agreement, Turkish Airlines will codeshare on Oman Air operating flights to Salalah, while Oman Air will codeshare on Turkish Airlines operating flights to Rome, Copenhagen and Algiers.

The codeshare agreement allows guests to benefit from the outstanding products and services offered by both carriers on these routes. Turkish Airlines' Deputy Chairman and CEO, Bilal Eksi expressed: "Witnessing Oman Air's direct flights to Istanbul within the scope of our existing codeshare agreement has always pleased us. Now extending this agreement in order to increase the travel opportunities offered for our passengers through our networks made us more delighted. We believe that this codeshare

enhancement with Oman Air will exposure further cooperation opportunities for both airlines together with growing relations between our countries."

Abdulaziz Al-Raisi, Chief Executive Officer, Oman Air commented: "Oman Air is happy and proud to be associating with Turkish Airlines which is a globally recognized network carrier. It is an ideal partner for Oman Air, which has justifiably attracted a reputation for offering the highest levels of comfort, luxury and outstanding service. As we continue to expand globally, codeshare agreements such as this help us spread our wings to newer destinations and bring us more partners and guests."

Turkish Airlines and Oman Air currently operate one daily flight each on the Muscat-Istanbul route under the reciprocal codeshare agreement. The schedule of these flights are designed to complement each other by allowing same day return trip at Muscat and Istanbul, and offer convenient connections at both hubs through the respective airlines' network.

Turkish Airlines, a member of Star Alliance, flies to more countries and international destinations in the world than any other airline, currently operates to 306 cities in 124 countries around the world, comprised of 49 domestic and 257 international destinations.



US funds focus on media stocks as mid-caps rally

NEW YORK: The S&P 400 Mid-Cap index has surged to its best start to a year since 1991, both rewarding fund managers and forcing them to work harder to seek out bargains in a group that is now the most expensive part of the US market based on their historical averages.

The rally in mid-cap stocks - companies with a market valuation between \$2 billion and \$10 billion - has come during a broad rally in global stock markets as investors price in a resolution in the trade talks between the United States and China and fewer interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve.

Mid-caps are up 14 percent for the year to date and sport an average price-to-earnings ratio of 16.9 times forward earnings, for their highest valuation premiums to small-cap stocks since 2017, according to Bank of

America Merrill Lynch research.

Yet fund managers from Janus Henderson, Hotchkis & Wiley, and Fairpointe Capital are among those who are still finding values by concentrating on financial, energy and media stocks and eschewing the high-priced real estate investment trusts and utility companies that make up nearly a fifth of the benchmark index. "The window for the big bargain bin was the fourth quarter and that was about it," said Kevin Preloger, a portfolio manager of the \$3.3 billion Janus Henderson Mid Cap

Value fund. "We're looking for companies that have good balance sheets and good cash flow, but the tough part is reasonable valuations."

Preloger's fund is finding them in financial companies such as M&T Bank Corp and Hartford Financial Services Group Inc that are increasing their stock buybacks at the same time they have been beating analysts' earnings expectations. Shares of M&T, for instance, are up 20.8 percent since the start of the year and trade at a forward price-to-earnings ratio of 11.8. —Reuters

What's On



Lulu Hypermarket launches new concept store in Khaitan

Lulu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, opened Lulu Express Fresh Market, a new concept store at Al-Sharqia Commercial Complex in Khaitan yesterday. The first Lulu Express Fresh Market store in Kuwait was inaugurated by Chairman & Managing Director of Lulu Group International Yusuffali MA & Mariam Ismayil Jumaah Alansari in the presence of govt officials and dignitaries as well as large gathering of shoppers.

Lulu Express Fresh Market is a new store format that adds to Lulu's growing retail portfolio, taking the number of branches in the

country to eight and the total branches across the world to 163. The convenience-focused store, spread across a 25,000 sq. ft. area, has dedicated sections for fresh fruits and vegetables, chilled and frozen fish and meat, a delicatessen, grocery, dairy, roastery, bakery and hot-foods, as well as non-food items and health and beauty products. The new Lulu Express Fresh Market store's easy accessibility, its modern ambiance, clear layout, wide aisles and well-stocked shelves are focused on providing the utmost convenience to shoppers.

Speaking to media Yusuffali said "it is our constant endeavor to bring world-class shop-

ping experience to our valued shoppers by going nearer to them rather than making them drive long distance to reach us. This new concept is one such step in that direction. From the time we opened our first store in Kuwait, we have received great response from both Kuwaiti as well as expat shoppers and we will continue to invest more in further strengthening our presence here". The store delivers a comfortable shopping environment while providing a wide range of high-quality goods at competitive prices, further entrenching Lulu's position as one of the finest customer-oriented retailers in the region.



Kuwaiti entrepreneurs at Bahrain startup innovation festival

A delegation of Kuwait entrepreneurs visited Bahrain to participate in an ecosystem tour and major startup innovation festival during the 2019 StartUp Bahrain Week. This was a community-led festival, focusing on the full range of grassroots support that is essential to help founders flourish. It was also an opportunity to encourage innovation and growth in the startup ecosystem - not just in

look beyond traditional business landscapes. The support of government initiatives, such as the National Fund for SME Development, is helping, and Rocket Internet's acquisition of Talabat is a further indicator of a growing startup ecosystem.

The Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who attended StartUp Bahrain Week were part of Cubical Services' Fikra Program, which accepts a num-

Pakiza Abdulrahman, Manager - Business Development, Startupsat the EDB said, "StartUp Bahrain Week was a real community-led effort and the visit by the Kuwaiti delegation was vital as both communities came together to further collaborate on the opportunities available in Bahrain. We look forward to continuing to forge closer links, share ideas and drive progress between our two ecosystems."

With its low cost of operations, talented workforce, strong presence of regional accelerators and incubators, and the growth of accessible venture capital - to name a few - Bahrain is strongly placed to support Kuwaiti startups looking to scale up. Mariam Hisham Al Rayes, Executive Vice President of Cubical Services in Kuwait, said, "We are delighted to be part of Bahrain Startup Week and to help pave the way for Kuwaiti entrepreneurs to expand their businesses to Bahrain. The 21 delegates found this trip inspirational and gained greatly from it, and we look forward to further collaborations between Kuwait and Bahrain."

A successful StartUp Bahrain Week

StartUp Bahrain week attracted an international line-up of speakers and industry experts who discussed next generation technologies, the power of disruptive startups and the importance of diversity in the workplace. There were hackathons, networking events and pitching competitions, and an 'Ecosystem Tour' allowed founders to meet key members of the Bahrain startup scene such as StartUp Bahrain, EDB and Tamkeen. At the GCC Startup Meetup, major players in the GCC startup scene gathered to exchange expertise, discuss common problems and compare products and services. At the headline event, Unbound Bahrain, over 100 influential speakers in the fields of AI, FinTech, blockchain, sustainability, investment, addressed an audience drawn from across the region.



Bahrain but across the region and beyond. The week-long gala included a variety of talks, pitch competitions and practical classes. Founders networked with investors, incubators, accelerators and educational institutions. The events were held in partnership with the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) and Tamkeen.

Connecting with other ecosystems

As with other Gulf countries, the startup ecosystem in Kuwait has been motivated to

ber of entrepreneurs every six months and provides them with the tools and resources they need to start their own businesses. The event allowed them to get more practical, hands-on advice, network with other entrepreneurs and be inspired by connecting with accelerators, investors and thought leaders. The Kuwaiti delegation included other members interested in the startup community, including Ministry of Youth Affairs, Al Hamra Real Estate Company, Gulf Bank, Markaz Financial Centre, KFAS and Kuwaitnet.

Horeca 2019 made significant progress

Horeca Kuwait exhibition for hospitality, catering, hotel and restaurant equipment has become one of the most important regional exhibitions in terms of a market share and value it annually attracts in hundreds of millions as well as in terms of its strategic food security and the number of participants, said the head of the committee and Leaders Group company general manager, Nabila Al-Anjeri.

Al-Anjeri added that Horeca recent cycle held in January had made significant sales for various vendors display-

ing their products, which made an even larger number of companies demand larger spaces for the 2020 cycle. She added that analytical studies about Horeca 2019 showed growing participant satisfaction and trust adding that the eight past cycles of the exhibition had enhanced the participating sectors' performance, operation and competitiveness.

Further, Al-Anjeri stressed that the coming years would also witness more qualitative and quantitative growth in the restaurants and hospitality sectors, especially since Kuwait hotels had been making substantial regional operation and performance levels over the past two years. "According to Ernest & Young's April report about hotels and hospitality in the Middle East, Kuwait hotels occupancy was amongst the sixth highest in the region while 9 others had deteriorated rates", Al-Anjeri explained.



Daya Bai boosts morale of students in ICSK

Daya bai, dressed in a simple cotton saree with colorful necklaces and clinking bangles looked no more than a tribal from India. "And this attire has made me face a lot of discrimination. But I have not given up my desire to serve those exploited in life and live like them," she said. She was interacting with the students at the Indian Community School Kuwait, Senior on February 17, 2019.

Ms Mercy Mathew, commonly known as Daya Bai is a well-known social activist. From the age of sixteen, she has been working for the upliftment of tribal and other oppressed communities in different parts of India. Fighting and striking for the rights of the endosulphan victims in Kasaragod district, Kerala, India. She is also

active in their treatment. She was in the war zone Bangladesh serving the war victims. A noted environmentalist, she participated in enormous agitations like Narmada Bachao Andolan.

"From a young age I has been keen on understanding why there was inequality in our society? When I had laborers working at my house in Pala, Kerala I wondered why couldn't they eat with my own family? After graduation,

I decided to go and live with the tribal people for some time. That's where I realized my way of life," she answered a student who asked her about the motivation for living her life for tribes.

She felt that fighting for equality and to give voice for such people is what she had to do. She advised the students to follow the preamble of the Constitution of India. According to the constitution, every citizen has equal

status and rights. "Tribes didn't trust me and accept me when I started working with them. I felt it difficult and hard to adapt their lifestyle in the beginning. But as time passed by I loved it. After monitoring my actions for a few months, they accepted me", she said.

She explained how she has always been discriminated. She was asked to alight from the compartment of a train or bus before the destination is reached. "But when Daya Bai became famous, people started to greet and even click a selfie", she said while answering a student who asked her on discrimination. Even after years of such experiences she never felt giving up. Through a real life story, she explained how conflicting experiences in childhood had helped a man work for the needy in life.

"She is an epitome of humanity. She is an inspiration to umpteen number of people," said Dr V Binumon, the Principal of ISCK senior while welcoming her. Dr Sam T Kuruvilla, the Vice-Principal, ICSK senior honored her with a memento. Ms Susan Rajesh, the deputy vice principal, ICSK Senior proposed the vote of thanks. The management of ICSK, aiming at the holistic education of the students has always been motivational in a discourse with such inspirational models.



Health & Science

Trump calls for 'Space Force', nations talk space peace deal

GENEVA: On the surface, this looks like a terrible moment for the world's major military powers to negotiate a deal on preventing an arms race in space. Last month, UN chief Antonio Guterres warned that the global disarmament architecture was "collapsing," citing various diplomatic failures, including Washington's decision to scrap a crucial nuclear weapons treaty with Russia.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon has drafted plans for a new "Space Force" on orders from President Donald Trump who has declared space a "war-fighting domain". Despite those headwinds, experts from 25 countries — including China, Russia and the US — open a 10-day meeting in Geneva today aiming to lay the groundwork for a treaty to keep space peaceful. Even against the grim diplomatic backdrop, experts say there may be reasons for optimism. "I hope I am not just indulging in wishful thinking here but I do see some positive initiatives against this rather dark background," said Paul Meyer, Canada's former disarmament ambassador and an expert on space security at The Simons Foundation in Vancouver. The closed-door Geneva talks involve a UN panel called a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). Chaired by Brazilian ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota to the UN Conference on Disarmament, the space GGE works on consensus and will only issue a report if all parties agree on its content.

Diplomatic efforts to forge a space treaty have been deadlocked for more than a decade. A main problem, experts said, is that China and Russia have insisted on preventing certain devices from being deployed in space. This has been a non-starter for the West which has instead favored language that emphasises "behavior" or "actions" in outer space that could be restricted. Patriota told reporters the level of dialogue at the first GGE meeting in August was "several notches" better than in the past, with China and Russia indicating an openness to new ideas. —AFP

KAICO celebrates 70th anniversary with ExxonMobil

KUWAIT: 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of successful relationship between KAICO (Kuwait Automotive Imports Company) and ExxonMobil in Kuwait. Both companies celebrated their longstanding relation at ExxonMobil's office in Cairo. The celebration was attended by Yousef Al-Shaya, KAICO CEO and Eng Hesham El Amroussy, ExxonMobil Egypt Chairman and Managing Director and Africa & Middle East lubricants Manager, among other delegates from both companies. Eng El Amroussy, reflected on this event: "Today I am delighted to celebrate ExxonMobil's long-lasting distributorship with KAICO. We are proud of our heritage and we look forward for a future full of success serving the Kuwaiti people. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for KAICO's relentless efforts to grow the Mobil brand. We look forward to continue our relation with KAICO for decades to come."

"KAICO has played an integral part of Kuwait's growth for 70 years. Our history dates back to 1949 when we started marketing Mobil lubricants and Kerosene. We are glad that our relation with ExxonMobil enabled us to continue our commitment and create a positive impact to the economy of Kuwait. Today KAICO is one of the leading



lubricants marketers" noted Al-Shaya.

Ashish Tandon KAICO General Manager, added "I am optimistic about our relation with ExxonMobil in Kuwait. We have succeeded throughout our history to overcome all challenges, and our continuous collaboration with ExxonMobil paves the way for further growth within the

Kuwaiti market." From his side, Sadiq Aly KAICO Division Manager noted: "Today, we celebrate the success of a strongly founded distributorship with ExxonMobil. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all KAICO and ExxonMobil teams for their commitment and hard work to achieve such remarkable milestone."

CLINIC

PAGE





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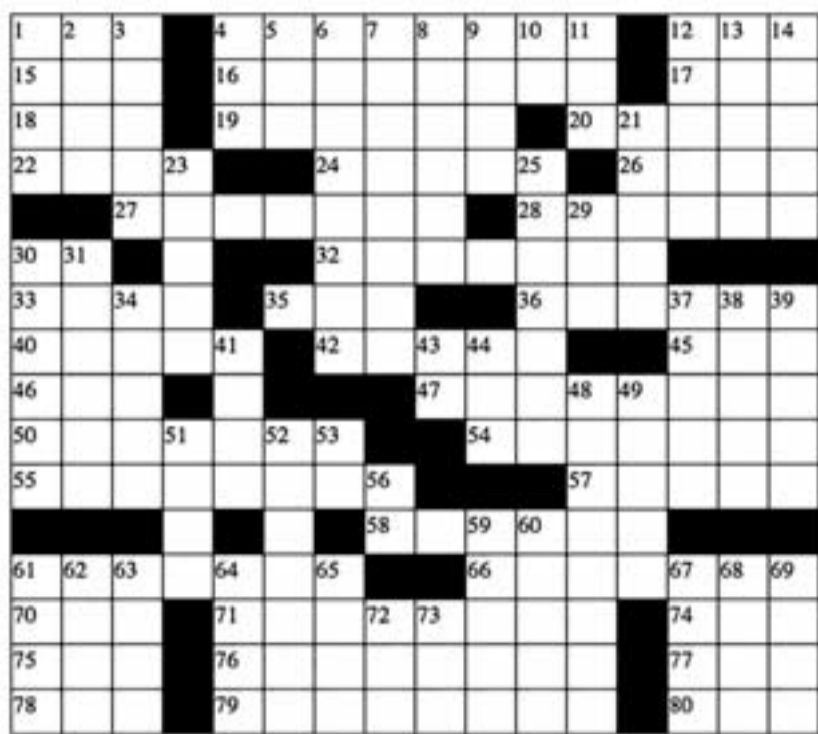
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Stars

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ACROSS

1. A state-chartered savings bank owned by its depositors and managed by a board of trustees.
4. A vessel made of material that does not melt easily.
12. (music) The pace of music measured by the number of beats occurring in 60 seconds.
15. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
16. An open automobile having a front seat and a rumble seat.
17. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
18. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
19. The cardinal number that is the sum of three and one.
20. Make more attractive by adding ornament, colour, etc..
22. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
24. Type genus of the Ardeidae.
26. (Sumerian) Water god and god of wisdom.
27. Capital of the state of Washington.
28. A histamine blocker and antacid (trade name Zantac) used to treat peptic ulcers and gastritis and esophageal reflux.
30. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
32. A member of the majority people of Punjab in northwestern India.
33. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
35. Call upon in supplication.
36. Any of several plants of the genus Camassia.
40. Entangled or hindered as if e.g. in mire.
42. A person who believes that God created the universe and then abandoned it.
45. Enlarged prostate.
46. A fatal disease of cattle that affects the central nervous system.
47. Appear again.
50. A member of an Indian people formerly living along the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
54. The domain controlled by an emir.
55. Annual and biennial herbs of Mediterranean to central Asia.
57. Given or having a specified name.
58. Obsolete terms for legal insanity.
61. Something contrived to meet an urgent need or emergency.
66. Type genus of the Artamidae.
70. Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
71. Extinct order of jawless vertebrates.
74. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
75. A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
76. Uttered in a shrill scream as of pain or terror.
77. A three-year law degree.
78. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
79. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
80. Brief episode in which the brain gets insufficient blood supply.

