

6 'Love vs hate' in the latest Indian polls



24 Mosques attacked in Sri Lankan town

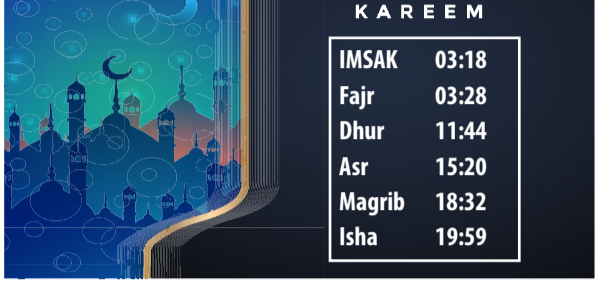


28 Manchester City retain Premier League trophy



Ramadan KAREEM

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| IMSAK | 03:18 |
| Fajr | 03:28 |
| Dhur | 11:44 |
| Asr | 15:20 |
| Magrib | 18:32 |
| Isha | 19:59 |



MPs fume as govt boycotts special session on amnesty

7 MPs sign motion to debate tax on expat remittances



By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A special session demanded by 22 lawmakers to discuss a draft law for granting amnesty to some political prisoners was not held yesterday because the government boycotted the meeting although 29 MPs showed up. The government said it decided to boycott the meeting because it was not consulted ahead of the session which is a prerequisite for cooperation and coordination with the National Assembly.

Several MPs vented anger on the government, describing its action as a humiliation to the National Assembly and called for non-cooperation with the government. The special session was demanded by mostly opposition lawmakers to debate a bill that stipulates pardoning dozens of opposition activists and ex-MPs who were handed jail terms for taking part in storming the National Assembly building in November 2011 following a protest against corruption.

Most of those who have been condemned to prison terms have been living outside the country since last summer and have repeatedly said that entering the National Assembly building did not amount to a crime especially that the action did not cause any damage. The session was not held because the Kuwaiti law stipulates that the presence of at least one Cabinet minister is essential for the Assembly session to be legal.

MP Mohammad Al-Mutair, who collected the signatures and submitted the motion, said the government's boycott of the session is an insult to the Kuwaiti people

and its institutions. He said the Kuwaiti people will never forget the "heroes" who defended the state establishments and public funds and committed no crime but they were punished by jail terms and forcing them to live abroad.

He said that the government should have attended and expressed its opinion regarding the important issue. MP Hamdan Al-Azemi called on lawmakers to stop their cooperation with the government over its boycott, saying that MPs should boycott sessions or walk out from Assembly meetings including the meetings of committees and the debate to pass the budgets. MP Osama Al-Shaheen also criticized the government for not attending the session, saying that it is incorrect that the government's attendance is essential for holding Assembly sessions.

Meanwhile, seven MPs have signed on a motion to debate urgently on May 14 a draft law for imposing a five-percent tax on remittances of expatriates. MP Khalil Al-Saleh who collected the signatures said several other MPs support the bill. The government, the Central Bank and the Assembly legal and legislative committee had all rejected the proposal saying it will have adverse consequences on the Kuwaiti economy and expats as well, besides promoting a black market for transferring money. But the Assembly's financial and economic affairs panel brushed aside all the rejections and decided to approve the bill and sent it to the Assembly for debate. It was not immediately known if the Assembly will agree to discuss the bill tomorrow and if it has enough support to pass.

Ramadan Kareem

Gloating over someone's grief 'prohibited in Islam'

By Hassan T Bwambale

Among Islam's articles of belief is to believe in preordainment. Allah (to Whom belongs all might and majesty) had predetermined what will happen and what will not happen - among others. If someone is tested by calamity or atrocity or else, there is wisdom behind it. It is prohibited for a believer to rejoice in a misfortune that seemingly strikes anyone whom he treats as an enemy or whom he doesn't like or whom he competes with.

Whoever rejoices in the misfortune of another what assurances does he have that a similar or worse catastrophe cannot strike him? Moreover, is he aware of Allah's plans? Whatever you regard as calamity may turn out to be a blessing in disguise. God Almighty tells Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) thus what can be translated as: "If a blessing befalls you, it grieves them (ie your enemies), but if a calamity strikes you, they say: 'We took our precautions beforehand' and they turn away rejoicing."