DOWN

1. Among the largest bony fish.
2. The act of scanning.
3. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.
4. A vacuum tube in which a hot cathode emits a beam of electrons that pass through a high voltage anode and are focused or deflected before hitting a phosphorescent screen.
5. European strong-scented perennial herb with gray-green bitter-tasting leaves.
6. Not subjected to tapping.
7. A railcar where passengers ride.
8. A large Yoruba city in southwestern Nigeria.
9. Indicate by signs.
10. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
11. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
12. A discrete unit of living matter.
13. A kind of heavy jacket ('windcheater' is a British term).
14. Affected with or marked by frenzy or mania uncontrolled by reason.
21. Close-fitting pants of heavy denim for casual wear (usually in the plural).
23. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
25. An antibiotic (trade name Azactam) used against severe infections.
29. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
31. Bristlelike process near the tip of the antenna of certain flies.
34. Thick like cream.
37. At right angles to the length of a ship or airplane.
38. (often followed by 'of') A large number or amount or extent.
39. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
41. Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
43. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.
44. The seat within a bishop's diocese where his cathedral is located adv.
48. Pearl oysters.
49. Colonial siphonophore of up to 130 ft long.
51. The financial means whereby one lives.
52. Small voraciously carnivorous freshwater fishes of South America that attack and destroy living animals.
53. An associate degree in nursing.
56. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
59. A Dravidian language spoken in south central India.
60. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
62. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
63. Toward the mouth or oral region.
64. A short labored intake of breath with the mouth open.
65. Queen of England as the 6th wife of Henry VIII (1512-1548).
67. A milkshake made with malt powder.
68. Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
69. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
72. Estrangement from god.
73. Seed of a pea plant.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

With your making new plans for your life, you're taking a more conservative approach than you'd ever have thought. Friends and family find this refreshing but almost off putting too because they know you and you generally rush in where fools fear to tread. It's okay to be thoughtful instead of thrill-seeking sometimes even if loved ones get alarmed. You don't want to live forever on the razor's edge. You contemplate and realize the best way to be secure with your new life. That generally involves real estate. Are you ready to shop? In town or out, think about it and go for it. Aries. Now's the time to dream.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

An older family member or friend could cause upset with your plans for today. Though you're unsure whether you want to act upon what you envisioned anyway, you don't need someone else telling you what a failure you are before you even start. To make it worse, you're in conflict with yourself over goals you've set for today's pleasures. So, how can you get upset with another who is questioning you now? You generally look so secure and confident in your decisions yet you appear to be wrestling with something that shouldn't take up this much time. Try to enjoy your day with those you love or not. Just enjoy.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Gossip isn't always the best thing to listen to but today when you hear a little tidbit about a family member you can't help but take notice. Questions become the topic of the day as you explore the seamier side of life about this family member or friend. Remember everyone has a touch of the dark side in them. Be careful you're not the next topic of conversation when family or friends gather, Gemini. The reason you're listening to this type conversation is because you're feeling unsatisfied with your own life. You may find it boring right now. Your thoughts may invite events you don't want to explore. Think good thoughts.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You feel like working on you today. Diet, exercise, and appearance are all part of the thoughts on which you seem to be doing. Perhaps a friend has found a good place to purchase clothing and offers to go with you for a complete makeover. You may go to the gym or figure a way to work out from home without the expenditure of major dollars. Cancer. Your health should come first but you generally put yourself last because those you love may need to be tended first. Go for a massage or take dance lessons, anything that gives you a pleasant sensation and makes you feel better.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

The best thing you could do for yourself now is to think your life over. Decide what is best for you. Take into consideration how you feel about family and friends but also look to them for advice. You want what you consider is the good life and you're unsure how this new feeling you have will relate in that. You're deep into the appreciation for all you've gotten in this life so far. Reign in any frivolous spending you may be thinking of now, Leo. Be thankful.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Appealing to others on an instinctual level is part of your good qualities. You want to talk and really express how you feel to someone who appreciates your soulful expressions. Deep communication brings you fulfillment but also gives you the chance to learn of work that may manifest money. If you're thinking of selling your home now or buying one, this is a good time to approach someone in the know. Engaging others could give you the ability to learn about appropriate advertising and more to assist you in encouraging your own wealth. Make sure you get with friends and friends of friends today for a great wealth enhancement project for your group.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

There is an overwhelming need for independence welling up in you now. You want to try new things and you don't want to be told "No." Breaking away from the norm is part of your mood and is weighing heavily upon your soul. Religion may be a source your reexamining now too. Spirituality may be your motive. You're thinking of making changes in your home, possibly even with those who live there. You're a helper to most all who ask. Libra. Others may come to you for your ideological thoughts and to assist them in some major challenges for their lives. You're ready and willing to help.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Instead of enjoying this nice Sunday, you're making plans to increase your income, giving attention to your home, perhaps not your home life though and how you'll achieve all of this. Be watchful that you don't allow another to ruin your mood for making the best of your life in a material fashion. That is a need right now and you have the tools to get your needs met. Mentally, you're at your best just as you were yesterday when you started thinking about all this. Clear-headed, practical decisions are easily made now. Get them ready to put into practice.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You're exhausted from rehashing the same thoughts again and again but if you have to do this, today is the day. Be considerate of yourself though and don't give in to self-doubts. You know you generally make good decisions on your life and assisting those you know. You've had too many folks come back and tell you that you give the greatest, most logical advice, Sagittarius. That's why friends and family want to be around you and trust you with their secrets. You're a good person who is worldly in some sense and totally logical in others.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Getting together with family, swapping stories about growing up and good food gets your attention today. Emotionally you need this time to wind down after the week of hard work. Generally working hard is what you consider best for you and it's very unusual for you to need those you love close but today you do. Enjoy your comradery with those you've known all your life. Though it's hard to let down your guard, this is a time of recharging your motor so to speak. You may even invite old neighbors and make it a reunion of sorts.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

If you're in competition with others at work you shine in your work ethic and in getting the job done in a satisfactory manner. Your mental capacity is at a high and your ability to get others onboard is excellent too. You have refined sensitivity to others now both at work and at home. That only makes you better at reading people. At home you have desires that are being met. You need the attention you get from those you love. This is a great time to be alive for you.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

It's a good day to be off work. Let's hope you are. This day could lead to some major misunderstandings because you're not apt to keep your mouth shut when offended. You can see how this might really upset the appiecart at work. At home it's another thing. You're supposed to be nice to the one you love but he or she might be on your last nerve. It's the stars. This too shall pass. Give it some time and try to remain silent, Pisces. Your lover might not say the nicest things either leaving both of you in a communication vortex and you with very hurt feelings. Things that happen then aren't the nicest. "Take time to be with you today, alone," is the best advice.

Wordsearch Puzzle

90's Songs 4 - Word Search

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

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| BABY, BABY | IRIS | SLAM |
| BAILAMOS | LOVE IS | SPOONMAN |
| BELIEVE | MOUTH | SUMMER GIRLS |
| BOOMBASTIC | NAME | TODAY |
| EMOTIONS | NO SCRUBS | UNSKINNY BOP |
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Yesterday's Solution

90's Songs 3 - Solution

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

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| BARBIE GIRL | LET'S RIDE | STRONG ENOUGH |
| CAN'T STOP | LINGER | THE SIGN |
| CRUSH | LONGVIEW | THIS KISS |
| DANGEROUS | MOTOWNPHILLY | TOO FUNKY |
| ENDLESS LOVE | MY WAY | TWISTED |
| ESCAPADE | PUSH | UNDERSTANDING |
| GETTO JAM | SMOOTH | WONDERWALL |
| HONEY | STAY | |

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019



A Vietnamese girl poses for photographs amidst the "The Parting of the Plastic Sea" art installation, made out of plastic straws by Canadian artist Benjamin Von Wong, at a mall in Ho Chi Minh City yesterday. "The Parting of the Plastic Sea" built with some 168,000 straws collected from streets around Vietnam, won the Guinness World Record for largest art installation made from plastic straws. — AFP

With streaming move, Google eyes future of gaming



In this file photo Videogamers play on an alpha version of French video game developer Ubisoft's last installment of "Assassin's Creed", titled "Assassin's Creed Syndicate".



In this file photo Videogamers play on an alpha version of French video game developer Ubisoft's last installment of "Assassin's Creed", titled "Assassin's Creed Syndicate", during the Madrid Games Week 2015 in Madrid.

Google is looking to transform internet-age game play, with an expected launch of a streaming service which uses the tech giant's power in the internet cloud. Expected Tuesday is the debut of a ramped-up version of a cloud gaming platform Google tested recently in partnership with Ubisoft.

A video clip teasing a keynote presentation at an annual Game Developers Conference in San Francisco invites people to "Gather around as we unveil Google's vision for the future of gaming." The clip cycles through an accelerating collage of scenes one might find in video games, but says nothing about what Google will announce at the event, which will be live-streamed at YouTube. Google collaborated with French video game colossus Ubisoft to use the hit "Assassin's Creed" franchise to test "Project Stream" technology for hosting the kind of quick, seamless play powered by in-home consoles as an online service.

A select number of people in the US were able to play "Assassin's Creed Odyssey" streamed to Chrome browsers on desktop or laptop computers. A recently uncovered patent that Google filed for a video game controller hinted that the tech firm might be planning to release its own console and controller to go along with a streaming service.

'xCloud' on horizon

Video games are following television and music into the cloud, with console-quality play on its way to being a streaming service as easy to access as Netflix or Spotify. Computing power in data centers

and devices from televisions to smartphones has surged and streaming technology has advanced, providing tools to break blockbuster titles from confines of consoles or personal computers. Google, whose YouTube video service operates an eSports platform for viewing game competitions, will be entering a sector with other powerful competitors including Sony and Microsoft.

Microsoft chief executive Satya Nadella said late last year that a keenly anticipated "xCloud" streaming service was in "early days." Microsoft's Xbox consoles and games unit are big business for the Redmond, Washington-based technology titan, which has been adapting to modern lifestyles in which software is hosted as a service online and tapped into using whichever gadgets people prefer. Video game titan Electronic Arts also has laid out a vision of streaming video games enhanced with artificial intelligence to create "living, breathing worlds that constantly evolve."

Bigger world of play

Wedbush Securities analyst Michael Pachter sees Amazon, Apple and Google as potential big players in the space given huge investments they have made in data centers that provide cloud services to millions of people. Amazon, a major cloud operator through its Amazon Web Services, also owns popular game play-streaming service Twitch. Console quality video game play streamed online as a service, hosted on servers in the internet cloud, faces challenges including moving data quickly enough to avoid lags in action or imagery.

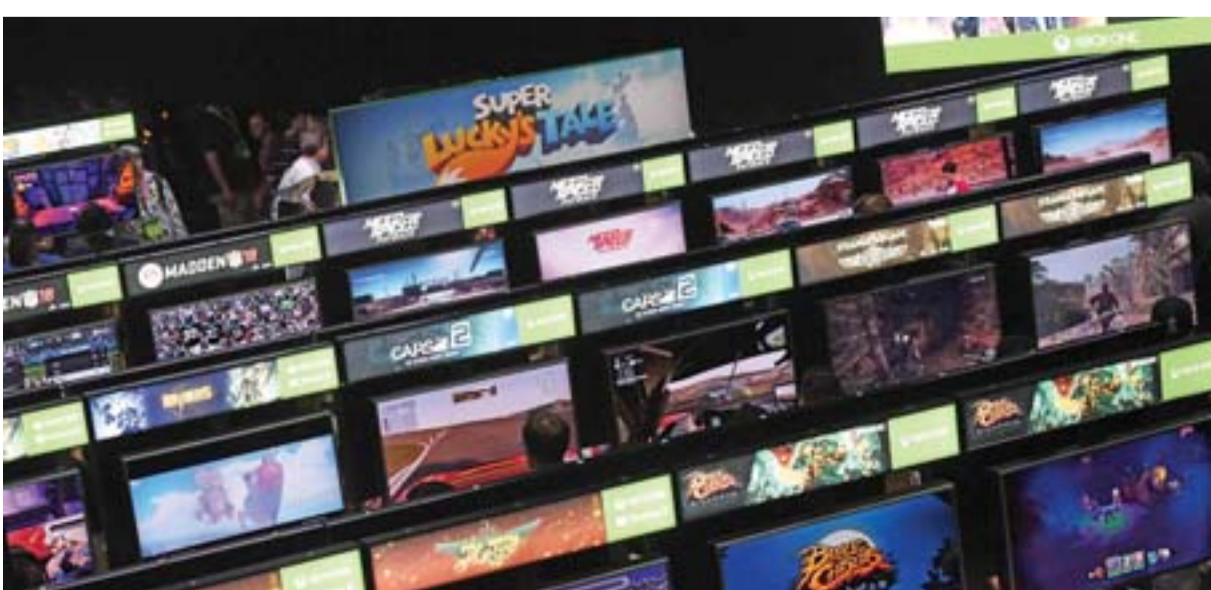
Improvements in internet bandwidth, computing power and data storage capabil-

ities are enabling "disruptive technologies" such as streaming that can change the way games are created as well as played, according to Ubisoft. While streaming game services might nibble at console sales, they are more likely to broaden the audience of players to anyone with an internet connection, according to analysts.



The US video game industry generated a record \$43.4 billion in revenue in 2018, up 18 percent from the prior year, according to data released by the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) and NPD Group. "Console, PC, and mobile platforms all saw significant growth, while developing portions of the market like subscription and streaming services gave us a peek into a future full of possibilities for the industry and gamers," NPD analyst Mat Piscatella said in a release. — AFP

Ted Price introduces the coming release of the game 'Sunset Overdrive' at the Xbox media briefing where new games were introduced on the eve of the annual E3 video game extravaganza in Los Angeles, California. — AFP photos



Gamers crowd the Microsoft Xbox One exhibit at the Los Angeles Convention center on day one of E3 2017, the three-day Electronic Entertainment Expo, one of the biggest events in the gaming industry calendar, in Los Angeles, California.



Gamers play the Ubisoft "Rainbow Siege" game at the Los Angeles Convention center on day one of E3 2017, the three-day Electronic Entertainment Expo, one of the biggest events in the gaming industry calendar, in Los Angeles, California.

Lifestyle | Gossip



Walker won't sing at his wedding

A Tom Walker won't sing at his own wedding. The 27-year-old musician popped the question to his long-term partner Annie last year but he's dismissed suggestions he provide the entertainment on their big day, insisting he can't imagine "anything worse". Asked by Britain's OK! magazine if he was going to be singing on his wedding day, he replied: "At my wedding? Are you joking? I can't think of anything worse. Imagine, it'd be like, 'Everybody come and look at me!' 'I am trying to get James Taylor and then

Flux Pavilion to do the after-party! Absolute class!" But the 'Leave a Light On' hitmaker and his wife-to-be are still in early stages of planning the wedding as they have been so busy. He said: "I have found a few potential venues and me and my missus have had a couple of discussions about it. She just finished a masters degree and has started a new job and I have just been hectically busy as well. So hopefully when it all dies down a bit we'll get some time to plan." The 'Angels' musician had been dating Annie for five years before he opened a bottle of

champagne and popped the question to her in Sri Lanka. He previously said that she loves being with his sweet-heart because she has been unfazed by his fame and stood by him all through his journey. He said: "When I met my missus, Annie, I didn't even have a job. She just likes me for me and nothing has changed between us, which is really nice because a lot in my life has changed but she's stayed the same."

The Raconteurs finish making their new album

The Raconteurs have told fans they've "finished making the rock 'n' roll album you've been waiting for". The rock supergroup - which features Jack White, Brendan Benson, Jack Lawrence and Patrick Keeler - have confirmed via a short video that their long-awaited new album has just been completed. The group also released a statement, saying: "Just finished making the rock & roll album you've been waiting for." The Raconteurs released their debut studio album, 'Broken Boy Soldiers', in 2006 and have not released a new record since 2008's 'Consolers of the Lonely'. Meanwhile, Jack previously revealed he considers it an artist's responsibility to "show something that no one else is doing". The 43-year-old star - who is best known for his work with The White Stripes - explained his outlook while discussing the rise of digital music. He shared: "If it was 1999 and I was asked: 'What do you think about digital music?', it was my job to say: 'Is that what everyone else is doing? Then I don't like it.' 'If the world had been into analogue, I would've said I loved digital. As an artist it is your job not to take the easy way out. I want to be turned on when I listen to an artist speak: I want them to show something that no one else is doing."



Aalto's fans feel 'accepted' at concerts

Saaara Aalto thinks her fans feel "accepted" when they attend her concerts. The 31-year-old Finnish singer - who came second on 'The X Factor' UK in 2015 - is not planning on slowing her career down anytime soon and has a lot of "ideas" in the pipeline that she wants to achieve in the future. However, the star also wants to continue making her fans feel like they are part of her "family" when they come to her gigs. Speaking to Diva magazine, she said: "I want to do a musical. I want to write a book. I have all these ideas and I can't get away from them. "When people come to my gigs, they feel accepted as they are and they feel part of this family. It's amazing what we can do together. When I sing, when we're together in that bubble, I feel we can change the world." And the 'Monsters' hitmaker also admitted that she is excited to head on tour with a new "intimate" show, which she describes as "Liza Minnelli meets Lady Gaga." She added: "I want to bring people closer to me so it's more intimate, An Evening With Saara Aalto. I tell stories and talk with the audience The 'Dancing On Ice' finalist - who is engaged to her talent manager partner Meri Sopanen - also opened up about her "wellbeing" and the values she has instilled in herself to make sure she never puts her health in jeopardy at the "risk" of her career. She said: "I have my values and I always stick with them. I won't sell my soul to please people. Because of that, things might be a bit harder for me. Industries are used to controlling people, but I don't want that energy. I will never risk my wellbeing for my career and it's always worked out well for me and led me to the right places."



Michael's art collection sold at auction

George Michael's art collection has sold for £11.3 million at auction. The collection of the chart-topping pop star - who died in 2016, aged 53 - featured pieces from the likes of Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst, and some of his most cherished artworks have been sold at Christie's in London to raise money for causes he supported. Damien Hirst's 2006 piece 'The Incomplete Truth' was sold for an eye-watering £911,250, whilst another Hirst piece, 'Saint Sebastian, Exquisite Pain', fetched as much as £875,250 at auction. A 1982 Bridget Riley painting known as 'Songbird' was sold for £791,250, and Tracey Emin's 'Hurricane' was bought for £431,250. Meanwhile, Andrew Ridgeley recently announced he is writing a book about his friendship with the late pop star. The duo met at school and went on to form Wham! in 1981, achieving huge stardom in 1984, before going their separate ways later in the decade. Penguin Random House imprint Dutton will publish 'Wham! George & Me' in October and have promised Andrew will reveal all in "wonderful detail". The publishers said in a statement: "They made and broke iconic records, they were treated like gods, but they stayed true to their friendship and ultimately to themselves. "It was a party that seemed as if it would never end. And then it did, in front of tens of thousands of tearful fans at Wembley Stadium in 1986. "Andrew's memoir covers in wonderful detail those years, up until that last iconic concert: the scrapes, the laughs, the relationships, the good and the bad. It's a unique and one-and-only time to remember that era, that band and those boys."



Gabrielle wants fans to vote on her setlist

Gabrielle wants fans to vote for which songs they want to hear. The 48-year-old singer thinks an online poll - as used by the Rolling Stones, who began asking their fans to select tracks for their setlists - is an "incredible idea" and would help "accommodate a lot of peoples wishes". Speaking to BANG Showbiz, she said: "I think a Twitter poll is an incredible idea, it's definitely something to think about, it would work. I should definitely do something like that. We could accommodate a lot of people's wishes for songs, sometimes it's good to give people what they want. "We're going to have a party, we're going to have fun. I've got the new album to play and the old stuff it's going to be great. "It's getting hard, it's got to the point where we're asking the audience what they want to hear and what I want to add to that." The 'Out Of Reach' hitmaker went on to explain that some fans go as far as sending their own set playlists to her and insisted that although she love her new material, she needs to make sure she includes her biggest hits or her fans would "kill me". The 'Dreams' hitmaker continued: "It was so funny because people have been sending their own playlist and saying what songs should follow the others. Right now I'm whittling down the songs, I kind of know what the setlist is but it is changing a bit because there are ones that I hadn't considered. "But I love my new material so it's a case of deciding how many from my new album I'm going to sing and how many hits from the back catalogue are going. "The audience want the hits otherwise they'd kill me and I love singing them too, I just need to find enough time to do all the songs I want to do, I'm really excited and I can't wait." Gabrielle kicks off her 'Under My Skin' tour on March 20 at the Old Fruitmarket in Glasgow, Scotland, and includes a date at London's O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire.

Migos to release new album next year

A new Migos album will be released next year. Fans have been eagerly awaiting a follow-up to 2018's 'Culture II' and while the trio have all been working on individual projects - Quavo's 'Quavo Huncho', Takeoff's 'The Last Rocket' and Offset's 'Father of 4' - Offset has revealed that a new album is on the way. In a Twitter chat with fans this week, he was asked when Migos plan to drop a new record and replied: "next year". He also revealed that he will release 'Without Warning 2', a sequel to his joint album with 21 Savage. Meanwhile, Offset recently insisted he tried not to "offend anyone" with his solo album 'Father of 4'. The Migos rapper - who has eight-month-old daughter Kulture Kiari with his wife Cardi B, as well as Jordan, nine, and Kody and Kalea, both three, from previous relationships - wrote a song on his record which details the absent role he played in the first years of his daughter Kalea's life, and says the lyrics were "hard" to write. When asked which lyrics of title track 'Father of 4' were difficult to write, the 27-year-old rapper said: "The lyrics about my beautiful daughter Kalea, and not really having a



relationship with her or knowing her mom well. My first daughter. The situation was a tight situation for me but I had to step up, like I said in the song. How it happened was a little rockstar-ish, but I still faced it. I wasn't there for some time, but I faced it, and I'm there now." Offset is pleased people have "embraced" the song, as he was concerned he could have "offended" those involved, or people in similar situations. He added: "Those were the hardest bars, though. It's the truth. I didn't want to offend anyone because it's a very sensitive topic. I didn't offend anyone and I appreciate how the people took it. They embraced it. It's understanding the baby daddy's side of it, who's trying. It ain't no excuse if you're not trying, but there's so much to fatherhood that even when you try, they try to play with it like it ain't enough. I was just trying to let the feelings go, and say, 'If you and your kids see eye-to-eye, and y'all got the relationship and y'all can understand, then it's all good.'"

Foals were 'rearing to go' with their new album

Foals' Jack Bevan says the band were "rearing to go" with their new album. The indie rock band recently dropped their first release since 2015, 'Everything Not Saved Will Be Lost Part 1' - with 'Part 2' coming this spring - and the group's drummer admitted that, following a year-long hiatus, the group has a "creative build up" and so were able to produce content "quicker than normal". In an interview with Music Feeds, Jack said: "Yeah, it was kind of exactly that. After we finished our last album, we were so tired because we'd basically played back-to-back tours of 'Holy Fire' (2013) and 'What Went Down' (2015). "We took a whole year off and I think when we came back, it was the first time we'd really had a break so we were rearing to go. "I think having that time off gave us a bit of a creative build up. So when we went into the studio, it

just came quicker than normal. Jack added that the group - which also includes Yannis Philippakis, Jimmy Smith, and Edwin Congreave - "never set out" to make a double album however they felt like they "couldn't edit" their tracklist down. He said: "We never set out to make a double album but I think we got to a point where we had finished 20 tracks and we were like 'I don't think we can edit this down to 12 or whatever to put on a record' We felt like we wanted to put it all out. "I think we also felt that in the past, as we only tend to make a record every three or four years, like 'Great! We get to put more tracks out, the fans get to hear more music and we get to play more songs live'. It's really satisfying for us to have that extra output."



Lifestyle | Gossip



Keira Knightley took 'so long' to ignore camera on set

Keira Knightley took "so long" to "completely ignore" cameras when shooting a movie. The 33-year-old actress - who has three-year-old daughter Edie, with Klaxons frontman James Righton - is keen to branch out into directing in the future but knows it takes a very different approach to starring on screen. Asked if she wants to direct said: "I don't know, at the moment with a three year old, no. But maybe further down the line. I've worked on a lot of films, I've worked with a lot of wonderful directors and I'm really interested in how it's all put together and I really like working with scripts and storylines. I think there's certain areas that I'm confident I'd be okay in, and certain areas where I'm not as confident. "The problem is, as an actor what I'm meant to do is completely ignore the camera is there, so it's taken me so long to completely ignore the camera there that now if you're thinking about directing you need to be thinking 'why are you there and what lens are you on'." The British star plays Rachael Morgan in James Kent's new

drama 'The Aftermath' and was drawn to the film because there were so many "interesting" and thought-provoking factors that she was left to "think about" when she read her character's script. Speaking to Collider, she added: "I'd never seen a film set exactly in this, I want to say period, but that's not right, it's the aftermath and what that looked like, that kind of post-apocalyptic world and I think that sense of rebuilding, that sense of loss, and that very real sense there was a winning side and a losing side. "But ultimately, if you've lost somebody that you loved, there is no winning, and what does that look like and how do you get past that. "It's a very, very grown-up love story because what happens as a couple you've been through a great tragedy and suddenly you are completely different people and it should be the person that you know best in the world and yet you don't recognize them in any way, how do you reach them, how do you come back together. I thought all of these things were interesting things to think about."



Cara Delevingne: I hope to inspire girls who aren't normal

Cara Delevingne wants to become "an inspiration to girls who aren't normal". The model-turned-actress has developed a strong bond with her fans through her various social media accounts, and Cara has insisted she wants her followers to see the ups and downs of her day-to-day life. Reflecting on her social media activity, Cara - who has starred in movies like 'Paper Towns' and 'Suicide Squad' - told Elle: "I think it's important to express yourself. "I hope I can be an inspiration to girls who aren't normal or feel like they [don't] belong, because I definitely don't a lot of the time." Despite this, Cara previously admitted to finding aspects of social media to be "creepy". The 26-year-old star shared: "I was just in Scotland, and they knew: 'Oh, you were in Inverness this weekend.' I was like: 'How did you know that?' and they said: 'Because someone who was in the bathroom with you tweeted it.' It's just creepy, things like that, someone in a bathroom stall. "When I was growing up, I was fans of so many people in music and acting, but it's a different kind of fandom now, it's like they're obsessed. "They find one person they obsess over and they follow them - they have to know everything about their lives, because you have that access, Instagram and Twitter, you can literally be a part of their lives. So they get one person and that's it. It's really changed things. It's kind of scary, really."

Wonder Woman 1984 'isn't a sequel'

The makers of 'Wonder Woman 1984' don't consider the upcoming movie to be a sequel. The much-anticipated film follows 2017's 'Wonder Woman' - which stars Gal Gadot as the titular character - and veteran producer Charles Roven has explained how the new movie is being approached by the studio. He told Vulture: "[Director Patty Jenkins] was just determined that this movie should be the next iteration of Wonder Woman but not a sequel. And she's definitely delivering on that. "It's a completely different time frame and you'll get a sense of what Diana/Wonder Woman had been doing in the intervening years. But it's a completely different story that we're telling. "Even

though it'll have a lot of the same emotional things, a lot of humor, a lot of brave action. Tugs at the heart strings as well." Earlier this year, meanwhile, Patty revealed she had no plans to helm a DC team movie in the near future. She said: "The 'Justice League' movie, I find those movies to be extremely challenging. I think they are fantastic when they are well done. "But taking on all of those characters at the same time in the timeline ... I sort of hope that we don't do a 'Justice League' movie for a little while because I'm excited to see all of their movies. I want to see 'Aquaman 2', I want to see 'Flash'."



New Suicide Squad movie is a 'total reboot'

The new 'Suicide Squad' movie will be a "total reboot". Producer Peter Safran has confirmed that the James Gunn-directed project will be a complete reboot of the much-discussed original film, which was released in 2016. Asked how excited fans should be about 'Suicide Squad 2', Peter explained to JoBlo: "First of all, we don't call it 'Suicide Squad 2' because it's a total reboot, so it's 'The Suicide Squad' and I think people should be extremely excited about it. "It's everything you would hope from a James Gunn script and I think that says a lot and that promises a lot and I

know that we will deliver a lot." The original 'Suicide Squad' movie boasted a star-studded cast that included the likes of Margot Robbie, Will Smith and Cara Delevingne. The film performed well at the box office, but was also widely panned by critics. Meanwhile, James Gunn was recently rehired for 'Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3'. The acclaimed filmmaker - who previously helmed the first two movies in the money-spinning series - was initially axed by Disney following the emergence of old offensive tweets, but he was rehired for the role earlier this month. Following the announcement, James wrote on

the micro-blogging platform: "I am tremendously grateful to every person out there who has supported me over the past few months. I am always learning and will continue to work at being the best human being I can be. "I deeply appreciate Disney's decision and I am excited to continue making films that investigate the ties of love that bind us all. I have been, and continue to be incredibly humbled by your love and support. From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Love to you all. (sic)".