Tell them that nothing will befall us except what Allah has decreed for us. For He is our guardian and protector and on Him let the believers rely." (At-Tawbah 9: 50 - 51) Among the things that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to seek refuge with Allah (the Almighty) from - was his enemies rejoicing in his predicament. Abu Huraira (RA) narrated thus: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) used to seek refuge with Allah from the difficult moment of a severe calamity, from being overwhelmed by destruction, from being destined to an evil end, and from the malicious joy of enemies; rejoicing in his predicament." (Al-Bukhari # 6, 616)

You might rejoice in a person's calamity and then God Almighty (Allah) responds by bestowing mercy on him. Wa'thila bin Al-Asqa'a (Prophet Muhammad's bona-fide companion) narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Do not rejoice at your brother's misfortune lest Allah bestows mercy and him afflicts you with a calamity." Al-Mun'dhiirey graded it as Hasan (authentic) in Saheeh At-Targheeb 3/310).

We deduce from the above prophetic narration that gloating over someone's grief, may result in being afflicted with a similar or worse calamity. Let God Almighty deal with His servants whom He created because He is their creator and knows more about them than anyone else.

Only Allah can judge His servants: If anyone, especially the one you dislike, gets afflicted with a calamity, do not conclude that it's because of his sins. Who gave you the moral authority to judge others? Jundub bin Abdillah narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) informed his companions about a man who quarreled with his friend, turned

Continued on Page 24

Iran: US military presence in Gulf 'an opportunity'

GENEVA: The United States' military presence in the Gulf used to be a serious threat but now it is an opportunity, a senior commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards said yesterday, according to the Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA). The US military has sent forces, including an aircraft carrier and B-52 bombers, to the Middle East to counter what US officials have said are "clear indications" of threats from Iran to its forces there.

The USS Abraham Lincoln is replacing another carrier rotated out of the Gulf last month. "An aircraft carrier that has at least 40 to 50 planes on it and 6,000 forces gathered within it was a serious threat for us in the past but now...the threats have switched to opportunities," Amiral Hajizadeh, head of the Guards' aerospace division said. He added, "If (the Americans) make a move we will hit them in the head."

The commander of the Guards, Major General Hossein Salami, said in a parliament session yesterday that the United States has started a psychological war in the region, according to a parliamentary spokesman. "Commander Salami, with attention to the situation in the region, presented an analysis that the Americans have started a psychological war because the comings and goings of their

Continued on Page 24

Germany eyes 'mosque tax'

BERLIN: Support is growing in Germany for a "mosque tax" to make Islamic institutions less dependent on potentially anti-democratic or "radical" foreign funding sources, a media report said yesterday. The federal government sees it as "a possible path", according to an answer to a parliamentary query, the Welt am Sonntag newspaper reported. Several of Germany's 16 states had also signaled support in principle for the idea which would mirror Germany's voluntary Christian "church tax", the newspaper said.

Concern has grown in Germany about the influence of foreign funding sources on mosques for the country's estimated

Podcasters find niche in the Arab world

DUBAI: Rana Nawas left the corporate world nearly two years ago to produce and host a podcast - one that is now considered the most popular in the Arab world. The English-language series, "When Women Win", tells the stories of successful women from all over the world and, according to Apple, has become the most listened to podcast in the Middle East. It first gained traction in 2017 in Dubai, where it is produced,

five million Muslims, who hail mostly from Turkey and Arab countries. Some 900 mosques in Germany are run by the Turkish-Islamic Union of the Institute for Religion (Ditib), under the authority of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government. Its imams are paid by the Turkish state, and the group has come under scrutiny with some of its members suspected of spying on Turkish dissidents living in Germany.

At the height of a bitter row between Germany and Turkey in mid-2017, two German ministers warned in a Spiegel Online commentary that Erdogan's "dangerous ideologies must not be imported to Germany via certain mosques." In other cases, some mosques have come under police scrutiny or been closed for preaching radical and militant Islamist ideas. Welt am Sonntag said that, in the

Continued on Page 24



AL-UDEID AIR BASE, Qatar: A B-52H Stratofortress assigned to the 20th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron is parked on the ramp at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. — AFP

UAE emirate of Fujairah denies blasts report

DUBAI: The government of Fujairah, a member of the United Arab Emirates federation, denied yesterday media reports about blasts at the port of Fujairah, according to a statement tweeted by its media office. Fujairah, just outside the Strait of Hormuz, is one of the largest bunkering hubs in the world. The strait is vital oil and natural gas corridor for the global energy market.