Alexander Skarsgard: Godzilla Vs. Kong is 'visually extraordinary'

Alexander Skarsgard says 'Godzilla Vs. Kong' is "visually extraordinary". The 42-year-old actor stars in the upcoming monster head-to-head blockbuster - scheduled for release in 2020 - and he has teased that the role is big and fun and completely different to the characters he has portrayed onscreen in the last two years. Speaking to Collider about the project, he said: "We've been shooting for two months, we were in Hawaii for a month we were in Australia for a month and I fly back tomorrow morning to continue. I'm having so much fun, I'm loving it I really am. "It's quite different for The Aftermath, and from most movies I've

been doing the past two years I've done a lot of slightly more cerebral, emotionally intense dramas. So in that way it was quite cathartic and it was exciting to something big and fun and I love the character I play in it and visually it's pretty extraordinary." The Adam Wingard-directed movie follows on from Gareth Edwards' 'Godzilla' and Jordan Vogt-Roberts' 'Kong: Skull Island' and 'Godzilla: King of the Monsters', which is slated for release in 2019. Skarsgard will be joined in the film by Julian Dennison - who starred in 'Deadpool 2' - and Brian Tyree Henry, as well as the Oscar-nominated Demian Bichir and Millie Bobby Brown. Meanwhile, the Swedish star also plays Keira Knightley's [Rachael Morgan] love interest Stefan Lubert in the James Kent directed drama 'The Aftermath', which is set in 1946 postwar Germany, and he insisted that it was the "complexity" of the script that attracted him to the role. He added: "Well I've read quite a few post world war two movies, what made me excited about this one is it felt very different. That world where two narratives is often quite good versus bad, everyone this side is a hero and everyone in Germany is a villain. "I thought it was interesting to read something that had a bit more complexity and I read the novel and thought it was fascinating. This guy is not your stereotypical evil Nazi, but he's also not a hero, he's trying to survive in Germany during the war, trying to protect his daughter. There's a complexity there and it made it very interesting to me."



Haley Lu Richardson turned down Five Feet Apart



Haley Lu Richardson initially turned down 'Five Feet Apart'. The 24-year-old actress stars opposite 'Riverdale's Cole Sprouse in the new romantic drama, which tells the story of two teenagers with Cystic Fibrosis - the genetic condition resulting in mainly respiratory and gastrointestinal problems - but Haley admitted her character's controlling nature made it difficult for her to connect at first. She told The Hollywood Reporter: "Fun fact: I actually passed on this movie. I wasn't super into this script the first time I read it, to be honest. Not because of what these characters go through, but because there were things about Stella that were hard for me to connect to. And I think that aspect of being so in need of control, that was scary for me because you can't fake that innate need or pressure or whatever it is to have these control issues. Her whole life is built around that. The majority of it is because of her situation and her CF, so honestly it was hard. It was hard to picture that happening in this big, magical teen romance world and it was scary to imagine doing justice to that and making that grounded and real in this big genre teen movie. "Honestly, I think it

scared me at first because I didn't know if it was possible, but then it's also a challenge and exciting being as grounded and real of a character and having conversations and saying words that a teenager can actually relate to with this magical, high-stakes situation happening around them." Haley also praised her co-star Cole, 26 as "awesome" and said their work in the movie was a real partnership. She said: "Cole's awesome. I didn't really know what to expect. It's always a bummer when you show up and you meet someone that you're gonna be doing a movie with and you get the sense that they don't really care as much as you do about doing a good job and about doing the best they can or they're not invested in the creative or collaborative aspect of making a movie, and Cole is so not that. He's so deeply artistic and caring and thoughtful, which made it possible to create those scenes and work with him on making these characters real and taking the time they need to make them real, well-rounded people. I just felt like I had a real partner in him, and I appreciated that."

Zachary Levi dreamed he gets paid to get in shape

Zachary Levi "always dreamed" of being given a role where he gets "paid" to get in the best physical shape of his "life". The 38-year-old actor - who is set to play the titular role in the upcoming DC and Warner Bros superhero flick 'Shazam!' - has a new found respect for Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson and the "incredible" workout regime he sticks to when working, and hopes one day he can be on that same "level", despite being the "strongest" he's ever been. Speaking to Collider about The Rock's fitness routine, he said: "I still don't know. It takes a village I'll say that, and he's got an incredible village around him to be able to stay on that schedule because even with everything that I'm doing, I'm still not able to reach 'The Rock' level, but maybe one day! "I hope I'm able to continue in this journey that I'm on right now of strength and wellness and health and the happiness that its brought from

that and just transforming my body and being stronger than I've ever been. "I always dreamed that I'd get paid to be in the best shape of my life and that's essentially happening so I'm happy about it." Levi's DC alter-ego has been brought to life with a red suit, which features an iconic red cape and gold lightning bolt across the chest, however, the star admitted that if there was going to be a sequel, he'd want to make a few "adjustments" on the outfit to make it more "comfortable". He added: "I'd want to make some adjustments on the suit just to make it a little more comfortable, the suit's amazing and it's beautiful and lights up and everything, but I was freezing, we shot in Toronto in the middle of winter and it didn't keep me warm at all and then we'd go on the stage inside and I'd be burning up. I want to work with wardrobe designers and find a happy medium!" — Bang Showbiz



Lifestyle | Features

Puerto Rican star iLe confronts rape culture with defiant new song

Rising Puerto Rican star who struck a chord with a song lambasting US oppression of her homeland is back with a provocative track tackling rape culture and society's machismo. The singer iLe (pronounced EEE-Lay) — whose career kicked off as a singer for her brothers' renowned reggaeton rap band Calle 13 — imbues the traditional Latin bolero style that's often reserved for romance yet with dark, poignant lyrics, calling attention to sensitive issues she says society prefers to ignore.



Puerto Rican singer iLe is interviewed by AFP on March 15, 2019 in New York City. — AFP

Speaking in New York ahead of her performance at the festival "Migrations: The Making of America" — put on by the acclaimed Carnegie Hall — the edgy balladeer said news of the sexual assault and murder of a Puerto Rican woman inspired her to pen the vulnerable "Temes," which unravels the emotional aftermath of a rape.

It's "a song trying to portray so many things that we go through as women that are very unfortunate," iLe, real name Ileana Cabra, told AFP of the song, whose title translates in English to "You're Afraid." "It's a struggle that I can't believe that we're still going through — but it's important to talk about," she said. "My best way of speaking about it is through music."

The 29-year-old singer who began performing with her superstar brothers

as a teenager has since stepped into her own, winning a Grammy for her debut solo album "Ilevitable" that saw her riff on Latin standards. Now she's repurposing her old-school sultry voice to take on contemporary affairs, first with 2018's "Odio" ("Hate"), which unpacks the colonial relationship between the US and Puerto Rico, and now with the striking "Temes." The disturbing-yet-dreamlike video for the song opens with the shoes of a man leaving a room as a woman, played by iLe, slowly composes herself, pulling up her underwear and removing ropes from her neck and wrists to reveal raw wounds.

'A little change'

As of 2012 Puerto Rico — a Caribbean island US territory — had the highest per capita rate in the world of women over 14 killed by intimate partners, according to an American Civil Liberties Union study, with 107 women murdered from 2007 to 2011. And in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria — which in 2017 ripped through the island home to approximately three million people — the problem has only worsened, advocates say, though a lack of telecommunications and bookkeeping infrastructure has made quantifying the problem difficult.

"I always think that these type of situations, like rape and killings — it's something that could happen to me as well," iLe said of her inspiration for "Temes." "If you pull out all the air I breathe/And my voice is leaving you without sound/If you believe that I can't survive without you/Why do you fear me?" she sings in her native Spanish. By the end of the video the woman stands back up, adjusts her sea green dress and boldly leaves the warehouse-esque scene of the crime.

"The song is pretty defiant. It's a song that defies patriarchy," said iLe, whose second album is set for release later this spring. The idea, she said, is pushing people to stop viewing rampant machismo as a normalized fact of life, an effort she says the #MeToo movement has lent steam to. "I'm a little hopeful with younger generations," she said. "Things are always slow. Things that we have now, it took time. We still haven't made that much progress." "But at least we feel a little change." — AFP

In movies and TV, plus-size actresses finally assume leading roles

Long relegated to providing comic relief or playing supporting parts, plus-size actresses are finally getting their due with juicy front-and-center roles in a sign of shifting attitudes towards diverse body types. New Hulu series "Shrill," which debuted Friday and is adapted from the best-selling autobiography of Lindy West, is the latest example of studios willing to depart from the tried and tested formula of slender leading ladies who have dominated the small screen since its creation. To be sure, curvy actresses like the Oscar-winning Octavia Spencer and Mo'Nique, or hip hop icon Queen Latifah, blazed an early trail starting more than a decade back with a string of starring film and television roles.



Aidy Bryant attends Hulu's "Shrill" New York Premiere at Walter Reade Theater in New York City. — AFP

In more recent years, Chrissy Metz has gotten attention for "This Is Us," Danielle Macdonald starred in the Netflix movie "Dumplin'," while in cinema, Rebel Wilson ("Pitch Perfect") and Melissa McCarthy ("Spy," "Ghostbusters") have made themselves regular fixtures. "I think the American public, and probably the public in general, is not used to seeing fat women on TV," Aidy Bryant, the star of "Shrill" who has been a regular on late night comedy show "Saturday Night Live" recently told Elle magazine. "I do think we are starting to see somewhat of a shift," said Rebecca Puhl, a professor at the University of Connecticut where she is deputy director Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. Heavier actresses are also taking on new types of roles.

"In the past, people with obesity were often cast in more of that comedic role

than a serious one," said James Zervios, of the Obesity Action Coalition, which fights against weight bias. "As of very recently, we have begun to see people with obesity, such as Chrissy Metz, cast in more dramatic roles." But, he adds, the progress is more marked for women than it is for men, who struggle to find leading roles outside of comedic performance. According to Puhl, research conducted by her institution has found decades worth of evidence documenting weight stigma in the entertainment industry, where characters with a larger body size "are often ridiculed, depicted engaging in stereotypical behavior like eating or binge eating." "They're also less likely to be shown having positive social interaction," she adds. That bias is even more pronounced in children's television, with large characters portrayed as "as being aggressive or anti-social or unfriendly."

Not there yet

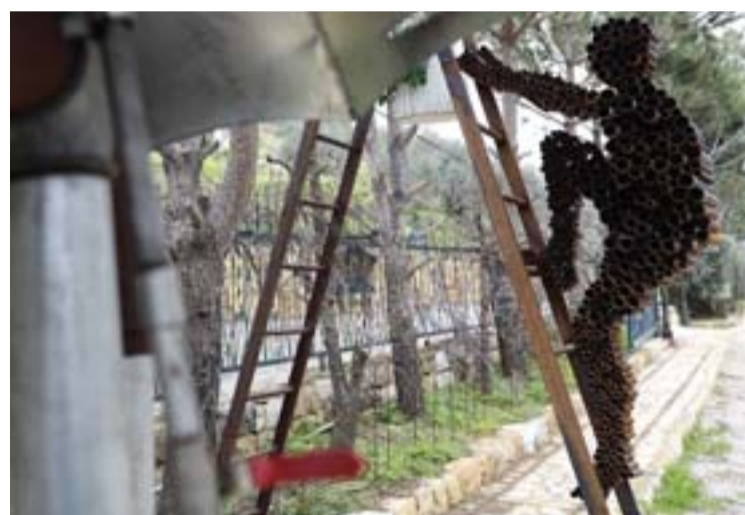
The phenomenon both mirrors and reinforces real word discrimination, adds Puhl, with studies showing that stigmatizing images in the media increase bias. Today, Melissa McCarthy is one of the few plus-size actresses whose weight and physical appearance is barely remarked upon during a film.

For others, like Metz and Macdonald, their characters' obesity may be commented on or are part of the wider story without dominating it. In "Shrill," Annie, played by Aidy Bryant, is constantly reminded of her obesity through a series of micro-aggressions in the opening scene. But the show grows in its complexity, as Annie finds herself becoming increasingly comfortable in her skin despite the inability of others to look beyond her weight.

"In a lot of ways, this is a really traditional television show," Bryant said in her Elle interview, adding: "It's a girl with her job and her boss and her girlfriends and her friends. "But the person at the center is the thing that makes it different. That point of view is what is important." Though recent developments suggest a step in the right direction, "I don't think we're all the way there yet," said Puhl. "Diversity of body sizes needs to be just a standard part of what we see in the media." "We know that two thirds of Americans are either overweight or obese so it makes sense to see these people on screen." — AFP



Lebanese artist turns shrapnel into sculptures



There is a violinist, a farmer tilling his field, and a cocker with a propeller for a head. All were once rockets, artillery shells, or bullets falling on Lebanon's battlefields. Artist Charles Nassar has been transforming their dark, wrangled remains into sculptures to celebrate tradition and memory. "I hate shrapnel, but I also love it at the same time," said the 54-year-old with a neat salt-and-pepper beard, in a garden south of Beirut. A series of conflicts have rocked the tiny multi-confessional country in recent decades. Metal rained down during the 1975-1990 civil war, the 2006 conflict between Lebanese Shiite movement Hezbollah and Israel, and during clashes in a Palestinian camp the following year.

Nassar was forced to flee Lebanon during the civil war, and his grandmother was killed in the violence. But she and other characters of the artist's past live on, displayed in the nooks and crannies of his garden in the village of Remhala.

In one corner, a metal version of his grandmother collects snails, while his father milks a cow nearby. In another sculpture, a woman bakes crispy flatbread slapped inside a traditional outdoor stove. "The shrapnel takes on shapes in my mind... They guide me to what I should do with them," said the artist. Nassar first created his metal sculptures in Beirut, but after the war he decided to display them on land he owned in Remhala.

He has worked the war detritus into 250 creations so far, selling 150 that he is now working to replace. "I don't want to remind people of war," Nassar said. Instead, the idea is that "anybody who was bothered by an artillery shell starts to like it," he added. "I'm trying to turn black into white, something negative into something positive." — AFP



These pictures show sculptures by Lebanese Artist Charles Nassar made out of artillery shrapnel in the village of Remhala, South of Beirut. — AFP photos



Lebanese Artist Charles Nassar inspects one of his sculptures made out of artillery shrapnel in the village of Remhala, South of Beirut.

Classifieds

Monday, March 18, 2019

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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Warm and Partly cloudy with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 25 - 60 km/h causing rising sand.

BY NIGHT: Cool with light to moderate north westerly wind to wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			Strong Wind and Dust	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 17/03/2019 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	23 °C	19 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23 °C	18 °C		
ABDALY	26 °C	17 °C		
BUBYAN	-- °C	-- °C		
JAHRA	25 °C	18 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	23 °C	19 °C		
SALMIYAH	20 °C	18 °C		
AHMADI	21 °C	19 °C		
NUWAISIB	22 °C	19 °C		
WAFRA	23 °C	18 °C		
SALMY	23 °C	14 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	03/18	Warm	25 °C	12 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h
Tuesday	03/19	Warm and some scattered clouds will appear later on	26 °C	11 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 25 km/h
Wednesday	03/20	Warm and Partly cloudy	26 °C	12 °C	VRB-N	08 - 28 km/h
Thursday	03/21	Warm and Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for scattered light rain later on	25 °C	13 °C	N-VRB	06 - 22 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:37
Sunrise	05:56
Zuhr	11:57
Asr	15:22
Sunset	17:57
Isha	19:14

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	25 °C
MIN. Temp.	10 °C
MAX. RH	93 %
MIN. RH	25 %
MAX. Wind	SE 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

CHANGE OF NAME
 Medapati Samelu S/o Medapati Rama Rao (old name) residing at 5-24, Kolmanpeta, Kumudavalli, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh - 534210. Solemnly declare that my name (previously called) Medapati Samelu (old name) changed as Medapati Raju (new name). (C 5501) 18-3-2019

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Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

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Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
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Qatar Airways	22423888
KLM	22425747
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6
British Airways	22425635
Air France	22430224
Emirates	22921555
Air India	22438184
Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Egypt Air	22421578
Swiss Air	22421516
Saudia	22426306

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

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 18/3/2019				Departure Flights on Monday 18/3/2019			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:15	AIC	982	Ahmedabad/Chennai	00:05
THY	766	ISL	00:30	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	254	Amman	00:40	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:15
KAC	504	Beirut	00:45	JZR	111	Doha	01:45
JZR	734	Cairo	00:50	KAC	363	Colombo	01:50
THY	772	Istanbul	00:50	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
KAC	102	London	00:50	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:55
JZR	722	Alexandria	00:55	KAC	417	Manila	02:20
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:00	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:25
DLH	625	Dammam	01:25	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	IGO	1758	Kochi	02:55
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	THY	767	ISL	03:05
IGO	1757	Kochi	01:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	QTR	1087	Doha	04:00
KKK	1268	Istanbul	03:05	KKK	1269	Istanbul	04:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
JZR	502	Lahore	03:35	JZR	701	Asyut	04:30
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:45	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:55
QTR	1076	Doha	04:00	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	FDB	070	Dubai	05:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	JZR	215	Jeddah	06:00
JZR	716	Sohag	04:40	JZR	713	Sohag	06:15
UAE	873	Dubai	04:55	JZR	121	Dubai	06:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:00	THY	771	Istanbul	06:40
KAC	382	Delhi	05:05	UAE	874	Dubai	06:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	KAC	167	Paris	07:10
JZR	404	Hyderabad	05:10	RJA	643	Amman	07:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	05:10	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	KAC	413	Bangkok	07:20
JZR	112	Doha	05:25	JZR	115	Doha	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	05:30	KAC	173	Munich	08:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	KAC	163	MXP	08:40
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:50
JZR	402	Mumbai	06:05	KAC	501	Beirut	09:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:10	KAC	161	Geneva	09:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:25	IGO	1756	CNN	09:00
KAC	678	Dubai	06:55	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:05
BAW	157	London	07:05	JZR	731	Cairo	09:10
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	BAW	156	London	09:10
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	KAC	541	London	09:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	101	London	09:45
IGO	1755	CNN	08:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
KAC	358	Kochi	08:05	KAC	126	Sharjah	09:45
KAC	304	Mumbai	08:20	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	617	Doha	10:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	211	Jeddah	10:40
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:45
AXB	395	Kozhikode	10:50	QTR	1071	Doha	10:45
JZR	702	Asyut	11:05	KAC	117	New York	11:25
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:10	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
JZR	122	Dubai	11:10	AXB	396	Kozhikode	11:50
JZR	116	Doha	11:10	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:00
MSC	415	Sohag	11:15	JZR	221	Riyadh	12:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:35	AXB	890	Mangalore	12:10
JZR	216	Jeddah	11:45	MSC	416	Sohag	12:15
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
JZR	714	Sohag	12:35	QTR	1075	Doha	13:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JZR	113	Doha	13:30
QTR	1078	Doha	13:35				

Israel court orders closure of building in Aqsa compound

JERUSALEM: An Israeli court yesterday ordered the temporary closure of a side building at a highly sensitive Jerusalem holy site that has been the source of tensions in recent weeks. The Jerusalem magistrates court said the building known as the Golden Gate at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound, known to Jews as the Temple Mount, should be closed while the case continues. The site's administrator, the Waqf religious organization, was given 60 days to respond to the court case involving the building. Israeli police have called for the building to be closed.

Waqf spokesman Firas Dibbs said it did not intend to abide by the court's decision, adding that the building remained open yesterday. Jordan, the custodian of the holy site, condemned the court ruling, with its foreign ministry adding that Israel would bear "full responsibility for the dangerous consequences" of the decision. There are believed to be discussions ongoing between Israel and Jordan over the status of the building.

There have in recent weeks been scuffles between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli police at the site in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem over the use of the side building. Palestinian worshippers have been entering the site and praying there despite an Israeli order that it should stay closed. Israel shut access to the Golden Gate in 2003 during the second Palestinian intifada over alleged militant activity there. Palestinian officials argue that the organization that prompted the ban no longer exists and there is no reason for it to remain closed.

The larger compound is the third-holiest site in Islam and a focus of Palestinian aspirations for statehood. It is also the location of Judaism's most sacred spot, revered as the site of the two biblical-era Jewish temples. Jews are allowed to visit but cannot pray there and it is a frequent scene of tension. Israeli officials are concerned tensions at the site could boil over and set off wider clashes ahead of April 9 Israeli elections.

The site has served as a rallying cry for Palestinians. Ofer Zalberg, a senior analyst for the International Crisis Group, said "we are seeing a hardening of the



JERUSALEM: Palestinian Muslims walk past the Golden Gate in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City of Jerusalem on March 1, 2019. — AFP

negotiating positions of both sides" concerning access to the side building. However, the court order gives the Israeli authorities some leeway in enforcement, he said. "The court did not give the police a deadline for implementing its order," said Zalberg. "It introduces clarity,

and now it's at the discretion of the government in terms of the timing and manner of the enforcement."

The Waqf said in a statement on Saturday that it wants to carry out renovations at the building, but keep it open during that time for Palestinians who

wish to pray there. It alleged that far-right Israelis were seeking to take over the side building, but Israeli authorities say they are committed to enforcing the current rules in place at the site that prevent such moves. — AFP

India, Pak had threatened to...

Continued from Page 1

Western diplomat in New Delhi and the Indian official said. Later, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who was also in Hanoi, also called both sides to seek a way out of the crisis. "Secretary Pompeo led diplomatic engagement directly, and that played an essential role in de-escalating the tensions between the two sides," State Department deputy spokesperson Robert Palladino said in a briefing in Washington on March 5. Pompeo spoke to Doval, the Indian and Pakistani Foreign Ministers Sushma Swaraj and Shah Mahmood Qureshi, respectively, Palladino said.

US Indo-Pacific Command Admiral Phil Davidson told reporters in Singapore last week that he had separately been in touch with the Indian navy chief, Sunil Lanba, throughout the crisis. US efforts were focused on securing the quick release of the Indian pilot by Pakistan and winning an assurance from India it would pull back from the threat to fire rockets, the Western diplomat in New Delhi and officials in Washington said.

"We made a lot of effort to get the international community involved in encouraging the two sides to deescalate the situation because we fully realized how dangerous it was," said a senior Trump administration official. The Pakistani minister said China and the United Arab Emirates also intervened. The government of the UAE said Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin

Zayed Al-Nahyan held talks with both Modi and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan.

India has not given details, but has said it was in touch with major powers during the conflict. On the morning of Feb 28, Trump told reporters in Hanoi that he expected the crisis to end soon. "They have been going at it and we have been involved in trying to have them stop. Hopefully that is going to be coming to an end."

Later that afternoon, Khan announced in Pakistan's parliament that the Indian pilot would be released, and he was sent back the next day. "I know last night there was a threat there could a missile attack on Pakistan, which got defused," Khan said. "I know, our army stood prepared for retaliation of that attack." The two countries have gone to war three times since both gained independence in 1947, the last time in 1971. The two armies are trading fire along the line of control that separates them in Kashmir, but the tensions appear contained for now.

Diplomatic experts said that the latest crisis underlined the chances of misread signals and unpredictability in the ties between the nuclear-armed rivals, and the huge dangers. It still was not clear whether India had targeted a militant camp in Pakistan and whether there were any casualties, they said. "Indian and Pakistani leaders have long evinced confidence that they can understand each other's deterrence signals and can deescalate at will," said Joshua White, a former White House official who is now at Johns Hopkins. "The fact that some of the most basic facts, intentions and attempted strategic signals of this crisis are still shrouded in mystery ... should be a sobering reminder that neither country is in a position to easily control a crisis once it begins." — Reuters

Panel calls to impose restrictive measures...

Continued from Page 1

He said the meeting discussed progress made in the northern economic zone and that discussions are still ongoing on this issue, adding that the draft law to regulate the area does not violate the constitution.

Head of the panel MP Salah Khorshid said the meeting also discussed Kuwait's 2035 vision and a number of projects to diversify sources of income, provided they do not violate the constitution. MP Al-Humaidi Al-

Subaei said the government did not provide any cohesive project based on a well-defined strategy, but mostly verbal information. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said that if the draft laws for the mega projects include violations of the constitution, he will grill the defense minister. MP Safa Al-Hashem said the government did not provide any concrete proposals or any legislation on the issue.

In the meantime, two independent candidates elected in the by-election held on Saturday to fill the seats of former MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabaei and Jamaan Al-Harbash will take the oath in tomorrow's session and serve the remaining one and a half years in this term. Bader Al-Mulla and Abdullah Al-Kandari, both lawyers, were elected in the second and third constituencies, respectively defeating their nearest Islamist rivals - former MPs Hamad Al-Matar and Ammar Al-Ajmi.

Survivor says Quran shelf...

Continued from Page 1

The first person he saw struck was a Palestinian, a man who was an engineer by training but who, like Abobora, also drove a taxi in the city. "He walked up just to see what is going on and then he saw the attacker. When he tried to run he shot him somewhere here," Abobora recalled, pointing to his side. "I saw him falling down."

Soon Brenton Tarrant, the 28-year-old Australian police say carried out the massacre, was inside the prayer hall, pumping round after round into the defenseless worshippers. Abobora said he instinctively fell to the ground and managed to squeeze himself against a bookshelf that held the Qurans. Crucially, it made his body a slightly smaller target. "I just pretended as if I am dead," he said. Abobora said he was sickened at how methodical the killer was, firing round after round into the crumpled pile of bodies in a well-planned attack he later learned was broadcast on Facebook.

"This guy started to shoot randomly, left and right, automatic. And then he finished the first box (magazine) and then he changed it, again automatic. Then he finished the second one, he put the third box, again start automatic in the other room again." He could feel the shockwaves from the bullets pass by his body. "I was waiting (for) my moment, when every second (a) shot comes I was saying 'This is for me. This is for me'. And I lost hope," he said. He began to silently pray and

think of his family.

The horror was far from over when the gunman departed after emptying a fourth magazine before driving across town to commit a second atrocity at the Linwood mosque. For an agonizing number of minutes afterwards, no one at the Al Noor mosque dared make a sound. But as the pain got too much for the wounded, people started crying out. The scene in front of Abobora was hellish. "There was blood everywhere," he said. A friend called out, saying he had been shot in the leg. He tried to help him up but the leg was shattered by the bullet.

Abobora staggered outside to find another worshipper - whose son is friends with his eldest son - alive but with horrific injuries. He had been shot in the jaw, his hand and his back. It was only after laying the man down he noticed two more bodies - two women lying in a pool of blood. "They were latecomers," he explained. "When he (the gunman) finished everyone in the mosque and he came out to escape, these ladies were late, and he shot them. Bang. Bang."

Close by was one of the gunman's discarded rifles and Abobora said he instantly recognized "Nazi" symbols written on it as well as historic places and dates celebrated by the far-right such as the Battle of Vienna in 1683. "He wrote all the places where Muslims were attacked on the gun, all over the gun." Like most of Christchurch's inhabitants, Abobora said he never believed such hatred would arrive on his doorstep. "We used to say New Zealand is safe, especially in Christchurch we say we are safe, it's a trusting system here. The Muslims here, we are the most quiet people," he said, adding the mosques in the city don't even broadcast the call to prayer. "New Zealand is not safe anymore," he concluded. "This is brutal." — AFP

Kiwis pay tribute as families clamor...

Continued from Page 1

Husna Ahmad was among four women believed to have been killed by Tarrant, who documented his radicalization and two years of preparations in a lengthy, meandering and conspiracy-filled far-right "manifesto". Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said her office and some 30 other officials had received the document by email about nine minutes before the attack. "It did not include a location, it did not include specific details," she said, adding that it was sent to security services within two minutes of receipt.

Earlier yesterday, the prime minister, wearing a black headscarf, appeared visibly moved as she greeted and hugged members of the Muslim community in Wellington, and laid a floral tribute to the victims of Friday's atrocity. Around Christchurch, New Zealand and the world there have been vigils, prayers, memorials and messages of solidarity. "We stand together with our Muslim brothers & sisters" were the words on a large red banner, above a sea of flowers at one of the sites in what one resident dubbed the "city of sorrow".

An emotion-filled haka - the Maori war dance - was performed by a New Zealand biker gang to honor the Christchurch dead. The country remained on high alert yesterday, with police closing an airport in the southern city of Dunedin - where Tarrant had lived - after an unidentified package was spotted on the airfield.

The dead from Friday's attack span generations, aged between three and 77, according to a somber list circulated among relatives. Some victims came from the neighborhood, others from as far afield as Egypt or Fiji. At least two of the dead came from the same family - a father and son. Delhi said yesterday that five of its nationals were killed in the attack, while Pakistan said nine of its citizens were among the dead.

"It's a massacre, what else do they need to know?" said school principal Sheikh Amjad Ali, expressing frustration over the wait for loved ones' remains. Islamic custom dictates that the dead should be buried within 24 hours, but strained authorities, desperate to make sure no mistakes are made or the complex investigation harmed, said a quick process was difficult. "All of the deceased have had a CT scan, their fingerprints are taken, the property they were wearing or had with them is removed," said Chief Coroner Deborah Marshall, adding that dental impressions were taken and post-mortems performed. Ardern said she expected all the dead would have been returned to their families by Wednesday.

Authorities said 34 people remained in hospital. Among those fighting for their lives is four-year-old Alin Alsati. The preschooler was praying alongside her father Wasseim at the Al Noor mosque when she was shot at least three times. Her father, who was also shot, recently emigrated to New Zealand from Jordan. "Please pray for me and my daughter," he pleaded in a Facebook video message from his hospital bed before undergoing surgery.

The mosque attacks have shaken this usually peaceful country, which prides itself on welcoming refugees fleeing violence or persecution. Today, Ardern will gather her cabinet to discuss changing the country's gun laws. That could include a ban on semi-automatic weapons of the type used by Tarrant. A series of reform attempts in recent years have failed. Ardern also wants answers from social media giants over the livestreaming of the carnage. Facebook said it had removed 1.5 million videos of the attack around the world in the first 24 hours. The video has been classed as "objectionable" under New Zealand law, meaning that anyone who shares it could face prosecution and jail.

Meanwhile after days of lockdowns, security warnings and fear, police have urged Kiwis to go back to their normal business. When they return to work, school and hobbies today however, they will find a high police presence, said commissioner Mike Bush. "This is for everyone's safety, to reassure the public." — AFP

Hero refugee chased gunman...

Continued from Page 1

But when he started swearing, I knew he was not the good guy," he said.

Aziz hurled the machine at Tarrant and then ducked between cars as the self-confessed fascist unleashed a barrage of shots at him. Aziz then heard one of his sons call out, "Daddy, please come back inside!" Unhurt, he picked up an empty shotgun the gunman had discarded and shouted "come on here" repeatedly in an effort to draw him away from his sons and the other worshippers. "When he see the gun in my hands, I don't know what happened, he dropped the gun and I chased him with my own gun... I managed to throw the gun on his car and smash the car window, and I could see he was a bit frightened."

The 48-year-old kept chasing the attacker as he sped off in his car. The gunman was apprehended by two armed police officers soon afterwards. Aziz returned to the mosque where he was met by scenes of carnage.

Dead bodies were strewn around the mosque, among them his close friends. "When I close my eyes, I still see bodies everywhere," he said. "We are all still in shock, but what can you do. You cannot bring them back."

Then came another shock. Aziz said police who arrived after the shooting blocked him from re-entering the mosque, thinking he might have been the gunman as he was seen earlier with the weapon. "For a long time, I didn't know if my kids were alive or dead or injured because I couldn't go inside the mosque," Aziz said. He later found out all his sons had survived. Aziz arrived in Australia as a child refugee. He lived in Sydney for almost three decades before moving to Christchurch two-and-a-half years ago.

He says he has nothing but contempt for the attacker. "A lot of people tell him he is a gunman. But... a man never hurts anybody. He is not a man - he is a coward," Aziz said. He said he was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from his neighbors after the attacks. "There's very nice people around here. When I went home last night, my wife told me all the neighbors, they sent flowers... cards, foods, cakes. They showed all their love. 'That's why I love New Zealand - you won't get that sort of love and that sort of respect anywhere.'" — AFP

Sports

Federer, Thiem into Indian Wells final as Nadal hobbles out

Nadal confirmed he would skip upcoming Miami Masters

INDIAN WELLS: The 39th match between Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal failed to materialize on Saturday as the world No. 2 Spaniard hobbled out of Indian Wells to send Federer into a title clash with Dominic Thiem.