The statement didn't identify the media outlets that published these

reports but the Iranian Press TV website cited a Lebanese broadcaster, Mayadeen, saying seven oil tankers were attacked in the port. "The media office of the government of Fujairah denies the veracity of the media reports saying strong explosions rocked the port of Fujairah this morning," it said.

"The operations at the port are going as usual." A spokesperson for the US Navy's Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet said they had no comment at this time when contacted by Reuters. Tensions are running high in the region after the US military sent forces, including an aircraft carrier, to the Middle East to counter what the White House says are "clear indications" of threats from Iran to its forces there. — Reuters



DUBAI: Rana Nawas (right), the producer of the English-language series 'When Women Win', hosts Saudi Arabian comedian and Hatoon Kadi during a podcast recording session in Dubai. — AFP

Local

Amir receives Kuwaiti, Iraqi officials at Bayan Palace



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 Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council, the Cassation Court and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement and leader of Reform and Reconstruction Alliance Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Al-Hakim.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council, the Cassation Court and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawaa.

Later, His Highness received Deputy Premier and

Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, visiting Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Al-Hakim and the leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement and leader of Reform and Reconstruction Alliance Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim. Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor Mahmoud Boushehri attended the meetings.

His Highness the Crown Prince also met with Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim and his accompanying del-

egation. During the meeting, they reviewed the most important developments in Iraq, as His Highness the Crown Prince hailed the Iraqi guest's effort to unify Iraq and achieve national reconciliation. His Highness wished Iraq progress and prosperity, hoping that it would restore its cultural role. Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governor attended the meeting.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Prime Minister received the visiting Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Al-Hakim, as well as Sayyid Ammar

Al-Hakim at Bayan Palace, while First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim at Seif Palace. Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince met with His Highness the Prime Minister, in addition to Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh. —KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement and leader of Reform and Reconstruction Alliance Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement and leader of Reform and Reconstruction Alliance Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim.



First Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement and leader of Reform and Reconstruction Alliance Sayyid Ammar Al-Hakim.

Kuwaitis remember Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti people will always remember their Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, who passed away 11 years ago, for his uncontested patriotism and relentless affirmation that "Kuwait is always first." On May 13, 2008, Kuwaitis lost their Father Amir who dedicated his life for the service of his country, as well as security and stability of his homeland in a unique fashion. "Kuwait is always first" was the phrase the Father Amir uttered at the inauguration of the 9th Legislative Session of the National Assembly to underline a firm fact that Kuwait would always remain above everyone.

Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah, the 14th ruler of the State of Kuwait, was named Amir on January 15, 2006. The Father Amir is the Fourth Amir since the Constitution was enacted by his father, then Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, on November 11, 1962. Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah contributed to the establishment of the constitution as a member in the drafting committee. In January 1978, then Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah nominated Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah as Crown Prince. In February of the same year, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah was appointed Prime Minister to form the 10th Government in Kuwait's history since independence. Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah kept the two posts until 2003, when the Prime Minister's post was separated from the Crown Prince thus paving way for appointment of current Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as Prime Minister, who formed the country's 21st government.

Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah occupied senior posts even before becoming a Crown Prince in 1978, especially in the security field. He was deputy police chief in 1945-49. He became Interior Minister in 1962 and a Defense Minister in 1964, making him the architect of Kuwait's modern security policy. However, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah, a security officer himself, paid a

great attention to the development of the military and security institutions. He established the Police School in 1956 and kept on developing the police force and established, for example, the Criminal Evidence Department in 1961. The Supreme Defense Council was established in 1963 and contributed to the development of the defense policy.

Liberation Hero

Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah was a true statesman who was also known as the 'Liberation Hero' because he masterminded the liberation of State of Kuwait from the Iraqi occupation in 1990-91. The Father Amir, at the early hours of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, insisted that then Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah leave Kuwait to maintain legitimacy of the country. During Iraq's seven-month occupation, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah embarked on several international tours to explain Kuwait's just causes. He also supervised conditions of the Kuwaiti people inside Kuwait, as well as supported the Kuwaiti resistance in every means possible. Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah was the first senior government official to return to Kuwait following the liberation and declared martial laws in order to restore security and stability in Kuwait.

Then Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad appointed in April 1991 Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah as Prime Minister of a government tasked with rebuilding the country. Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah was up to the task. He worked relentlessly to rebuilding the country and its institutions, restored order and dealt with the largest environmental disaster, the gigantic fire and oil leak caused when Iraqi forces torched over 700 oil wells just before leaving the country.

Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah organized parliamentary elections in 1992, and the first post-liberation National Assembly was in place on October 20 the same year. The Father Amir also



Father Amir Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah in police uniform.

paid a special attention to the Kuwaiti missing and prisoners of war. He was named Amir on January 15, 2006 following the demise of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad. However, due to his health condition, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad became Amir on January 29, 2006 through constitutional measures. The Father Amir passed away at his residence in Al-Shaab Palace the morning of May 13, 2008 and an official mourning was declared, ending a life full of achievements that every Kuwaiti would always remember. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah attend the opening of the 7th session of Kuwait-Iraq Committee. — KUNA

Kuwait, Iraq agree to solve sticky issues

KUWAIT: Kuwait and Iraq agreed to solve outstanding issues "within the framework of excellent relations," Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said on Saturday. Speaking after the opening of the 7th session of Kuwait-Iraq Committee, Jarallah said Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Al-Hakim would co-chair another round of talks. He expressed confidence the talks would promote relations between Kuwait and Iraq to a new level of strategic partnership. Jarallah said the two sides would sign five documents in addition to the minute of the meeting. He said the meeting was held in "positive atmosphere," and commended the outcome of the joint teams. "The meeting is being held amidst critical circumstances in the region, so it is highly crucial and important we boost

cooperation with the brothers," he said.

Later on Saturday, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled held an iftar banquet for his Iraqi counterpart and his accompanying delegation. Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Office Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocol Affairs Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran and Assistant Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ambassador Fahad Al-Awadhi were present. The banquet also gathered Kuwait's Ambassador to Iraq Salem Al-Zamanan, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Office Ambassador Saleh Al-Loghani, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Affairs Advisor Abdul-Mohsen Al-Zaid and a number of senior officials of the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry. — KUNA

Local

Department examined 15,000 fingerprints to resolve unsolved cases

Azmi's family receives waiver after transferring blood money

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Criminal Evidence Department examined the fingerprints of around 15,000 suspects referred to it by various security sectors and the public prosecution in 2018 with the aim of resolving unsolved cases and compare them to unidentified fingerprints found at various crime scenes, well-informed sources said. The sources added that the criminal evidence department database now includes fingerprints of around 9 million citizens and expats.

Waiver received

Members of Khaled Nega Al-Azmi's family received a waiver dropping the case against him after blood money was transferred to the heirs of Hedaya Al-Sultan. The Awazem tribe had recently gathered the KD 10 million 'blood money' that the victim's family agreed to receive in exchange of releasing Azmi 19 years after his imprisonment.

Risk management

Finance Minister Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf issued a ministerial resolution on forming a committee to audit and assess risks at the Public Institution For Social Security. The committee will be headed by Mohammed Al-

Qattan and include Brig Adel Al-Jasmi, Colonel Abdul Mohsen Al-Akshan, Bader Al-Hamad, Abdul Aziz Shuaib and Abdullah Al-Hajri. The committee will be entrusted with reviewing the authority's financial decisions, supervising outside auditors and assessing their performance, reviewing the risk management strategy, appointing and dismissing auditors and setting disciplinary measures for employees.

Health insurance

Well-informed medical sources strongly denied suspending the health insurance contract for students dispatched on scholarships to the UK. The sources noted that pending auditors' approval of the health insurance contract's renewal and in order to provide students with the proper healthcare, the Kuwait health office in London has advised students seeking healthcare to consult their family doctor or the NHS hospitals free of charge.

Assailants at large

Three unidentified assailants stabbed a Vietnamese man in Hawally and left him bleeding before passersby called the police. The victim, who was stabbed in the upper part of his chest, was rushed to the ICU, where he told police that he didn't recognize his assailants.



KUWAIT: A copy of the waiver issued to release Khaled Nega Al-Azmi from prison after the blood money was received.

Defense Minister heads SCPD meeting

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Chief of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, chaired the council's eighth meeting yesterday. The council discussed a study on overhauling government management and educational reform based on a strategy that matches Kuwait's 2035 development vision, it said in a statement.