Nadal, whose longstanding right knee trouble flared up in his quarter-final victory over Karen Khachanov, couldn't take the court for the blockbuster semi-final with Swiss great Federer.

"I wanted to try my best to be competitive today," a dejected Nadal said. "I warmed up today in the morning, and I felt that my knee was not enough good to compete at the level that I need to compete, to play semi-finals match of this event." Federer, seeded fourth as he pursues a record sixth title in the California desert, will battle 25-year-old Austrian Thiem, who is seeking his first title in one of the ATP's prestigious Masters 1000 events.

Thiem, ranked eighth in the world, was rock-solid in a 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (3/7), 6-4 victory over 14th-ranked Canadian Milos Raonic.

Thiem, who advanced to the semis on a walkover when Gael Monfils withdrew with an Achilles tendon inflammation, was locked-in from the start, firing 10 winners without an unforced error in the opening set.

He couldn't convert his only break point against Raonic in the second, and Raonic managed to seize the tiebreaker aided by a favorable netcord bounce for a 5-3 lead. Thiem gained the first break of the match for a 3-2 lead in the third and after saving the only break point he faced all day as he served for the match wrapped it up with a sparkling backhand volley.

"It was an amazing day," said Thiem, who will be playing in his third Masters 1,000 final. "His serve is just

unreal so even though I played amazing it was so close the first two sets." The Austrian said it would "mean the world" to break through for a Masters crown, but noted it would be a tall order against 20-time Grand Slam winner Federer—who is coming off a remarkable 100th career title in Dubai last month.

"It's not going to be easy," said Thiem, who has split four prior meetings with Federer 2-2. Federer was looking forward to the match and the chance to break out of a tie with Novak Djokovic for most Indian Wells titles, but was sorry to miss a meeting with Nadal.

Their rivalry stretches back 15 years, and Federer couldn't help wondering how many more chances they might have. "We've had so many epic battles," Federer, 38, said. "I know that every one that we have now could be our last. So was this our chance at a last one—I hope not and I believe at the level he's playing and the level I'm still going there's definitely going to be more."

The injury was devastating news for Nadal, whose run to the Australian Open final in January marked a return to competition for the first time since similar knee trouble forced him out of his US Open semi-final against Juan Martin del Potro in September.

He had ankle surgery in November, and only returned to training in December. "For me it's not about only today. It's about what it means for me to have to pull out in a tournament that I love so much like this one, and in the semi-finals after playing well during the whole tournament," Nadal said. "You can imagine that I can't be happy." Nadal confirmed he would also skip the upcoming Miami Masters and aim to recover and prepare for the claycourt season, targeting a return at Monte Carlo April 14-21. — AFP



INDIAN WELLS: Dominic Thiem of Austria plays a backhand against Milos Raonic of Canada during their men's singles semifinal match on day thirteen of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Saturday in Indian Wells, California. — AFP

Ali Al-Khorafi wins show jumping competition



KUWAIT: Upcoming and promising rider Ali Al-Khorafi won the Kuwait Equestrian Sports Club show jumping competition of the 105cm.

The winners are: 1st Ali Al-Khorafi and Catalana, 2nd Judy Alayash and Alberto, 3rd Ali Al-Saqer and Armani, 4th Bassam Al-Shemali and Willy, 5th Saud Al-Marshood and Trigger, 6th Abdulrahman Al-Madahka and Dicale.

Disappointed Lewis says race was over by first turn

MELBOURNE: A disappointed Lewis Hamilton said yesterday his Australian Grand Prix was "done and dusted" by the first corner as he was left searching answers after failing to match the pace of Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas.

The five-time world champion started from pole at the season-opening race but was pipped at turn 1 by the Finn and was never in contention as he quickly pulled away to beat the Briton by almost 21 seconds.

To rub salt in his wounds, Bottas also picked up an extra point for the fastest lap.

Hamilton, who was quickest in all three practice sessions and during qualifying, was gracious in defeat, but also struggling to know what went wrong.

"I had a pretty straightforward race today; I lost position at the start and my race was pretty much done and dusted after the first corner," he said.

"Afterwards it was really about bringing the car home and bagging

the points.

"I had to pit early to cover the pit stop from Ferrari, so I had a long second stint and drove super carefully to make sure I had tyres left at the end of the race."

Autosport.com said Mercedes had discovered damage to the floor of Hamilton's car following post-race checks, possibly caused by hitting debris or running across a kerb.

Team chief Toto Wolff had no immediate answers. "For Lewis, it was a harder afternoon—the start was not as good as Valtteri, then we had to pit him earlier than ideal to cover the risk of being undercut by (Sebastian) Vettel," he said.

"That gave him a long stint on the tyres and none of us knew if they would make it to the end, so it was hard to judge the right pace and he wasn't happy with the car balance. "My feeling is that it can be tricky to find the sweet spot with these new cars and tyres, and probably we didn't manage that today with Lewis."

Despite not getting the win he was aiming for, Hamilton said it was "an incredible weekend for the team". "I'll bag the 18 points I got today, keep working and come back recharged for the next one," he said. "It was a really great weekend for the team and I'm really happy for everyone. We showed a great performance today and we need to continue to build on this—we have a long season ahead of us." — AFP

Bottas upstages Hamilton at Australian Grand Prix

MELBOURNE: Valtteri Bottas upstaged his Mercedes world champion team-mate Lewis Hamilton yesterday to win the season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix in a sizzling performance that he called his "best ever".

The flying Finn started second on the grid but got a jump on the polesitting Briton at the first corner and never looked back, scorching round the Albert Park circuit to take the chequered flag a massive 20.9 seconds ahead of Hamilton.

Red Bull's precocious Max Verstappen came third to join them on the podium after audaciously overtaking Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel midway through the race. "How about that! Yes!" said Bottas over the team radio after also taking the new bonus point for the fastest lap.

"I don't know what just happened. I don't know what to say. It was definitely my best race ever," he said after. "I felt so good and the car was so good. Four-time world champion Vettel had to settle for fourth, trailing in 57.1 seconds behind Bottas. Ferrari partner Charles Leclerc was fifth, with Kevin Magnussen in a Haas sixth. Bottas, whose last triumph was at the Abu Dhabi season finale in 2017, was overshadowed last year by Hamilton, fail-

ing to win a race, hampered by mechanical problems and bad luck but was fast in qualifying and only narrowly edged out of pole position.

"In the beginning it was all about managing the race and building the gap," Bottas said. "I knew I could do it, I've done it before, it was about being at my best level." Bottas, now in his third year with Mercedes, knows he must perform with promising Frenchman Esteban Ocon, 22, waiting in the wings as the team's reserve driver. He delivered in spades on Sunday for his fourth Grand Prix win in his 119th race.

"It's a good weekend for the team," said Hamilton. "Valtteri drove an incredible race today so he deserved it. "We have some work to do, (but) it is more than we could have hoped for as a team." Starting on soft tyres on a fine day, Bottas got an electric start and built a gap of 1.153 seconds on Hamilton after the opening lap, with Vettel, Verstappen and Leclerc trailing in their wake.

The gap kept growing, and when Vettel pitted on lap 14 to swap for medium tyres Mercedes called in five-time champion Hamilton soon after. Bottas stayed out, pumping out fastest laps, and when seven laps later he pitted he emerged more than 10 seconds ahead of his team-mate, who was clearly bemused.

"What was the reason for stopping so early?" Hamilton asked over the team radio, to be told it was to cover Vettel's early stop. With Bottas having an unsurmountable lead the battle was on for second, with Verstappen hounding Hamilton but unable to find a way through. "I had



MELBOURNE: Mercedes' Finnish driver Valtteri Bottas celebrates on the podium after winning the Formula One Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne yesterday. — AFP

to overtake Sebastian to get onto podium which is not easy here but was happy to pull that move off," said Verstappen, who was ecstatic at beating the Ferraris.

Mercedes have been in a class of their own all weekend, turning the tables on pre-season testing when Ferrari looked like the team to beat. The Italian team's performance will be a source of worry, especially as they haven't won the constructors' title since 2008 and their last driver to become world champion was Kimi Raikkonen in 2007.

In contrast, Mercedes and Hamilton

have been dominant, winning the drivers' and constructors' titles five years in a row. Carlos Sainz Jr was the first casualty, forced to stop his McLaren with smoke and flames billowing out of his engine on lap 10 while he was running 14th.

It was also a day to forget for local hero Daniel Ricciardo in his first race for Renault after switching from Red Bull. He lost his front wing after running onto the grass before the first corner and had to pit for a new nose. He finally retired on lap 30 of the 58-lap race. The next Grand Prix is in Bahrain on March 31. — AFP

Bring on the World Cup! Wales believe after Grand Slam

CARDIFF: Wales were hailed yesterday for the energy, drive and belief that powered them to the Six Nations Grand Slam, legendary fly-half Barry John saying the World Cup could not come around quick enough.

The Welsh thumped Ireland 25-7 at Cardiff's Principality Stadium on Saturday to follow victories over France (24-19), Italy (26-15), England (21-13) and Scotland (18-11). It was also a 14th consecutive win, based around an iron-clad, swarming defence and an ever-strengthening squad coach Warren Gatland has forged around talismanic captain Alun Wyn Jones.

"You can see the camaraderie that Gatland and Alun Wyn have built so superbly," ex-Wales and British and Irish Lions icon John said in his Wales on Sunday column. "It's resulted in the Grand Slam. Bring on the World Cup."

Wales, John continued, "are getting more and more confident and need fear nobody out in Japan", where the World Cup runs from September 20 until November 2. Former Welsh and Lions prop Graham Price said Wales were thriving on the winning momentum that has seen them rise to second in World Rugby standings.

"Get to the World Cup and anything can happen!" Price said, with Wales drawn in Pool D along with Australia, Fiji, Georgia and Uruguay. "I am optimistic we are going to do well at the World Cup and, if we were to face the All Blacks, the later the better."

Sam Warburton, who was named Welsh skipper at the age of 22 by Gatland and led Wales to their 2012 Grand Slam, hailed the "fairytale finish" for his former coach, who steps down from his job after the World Cup.

"It will be the most rewarding of his three Grand Slams because it is almost a fairytale to do this in his final Six Nations campaign," Warburton said in the Sunday Times.

"To do it in a World Cup year too - the last team to complete the clean sweep in such a year were England in 2003 and look how that panned out (they won the World Cup) - makes it extra special." Warburton maintained that the sole team in world rugby he would worry about Wales playing were double defending world champions New Zealand.

"If it was anyone else at the moment, I would back Wales," said the flanker who retired from rugby last year after a succession of injuries.

"If somebody else beat New Zealand and knocked them out of the tournament, as a Welsh fan you would be thinking, 'Oh my God, this is on.'" Ian McGeechan, the former Scotland and Lions centre who was Gatland's predecessor as Lions coach, hailed the New Zealander as a "fantastic servant" to Wales and northern hemisphere rugby in general.

"What I liked about this (Grand Slam) was the spirit Wales showed when they were under the cosh," McGeechan said in the Sunday Telegraph. "They never panicked. You cannot fake that."

There can be no denying the pressure has been ramped up on Wales, where the public are notoriously fickle and every family, as the joke goes, has an international selector in their ranks. But Warburton said Gatland had "simply changed the psychology of the nation".

"Wales are now a team of achievers and the nation wants and believes that the team can achieve," he said. — AFP

Sports

Shiffrin ends sublime season on a high with record-equalling fourth globe

Noel wins as Hirscher claims slalom globe

SOLDEU: Mikaela Shiffrin capped her phenomenal season with victory in the giant slalom at the World Cup finals in Soldeu yesterday for her 17th win and a record-equalling fourth globe. The all-conquering American ski queen added the giant slalom to the super-G and slalom titles having already been crowned the overall champion for the third straight season at the start of March by securing the crystal globe.

That drew her alongside Lindsey Vonn and Tina Maze, the only other two women skiers to capture four titles in the one season. Only former Swiss ski great Pirmin Zurbriggen has bettered that tally when he ended the 1987 season with five titles.

Shiffrin, who turned 24 this week, has maintained her impressive run of form right to the end, even though she only had to finish in the first 15 on Sunday to be assured of winning the overall giant slalom title.

On Saturday the unstoppable skier from Colorado won the slalom, these two wins coming after last week's exploit in the Czech Republic when she set a new record for most World Cup victories in a season with her 15th. That pulled her clear of the previous benchmark of 14 set by Swiss legend Vreni Schneider who achieved the feat in 1988-89. Yesterday was Shiffrin's 60th World Cup win. Vonn, who is 10 years older, retired with 82 career wins in February.

Vonn claimed four globes twice, in 2010 and 2012, while Maze achieved the same feat in 2013. Shiffrin ended her season at the top of the podium after beating New Zealander Alice Robinson, the 17-year-old invited to the World Cup finals as junior world champion in the discipline, by 0.30sec.

Slovakia's Petra Vlhova took third at 0.4s. If Shiffrin

is able to maintain her rate of success, she will threaten the outright record of 86 World Cup wins held by Swedish legend Ingemar Stenmark in two seasons time.

The one record that escaped her clutches this campaign was the points record of 2,414 set by Maze in 2013. She winds up the 2018/2019 season with 2,204. Aside from Shiffrin, it was the precocious performance of teenage New Zealander Robinson that caught the eye in Andorra, the youngster climbing the podium for the first time, aged just 17 years, three months.

The Kiwi left a cluster of established stars in her wake, including France's double world champion Tessa Worley and Viktoria Rebensburg, Germany's 2010 Olympic champion who was penalised for a major mistake on her second run.

Earlier, Sweden's 2018 Olympic slalom champion Frida Hansdotter competed in her final race Saturday. To mark her retirement, she came down the slope wearing traditional Swedish costume, basket in hand to distribute bread rolls, followed by a champagne shower with her teammates at the finish.

Later, Marcel Hirscher trailed in out of the top 10 behind Clement Noel in the season-closing men's World Cup slalom having already secured the discipline's small globe. Marcel Hirscher trailed in out of the top 10 behind Clement Noel in Sunday's season-closing men's World Cup slalom having already secured the discipline's small globe.

The Austrian, who finished 14th, was receiving his sixth slalom title to add to his eighth successive overall crystal globe. For Noel it was a third win of the season and it left him in second place in the slalom standings, more than 300 points behind Hirscher.



ANDORRA: General overall FIS Alpine ski winners Austria's Marcel Hirscher (L) and US Mikaela Shiffrin (R) celebrate with their crystal globe trophies during the podium ceremony after competing in the Men's FIS Alpine ski world cup championship and in the Women's FIS Alpine ski world cup championship yesterday, in Grandvalira Soldeu - El Tarter, in Andorra. — AFP

Noel dominated the first run but could muster only the 20th fastest time on the second yet he had enough in hand to take the win from Manuel Feller and Daniel Yule. Germany's Felix Neureuther was showered with

champagne after his final race before retirement.

Last weekend Hirscher raised the prospect of his own retirement at the age of 30 after making certain of the overall title in Slovenia. — AFP

South Africa pin World Cup hopes on bowlers

CAPE TOWN: South Africa finished their one-day series against Sri Lanka with a clear idea of both the team and the tactics they will use in the upcoming Cricket World Cup. Sri Lanka, after their fourth 5-0 series defeat in less than two years, appeared to be in disarray.

South African captain Faf du Plessis said after the fifth match on Saturday night that he was "98 to 99 percent" sure who would go to England. He said the "one or two percent" was to allow for "guys who are really red hot or striking good form".

Sri Lankan captain Lasith Malinga said form in a forthcoming domestic tournament would be important, while he expected experienced players like Angelo Mathews and Dinesh Chandimal - who did not play in South Africa - to be in contention.

Du Plessis indicated that South Africa were pinning their hopes on a potent bowling line-up to win matches, even if meant that the team might have a lengthy tail. South Africa's fast bowlers, backed by leg-spinner Imran Tahir, dominated the Sri Lankan batsmen, who were unable to bat out a full 50 overs in any of the matches.

Du Plessis cited the example of Pakistan, who won the 2017 Champions Trophy in England. "I've been in teams that have had a very long batting line-up and it didn't prove successful," said Du Plessis.

"You can learn from your mistakes and you can look at other teams where they have got it right. Pakistan had a very average batting line-up but it didn't matter to them because they kept bowling teams out."

Du Plessis said that if the bowlers performed, it would be up to the top six in the batting order to make sure they scored enough runs. Malinga, who has captained Sri Lanka to nine one-day losses without a win, said at the post-match presentation: "We tried hard in the last five matches but we didn't get enough runs on the board."

Malinga said his players had fought hard and the bowlers had stuck to their plans without luck. But evidence of the fight claimed by Malinga was seldom in evidence during the matches. With coach Chandika Hathurusingha recalled to Sri Lanka ahead of the remaining matches on tour - three Twenty20 internationals - it seemed Sri Lanka had much to sort out before the World Cup starting on May 30.

But the same was said before last month's Test series in South Africa, which Sri Lanka won against the odds under the captaincy of Dimuth Karunaratne. Seven of South Africa's likely World Cup squad will be playing in the Indian Premier League, which starts on Saturday. The fixtures have not been finalised but it is likely the IPL will only finish about two weeks before the start of the World Cup.

Key bowlers Kagiso Rabada, Lungi Ngidi and Tahir, as well as promising fast bowler Anrich Nortje, will be playing in the IPL - as will Du Plessis, Quinton de Kock and David Miller. Du Plessis said he had no power over IPL decisions, "but if we can get some guys even a week's break before we join up together that will be great for us. We'll see if that can be a possibility".

Du Plessis, Rabada, Ngidi, Tahir and De Kock were all named on Sunday in South Africa's squad for the first Twenty20 international against Sri Lanka at Newlands on Tuesday but will not play in the last two matches. — AFP

Khan takes five, Afghanistan set 147 to win maiden Test

DEHRADUN: Spinner Rashid Khan claimed five wickets to put Afghanistan in sight of their maiden Test victory after bowling out Ireland for 288 on day three of the one-off game yesterday. Chasing 147 to win, Afghanistan were 29 for one at stumps. Ihsanullah Janat, on 16, and Rahmat Shah, on 11, were batting at close of play in Dehradun.

Spinner Andy McBrine had opener Mohammad Shahzad caught behind for two before Janat and Shah, who made 98 in Afghanistan's first innings total of 314, played out the last few overs of the day.

Ireland batsmen Andy Balbirnie and Kevin O'Brien had earlier hit half-centuries before Khan returned career-best figures of 5-82 to bowl out Ireland in the final session of play. "Feeling happy to get some wickets for the team when the team needed me," Khan, who has taken seven wickets in the match, told reporters.

"It was tough to grip the new ball because I had a finger injury and tough for me to pitch it on the right length as was paining a lot," he said, referring to the injured middle finger of his bowling arm. Balbirnie made 82 and O'Brien 56 before a 10th-wicket 58-run partnership between James Cameron-Dow and Tim Murtagh set up a potentially tricky chase for the Afghans.

Cameron-Dow was left unbeaten on 32 after number 11 Murtagh, who hit 54 not out in Ireland's first innings score of 172, was the last man out on 27. "I am not surprised, if you have seen Test cricket even tailenders have records," said Khan.

"Plan was to bowl as many good deliveries as possible. But they chose the right deliveries to score and that's how they made runs."

Earlier Balbirnie put on 104 runs for the third wicket with James McCollum, who made 39, to frustrate the Afghanistan bowlers in the first session. An umpiring howler cost Ireland their first wicket of the day with Paul Stirling adjudged lbw off paceman Yamin Ahmadzai for 14 after the opener got a thick edge onto his pad.

Rahm takes lead at Players as McIlroy, Fleetwood battle

MIAMI: Jon Rahm stormed into the lead at the Players Championship in Florida on Saturday, firing an eight-under-par 64 to take a one-shot advantage into the final round as he chases his first win of the year.

The 24-year-old Spanish ace surged into contention after taming TPC Sawgrass's Stadium Course at Ponte Vedra Beach with a scintillating exhibition of accurate iron shots and solid putting.

The world number 10 only narrowly missed out on equalling the course record 63 after finishing the third round with a 15-under-par aggregate of 201. Rahm took sole possession of the lead after overnight leader Rory McIlroy endured a mixed round. The Northern Ireland star recovered from a bogey-bogey start to card a two-under-par 70 to finish the day at 14 under.

England's Tommy Fleetwood will also start the fourth round one off the pace. Fleetwood recovered from a double-bogey on the first, and two more bogeys on the front nine, to

card a two-under-par 70 for 14 under.

Rahm meanwhile is hoping to claim his first win of the year after a remarkably consistent start to 2019 which has included top-10 finishes in five of six starts. The Spaniard attributed his success on Saturday to a newfound mental durability.

"For the past year or so, I've been working so hard in the mental aspect of my game, trying to keep myself in check a little bit more," Rahm said after his round. "That's been the key this week. I've been so balanced, nothing like I used to be, not getting frustrated when I miss shots."

"I've been really proud the way I've handled. Hopefully tomorrow I can continue it and get a good round."

Rahm's fireworks on Saturday came on the back nine, which he completed in six under to move clear of the field. A birdie on the 10th was followed by an eagle on the par-five 11th, when he drilled a magnificent second shot from the fairway to three feet from 244 yards.

A laser-guided tee shot to three feet on the par-three 13th yielded a further birdie, and then two more birdies on the 16th and 17th took him to eight under for the day.

McIlroy meanwhile was in trouble from the start, carding bogeys at the first and second to immediately give the chasing pack hope. But he responded to that early setback on the par-three third hole, draining a 14-foot birdie putt to pick up a shot. — AFP



DEHRADUN: Afghanistan's Ihsanullah Janat (L) plays a shot during the third day of the Test cricket match between Afghanistan and Ireland at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Dehradun yesterday. — AFP

Balbirnie, who resumed the day on 14, stood firm to register his maiden Test half-century with a boundary off Mohammad Nabi. Ireland took lunch at

124-2 but a batting collapse in the second session saw them slip to 157-6, with Khan and Salamkheil sharing the spoils. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the one-off Test between Afghanistan and Ireland in Dehradun yesterday:

Ireland first innings 172 (T. Murtagh 54 not out, G. Dockrell 39, Y. Ahmadzai 3-41, M. Nabi 3-36)

Afghanistan first innings 314 (R. Shah 98, A. Afghan 67; S. Thompson 3-28)

Ireland second innings (overnight 22-1)

W. Porterfield c Khil b Ahmadzai	0
P. Stirling lbw b Ahmadzai	14
A. Balbirnie c Khil b Salamkheil	82
J. McCollum lbw b Khan	39
K. O'Brien lbw b Khan	56
S. Poynter c Janat b Salamkheil	1
S. Thompson c Janat b Khan	1
G. Dockrell lbw b Khan	25
A. McBrine st Khil b Khan	4
J. Cameron-Dow not out	32
T. Murtagh c Rahmat b Ahmadzai	27
Extras: (b4, lb2, w1)	7
Total: (all out, 93 Overs)	288
Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Porterfield), 2-33 (Stirling), 3-137 (Balbirnie),	

4-141 (McCollum), 5-150 (Poynter), 6-157 (Thompson), 7-220 (Dockrell), 8-229 (O'Brien), 9-230 (McBrine), 10-288 (Murtagh)	
Bowling: Ahmadzai 14-1-52-3, Nabi 20-1-58-0, Khan 34-7-82-5, Salamkheil 17-2-66-2, Momand 8-0-24-0 (w1).	

Afghanistan second innings (target 147)

M. Shahzad c Poynter b McBrine	2
I. Janat not out	16
R. Shah not out	11
Total: (1 wicket, 16 overs)	29
Fall of wickets: 1-5 (Shahzad)	
To bat: A. Afghan, H. Shahidi, I.A. Khil, M. Nabi, R. Khan, Y. Ahmadzai, W. Momand, W. Salamkheil	
Bowling: Dockrell 7-4-18-0, McBrine 8-4-8-1, Cameron-Dow 1-0-3-0.	

Smith, Warner meet with Australia team as bans near end

SYDNEY: Steve Smith and David Warner have met with their Australia team mates in the United Arab Emirates to smooth the ground for their return to international cricket when their bans expire at the end of the month.

The former test captain and vice-captain were suspended for 12 months for their roles in a ball-tampering scandal in South Africa last March and have not been allowed to play top-level cricket since. While Australia have struggled without their two best batsmen, questions have been raised over how easily they would re-integrate into the squad for the one-day World Cup and Ashes tour of England.

Coach Justin Langer appeared to have no such qualms after meeting with the pair ahead of the one-day series against Pakistan that starts on Friday in Sharjah. "They have been received really well," Langer said. "They have gone through a really tough time, a 12-month suspension ... it's great to have them back in the team."

"They're excited and ... as a coach when you have got two guys with as many runs and experience as they've got coming back into a team that's playing well, that's very exciting." While the bans end in time for the pair to play the final two matches of the Pakistan series, neither was included in the squad as they are both recovering from recent elbow surgery. Langer said the duo had been briefed on the new team ethos that was put into place after independent reviews identified a "win-without-counting-the-cost" mentality in Australian cricket. — Reuters

Sports

Wolves shock 'poor' Manchester United to reach FA Cup semis

'We're in a great position in the league, we've got the Champions League'

WOLVERHAMPTON: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer admitted Manchester United produced the poorest performance of his reign as Wolves sent them crashing out of the FA Cup on Saturday with a 2-1 quarter-final win.

But United's interim manager was remarkably upbeat despite his side's flat performance, saying they had plenty more to fight for as they aim for a top-four finish in the Premier League and look forward to a Champions League last-eight tie against Barcelona.

United were well beaten by an eager Wolves side who scored two goals in the space of six minutes in the second half through Raul Jimenez and Diogo Jota, with Marcus Rashford's injury-time effort a consolation.

Solskjaer had presided over a run of just two defeats in 18 games since replacing Jose Mourinho in December, progressing to the quarter-finals of the Champions League and the FA Cup. But they now go into the international break with back-to-back defeats after losing to Arsenal last week, with Rashford's goal their only real chance of the game.

"Today was the poorest performance we've had since I've been here," said Solskjaer. "It was a big step backwards. There was a lack of urgency going forwards and a lack of forward passing and a lack of regains. We felt too comfortable in possession and we never put their keeper under pressure or their defenders under pressure."

But Solskjaer delivered a positive message to fans. "We're in a great position in the league, we've got the Champions League," he said. "You can't sulk for too long. We've got so much to play for. Man United in April and May always find their form. We can't wait for the

challenge when Barcelona come."

Wolves head coach Nuno Espirito Santo was delighted after his side reached the club's first FA Cup semi-final for 21 years. "It means a lot of course. The FA Cup is the oldest competition and we played well," he said. "We achieved it with the amazing support of our fans believing in us and the noise was fantastic. "When we achieved it, we achieved it together. Now we have to prepare for the next one." Wolves had the best chance of the first half, two minutes before the break. Ruben Neves sent Jota galloping clear for a one-on-one with Sergio Romero, but the United goalkeeper beat his curling shot away. After the break Romero kept United in the game with two superb saves to deny a bullet header from Jimenez and a rising chip from Joao Moutinho as Wolves got on top. Wolves scored the goal they had been threatening in the 70th minute.

Jimenez was forced backwards with his back to goal after being crowded out following a superb run by Moutinho, who breezed through three challenges cutting in from the left. But the Mexican swivelled 180 degrees after getting a lucky bounce off Paul Pogba and drilled a low shot past Romero.

Six minutes later Wolves put the tie beyond United when Neves sent Jota racing clear on the counter and the Portuguese left Luke Shaw in a heap before firing an unstoppable left-foot drive inside Romero's near post. Referee Martin Atkinson showed United defender Victor Lindelof a red card for lunging in on Jota but it was overturned by VAR. Rashford pulled one back with a shot on the turn in the fifth minute of the five added one, but it was too little, too late. — AFP



WOLVERHAMPTON: Manchester United's English forward Marcus Rashford (2nd R) vies with Wolverhampton Wanderers' Moroccan midfielder Romain Saiss during the FA Cup quarter-final football match between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Manchester United at the Molineux stadium in Wolverhampton, central England on Saturday. — AFP

Reus sends Dortmund top with late winner

BERLIN: Marco Reus admits Borussia Dortmund are struggling to pick up wins in the Bundesliga title race, even as his late goal sent them top by sealing Saturday's dramatic 3-2 victory at Hertha Berlin.

Dortmund's win leaves them three points clear of defending champions Bayern Munich, who must bounce back from their Champions League exit to Liverpool by beating Mainz. Ivorian striker Salomon Kalou twice breached Dortmund's defence in a poor first half by the visitors, who have taken 12 points from a possible 21 in their last seven league games.

Danish midfielder Thomas Delaney and defender Dan-Axel Zagadou twice equalised for Dortmund before Reus' late strike at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

Hertha had defender Jordan Torunarigha and substitute striker Vedad Ibisevic sent off in the final few minutes of a bad-tempered match.

"The most important thing was the three points we took," Dortmund captain Reus told Sky. "We dominated the second half and played better football the first. "We're struggling to win, but that's the only way we'll get more confidence," he added, after Dortmund also needed two late goals to beat strugglers Stuttgart last weekend. Kalou capitalised on a mistake by Dortmund goalkeeper Roman Burki with just four minutes gone to give Hertha the lead. Delaney equalised by charging through a huge gap in midfield and firing home, his 14th-minute shot deflecting off Hertha defender Karim Rekik. Kalou restored Hertha's lead by drilling home a penalty after a Julian Weigl handball 10 minutes from the break. Dortmund drew level again when Zagadou, 19, headed home a Jadon Sancho corner two minutes after the break. With five minutes left, Torunarigha was sent off for a second yellow card after fouling Dortmund defender Achraf Hakimi, just before Delaney hit the crossbar. With time running out and Dortmund growing desperate after wasting a string of chances, Sancho

supplied the cross for Reus to convert to claim the three points. In the dramatic closing moments, Kalou's replacement Ibisevic was also dismissed for throwing the ball in the face of the Dortmund goalkeeper.

Earlier, Schalke's miserable run was extended to six straight defeats after losing 1-0 at home to RB Leipzig in Huub Stevens' first game back as caretaker coach. The Dutchman has been hastily hurried back for his third stint in charge after predecessor Domenico Tedesco was fired on Thursday, two days after the 7-0 thrashing at Manchester City in the Champions League.

However even Stevens, who lifted the UEFA Cup as Schalke coach in 1997, could not arrest their dreadful run, which has seen them fail to win any of their last eight league games. Timo Werner stabbed home Leipzig's winner with 14 minutes gone in Gelsenkirchen after Yussuf Poulsen had rattled the crossbar.

The defeat saw Schalke drop to 15th in the table, leapfrogged by Augsburg who enjoyed a 3-1 comeback win at home to second-from-bottom Hanover. Sergio Cordova equalised for Augsburg to cancel out Hendrik Weydandt's shock early goal for Hanover to make it 1-1 at the break. — AFP

Killorn, Lightning crush Capitals

TAMPA BAY: Alex Killorn recorded his first career hat trick, Tampa Bay set a franchise record for wins in a season, and the Lightning beat the visiting Washington Capitals 6-3 on Saturday in the first meeting this season between the Eastern Conference's two division leaders. The Lightning notched their 55th victory and became just the fourth team in NHL history to win 54 games or more in consecutive seasons. Tyler Johnson, Erik Cernak and Yanni Gourde also tallied, and Nikita Kucherov notched two assists for the Lightning, who won their fourth straight. Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 30 shots and won for the 13th time in his past 14 starts. Alex Ovechkin had two goals, and John Carlson added a marker and an assist for Washington, which lost for just the third time in its past 15 games. Braden Holtby allowed four goals on 33 shots.

OILERS 3, COYOTES 2 (OT)

Connor McDavid scored his second goal of the game 58 seconds into overtime as Edmonton claimed a victory in Glendale, Ariz. Mikka Koskinen made 28 saves for the Oilers, and Matthew Benning added a goal. Alex Galchenyuk scored twice for Arizona. Coyotes goalie Darcy Kuemper stopped 22 shots.

BRUINS 2, BLUE JACKETS 1 (OT)

Brad Marchand scored at 3:30 of overtime as Boston returned home and snapped a three-game losing streak with a victory over Columbus. Patrice Bergeron also scored for Boston, and Jaroslav Halak made 24 saves. The Bruins put together a streak of 19 straight games with a point, the longest in the NHL this season, before going 0-3-0 on a three-game trip to Pittsburgh, Columbus and Winnipeg. Matt Duchene scored the lone goal for the Blue Jackets, who had a two-game winning streak snapped. Columbus' Joonas Korpi stopped 31 shots.

BLACKHAWKS 2, CANADIENS 0

Corey Crawford made a career-high 48 saves in his hometown as visiting Chicago won its fifth in a row, beating Montreal. Connor Murphy and Brendan Perlini were the goal-scorers, both on assists from Alex DeBrincat. Crawford, who missed 28 games in the middle of the season due to concussion issues, posted his second shutout of 2018-19. He owns a 1.48 goals-against average during a five-game winning streak. The Canadiens are 6-10-1 following an impressive 8-1-1 stretch.

BLUES 5, PENGUINS 1

Vince Dunn scored twice, and Pat Maroon had a goal and an assist as St. Louis ended a three-game losing streak by winning at Pittsburgh. Oskar Sundqvist and Jay Bouwmeester also scored, and Colton Parayko and Robert Thomas each had two assists for St. Louis, which built a 4-0 lead through the game's first 23 minutes. Jordan Binnington made 40 saves and is 17-4-1 in his first 22 NHL starts. — Reuters



GENOA: (From L) Genoa's Danish midfielder Lukas Lerager, Juventus' Brazilian defender Alex Sandro and Juventus' Uruguayan midfielder Rodrigo Bentancur go for a header during the Italian Serie A football Match Genoa vs Juventus yesterday at the Luigi-Ferraris stadium in Genoa. — AFP

Juventus suffer first league defeat of the season at Genoa

GENOA: Juventus fell to their first Serie A defeat of the season yesterday as Genoa ran out 2-0 winners days after the Turin club's Champions League heroics against Atletico Madrid. Stefano Sturaro, who joined Genoa on loan from Juventus in January before the deal was made permanent, put the home side in front in the second half before fellow substitute Goran Pandev secured the shock result with 10 minutes remaining.

Cristiano Ronaldo inspired a remarkable European comeback for the Italian champions on Tuesday when he scored a hat-trick to overturn a 2-0 first-leg defeat against Atletico and send his side through to the quarter-finals with a 3-2 aggregate win.

However, the Portuguese was left out of the matchday squad for the trip to the Stadio Luigi Ferraris and Juve coach Massimiliano Allegri was left frustrated as Genoa took points off his side for the second time this season, having drawn 1-1 in Turin in October.

"I expected a different Juventus," Allegri told Italian

broadcasters. "We did not put in a good performance, we made some mistakes and then this goal came out of nowhere. "Much like the Coppa Italia defeat to Atalanta, we picked the right game to lose, because it's just before the break for international duty, so we have time to unplug and rest."

"I am actually happy for Stefano, because if anyone had to score against us, I'm glad it was Sturaro. He's a lovely guy and suffered so much, out of action for practically a year with that tendon injury, so he deserves it."

Juve had dropped points just three times this season going into the game, with draws against Genoa, Atalanta and Parma, while they were unbeaten overall in the top-flight for the last 31 rounds, since losing 1-0 to Napoli on 22 April 2018.

However, the hosts started the brighter as Christian Kouame forced a good save from former Genoa goalkeeper Mattia Perin before Cesare Prandelli's side were awarded a penalty for handball, only for a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review to overturn the decision.

Juventus thought they had gone in front after the break when Paulo Dybala swept home a finish, but VAR chalked the goal off for an offside in the build-up. Sturaro then curled a finish into the corner against his parent club just minutes after coming on, before Pandev made sure of the three points with a powerful finish. Despite the result, Juventus remain 18 points clear of second-placed Napoli at the summit of the table, while Genoa climbed above Sassuolo into 12th place on 33 points. — Reuters

Africa Cup of Nations host Egypt bogged down in domestic football crisis

CAIRO: Little more than three months before it hosts the Africa Cup of Nations, Egyptian football has been plunged into its latest crisis with major clubs squabbling, games regularly called off and security services intervening amid ongoing safety concerns.

"This is the hardest season in the history of Egyptian football," Amer Hussein, chairman of the domestic league's competition committee which schedules matches, told AFP. With leading top-flight clubs also involved in African and pan-Arab competitions, the knock-on effect on the domestic calendar has this year thrown the Egyptian league into disarray. It does not augur well for June and July, when Egypt will host the Cup of Nations for the fifth time, with 24 teams participating for the first time in an expanded format. Egypt was chosen ahead of South Africa after Cameroon was stripped of its hosting duties by the Confederation of African Football. The tournament is due to take place during the searing Egyptian summer, from June 21 to July 19.

The domestic league is set to run on well beyond the end of the Cup of Nations, with the possibility of extended runs in international competitions for Cairo giants Al Ahly and Zamalek potentially making things even more complicated.

The hasty preparations for the Cup of Nations have compounded the league's woes at a time when Ahly and Zamalek have been hitting out at organisers along with their new, Saudi-funded rival Pyramids FC.

In February, Pyramids FC publicly accused the federation of favouring their rivals. The club called the scheduling of fixtures an "injustice" to them and threatened to complain to FIFA. Turki Al Sheikh, an influential Saudi businessman and a close political advisor to Saudi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman, has bankrolled the club after buying it last summer.

He has completely rebranded it with an aggressive marketing campaign and gone on a signing spree, bringing in foreign players from the likes of Brazil and Syria. Al-Ahly, Egypt's and Africa's most successful club, have even refused to comply with the packed domestic schedule. They implicitly hit out at Pyramids FC, saying they would not bow to "pressure from a certain party".

"Tensions are running high and that frightens football officials in Egypt with the Africa Cup of Nations around the corner," said Amir Abdel Halim of popular Egyptian football website Fil Goal. He said football authorities were trying to contain the "anger of Ahly supporters", while also encouraging new "investments in Egyptian football embodied in Pyramids FC". In the face of this wave of postponements and growing fan impatience, Egypt's powerful security services have stepped in, in a country where football and politics have made for a lethal mix.

The country is still scarred by the deadly clashes which caused nearly 100 deaths on the sidelines of matches involving Ahly and Zamalek in 2012 and 2015 respectively. "Ninety-five percent of postponements are because of the security services" Hussein explained. "There is no football without security."

In the politically turbulent period after the 2011 uprising that toppled long-time ruler Hosni Mubarak, some fan groups attached to the two powerhouse clubs were instrumental in mobilising demonstrations and rallying supporters to political causes.

Last month, after weeks of media mudslinging between Ahly and Pyramids, the EFA announced that the match between both teams would be postponed "on orders from security services". "The EFA should have stuck to its original schedule" instead of "wanting to please everyone," said Marwan Ahmed from influential website King Fut. — AFP

25 Bottas upstages Hamilton at Australian Grand Prix



26 Shiffrin ends sublime season on a high with record-equalling fourth globe



27 Juventus suffer first league defeat of the season at Genoa



Liverpool survive Fulham scare

Liverpool go top of Premier League with a two-point lead over City



LONDON: Fulham's Serbian striker Aleksandar Mitrovic (C) vies with Fulham's Belgian defender Denis Odoi (R) during the English Premier League football match between Fulham and Liverpool at Craven Cottage in London yesterday. — AFP

LONDON: Liverpool usurped Manchester City to take top spot in the Premier League but needed a James Milner penalty nine minutes from time to see off lowly Fulham 2-1 at Craven Cottage yesterday.

The on-form Sadio Mane put the visitors in front midway through the first half, but a rare defensive mix-up between Virgil van Dijk and Alisson Becker allowed Ryan Babel to give his former club a huge scare 16 minutes from time. Fulham's awful defending all season is the reason they are heading back to the Championship after just one season back in the top flight, and the hosts gave Jurgen Klopp's men a much-needed gift when goalkeeper Sergio Rico bundled over Mane and Milner secured all three points from the spot. Liverpool now hold a two-point lead over City, but the champions have a game in hand. The league

leaders completed a clean sweep of four English sides into the quarter-finals of the Champions League with a highly impressive 3-1 win at Bayern Munich on Wednesday.

But they nearly suffered a very costly European hangover against a Fulham side still 13 points adrift of safety. Most of the visitors' attacking threat came down their left side in the first half and that proved the source of the breakthrough on 26 minutes.

Mane scored twice in Munich in midweek and took his hot streak to 11 goals in 11 games with a simple finish after exchanging passes with Roberto Firmino.

At the other end, Babel was Fulham's biggest threat all afternoon and Tom Cairney fired wastefully over after the Dutchman outpaced Trent Alexander-Arnold just before the break.

Liverpool started the second half with greater intent to try and put the game to bed.

Andy Robertson was the provider as Georginio Wijnaldum headed a good opportunity over at the far post before Rico was called into action to deny Van Dijk. However, as a torrential rain shower swept over the banks of the Thames to make playing conditions hazardous, Liverpool's slender lead proved a dangerous one. Floyd Ayite was rightly flagged offside as he headed a deflected shot past Alisson before the Brazilian number one got down well to save from Andre Zambo Anguissa.

Mane was inches away from securing the points and doubling his tally for the day with a deft header from a corner that clipped the top of the crossbar.

But disaster seemed to have struck for Liverpool

when Van Dijk's header back towards Alisson didn't have enough purchase and Babel stepped in with the break of the ball to tap into an empty net.

However, the league leaders showed why they are in the running to end a 29-year title drought to get a vital three points with the help of some erratic goalkeeping from Rico. Mohamed Salah's goal drought continued as the Egyptian has scored just once now in his last 10 games, but it was his shot that Rico spilled before the Spaniard unnecessarily pulled down Mane.

Milner took responsibility from the penalty spot and calmly sent Rico the wrong way to restore Liverpool's lead, which this time they never looked like letting go.

Salah should have got a much-needed confidence boost when released clean through by Mane, but Rico saved low to his left. — AFP

Spurs knock off Blazers for 8th straight win

SAN ANTONIO: DeMar DeRozan's 21 points led seven San Antonio players in double figures as the Spurs made all the big plays in the fourth quarter to beat the visiting Portland Trail Blazers 108-103 on Saturday for their eighth straight victory. The sixth-place Spurs are a season-best 12 games over .500 and within a game and a half of Portland for fourth place in the Western Conference standings. Rudy Gay and Derrick White added 13 points each for San Antonio, with LaMarcus Aldridge and Patty Mills scoring 12 points each. DeRozan and Aldridge had eight rebounds apiece, Gay had seven, and Jakob Poeltl blocked five shots. Portland's Damian Lillard led all scorers with 34 points, and Jusuf Nurkic added 24 points and 16 rebounds. CJ

McCullum, who finished with 10 points, left in the third quarter with an apparent left knee injury during a drive to the basket.

WARRIORS 110, THUNDER 88

Stephen Curry scored 33 points and Klay Thompson added 23 as Golden State scored 40 points in the first quarter in defeating host Oklahoma City. DeMarcus Cousins added 12 points, eight rebounds and six assists for the Warriors, who also got eight rebounds and six assists from Draymond Green. Paul George led Oklahoma City with 29 points but hit only 9 of 25 shots overall. Dennis Schroder added 15 points off the bench, and Russell Westbrook shot only 2 of 16 in finishing with seven points.

NUGGETS 102, PACERS 100

Paul Millsap hit a running layup with seven seconds left as host Denver edged Indiana to stay a game behind Golden State for the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference. Millsap finished with 15 points and 13 rebounds. Nikola Jokic scored 26 points before being ejected for arguing a foul call on a loose ball play. Jamal Murray and Will Barton scored 17 points each for Denver. Thaddeus Young had 18

points and 10 rebounds, Darren Collison scored 17 points and Domantas Sabonis and Bojan Bogdanovic finished with 16 each for the Pacers.

JAZZ 114, NETS 98

Rudy Gobert totaled 23 points, 17 rebounds and three blocked shots, and Utah took control by early in the second quarter to defeat Brooklyn in Salt Lake City. Gobert recorded his 55th double-double. He shot 9 of 12 from the floor and had six more dunks, increasing his league-leading total to 249. Donovan Mitchell led Utah with 24 points and added six rebounds and four assists. Spencer Dinwiddie scored 22 points off the bench, but the Nets dropped to 0-2 to start a season-high, seven-game road trip. D'Angelo Russell added 20 points but shot 8 of 25 for Brooklyn.

CELTICS 129, HAWKS 120

Kyrie Irving scored 30 points and Jaylen Brown added 23, with two key baskets in a fourth-quarter stretch, as host Boston held off Atlanta to win for the fifth time in its past six games. Irving fell just short of his second straight triple-double with 11 rebounds and

nine assists. Boston also got 19 points-four in the crucial fourth-quarter run-and 11 rebounds from Marcus Morris while Jayson Tatum had 18 points and eight rebounds. Marcus Smart scored 16 points. Atlanta was led by Trae Young, who had 26 points, including 5-for-8 shooting on 3-pointers, and John Collins, who had 20 points and 11 rebounds.

WIZARDS 135, GRIZZLIES 128

Bradley Beal led six players in double figures with 40 points-his second straight night reaching 40 — as host Washington defeated Memphis. Jabari Parker had 20 points and 11 rebounds, and Bobby Portis scored 18 points as Washington, 11th in the Eastern Conference, moved to within three games of eighth-place Miami. Mike Conley had 28 points and 12 assists for Memphis. Jonas Valanciunas amassed 22 points, and Avery Bradley scored 21.

MAVERICKS 121, CAVALIERS 116

Tim Hardaway Jr. led seven players in double figures with 22 points as host Dallas ran off to a big lead before holding on to beat Cleveland and end a seven-game losing streak.

Maxi Kleber finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Mavericks, and Jalen Brunson and Dwight Powell added 16 points apiece. Dirk Nowitzki contributed 14 points and six rebounds. Rookie Collin Sexton scored a game-high 28 points, and Kevin Love and Cedi Osman added 22 apiece. Love also had 12 rebounds and four assists.

SUNS 138, PELICANS 136 (OT)

Phoenix scored five points in the final 2.2 seconds of overtime, helped along when host New Orleans drew a technical foul for calling a timeout when it had none remaining. Devin Booker led the Suns with 40 points and 13 assists, and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 32 points. The Pelicans lost their sixth straight despite getting a New Orleans-record fourth consecutive triple-double from Elfrid Payton. The former Suns point guard finished with 16 points, 13 rebounds and a career-high 16 assists, tying the assist mark he set one night earlier against Portland. Three of his teammates had double-doubles. Julius Randle finished with 21 points and 11 rebounds, Anthony Davis had 15 points and 11 rebounds, and Cheick Diallo came off the bench to add 10 points and 10 rebounds. — Reuters