It also looked into the privatization process involving core elements, positive and negative aspects, given that the private sector's involvement is a key element of the country's third development plan, it added. Meanwhile, Sheikh Nasser presided over a meeting on alternative energy, in the presence of the ministers of economic affairs, finance and oil and representatives of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), according to the statement. — KUNA



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Chief of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the council's eighth meeting yesterday. — KUNA



Al-Najat Charity raised over KD500,000 with Ooredoo's support

KUWAIT: Stemming from the company's deep-rooted values of caring, connecting, and challenging, Ooredoo Kuwait participated in Al-Najat Charity Society's fundraising campaign, which successfully raised more than KD500,000 to help in supporting hundreds of needy families in Kuwait. The fundraising campaign took place in 360 Mall last Friday from 1 pm to 1 am. Ooredoo participated with a social media awareness campaign prior to the fundraising campaign, to invite the public to this event. The event was attended by several social media influencers, charity patrons and donors. The charity campaign highlighted the suffering that needy families face due to issues with limited income, healthcare expenses, tuition fees and debts.

Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub said in a statement that the company is committed to fostering charitable and socially-responsible activities

through its corporate social responsibility agenda. "We are happy that the campaign raised the necessary funds to reach its target and are proud of every person who participated in this campaign, and this isn't strange to the charitable and kind people of Kuwait. We're honored to work with Al-Najat Charity Society, who have an extensive portfolio of activities around the world serving the underprivileged."

Al-Najat Charity Society announced the continuation of this campaign with the goal of providing for 500 needy families in Kuwait. Donations for AlNajat Society are possible through its locations in Sabah Al-Salem and Rawda, in addition to its affiliate societies of Salwa Zakat Committee and Al-Othman Zakat Committee, Rumaihiya Zakat Committee, Andalus Zakat Committee, Kaifan Zakat Committee, and the Islam Presentation Committee. Donors can call the society's hotline on 1800082 for more information.



Gulf Bank launches '10 Minutes' social Ramadan campaign

KUWAIT: As part of its ongoing Ramadan initiatives this year, Gulf Bank has launched its latest social media activation in recognition of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle during the holy month. The community initiative, titled 'Ten Minutes,' consists of a series of short Instagram episodes highlighting unique tips on how viewers can live a healthier lifestyle by enhancing their nutrition, mental health, fitness, and general well-being in just ten minutes. The series is delivered by five chosen professionals in their fields: nutritionist Noura Al-Askar; fitness and lifestyle instructor, Rana Al-Omani; sports Medicine, physiotherapy and fitness specialist, Youssef Al-Saleh; fitness

coach, Ali Al-Adwani; and mental and well-being specialist, Dr Mohammed Al-Suwaidean.

This initiative comes in the interest of public health, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, during which people are more preoccupied with work and social events. The community initiative urges people to take ten minutes out of their day to practice healthier habits and be more mindful of their physical and mental well-being.

Commenting on the initiative, Ahmad Al-Amir, Assistant General Manager at Gulf Bank, said: "At Gulf Bank, we are keen on using our social media channels to give back to our followers, and deliver messages that promote a healthier lifestyle. This year, we have collaborated with a number of local specialists across various health-related fields because we recognize the importance of both physical and mental well-being. We know how busy Ramadan can get, and we urge our followers to take ten minutes out of their day to place their health first. We hope this initiative will benefit our followers and we look forward to launching even more productive community initiatives."



Ahmad Al-Amir

News in brief

UAE lifts ban on Kuwaiti poultry

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates yesterday lifted a ban on all imports of live domestic and wild birds from Kuwait it had imposed in February following a bird flu scare. According to a notice issued by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCAE), domestic and wild live birds, ornamental birds, chicks, hatching and table eggs, poultry meat, and their thermally non-treated products from Kuwait can now be imported to the UAE. The ban was implemented following a notification from the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases of the outbreak of a highly contagious strain of bird flu (H5N8) in Kuwait.

Cooperation needed against locusts

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri stressed the need of concerted efforts by the concerned state departments to eradicate the swarms of locusts in Al-Wafra, south Kuwait. "The different state departments need to pool their resources in the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources which leads the efforts in this regard," he said on Saturday. Minister Jabri had visited the farms near the southern borders with Saudi Arabia on Friday to inspect the combat against the swarms of locusts in the presence Kuwait farmers union. — KUNA

Electronic prescriptions tested

KUWAIT: Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah said the use of electronic prescriptions will be experimentally launched at Mubarak Al-Kabeer and the Amiri hospitals after Ramadan. Speaking on the sidelines of a ghabqa held by Kuwait Medical Association (KMA), he explained that the e-prescription system prescribes and distributes medicine through an electronic system designed to organize the process and stop wasting drugs. He also noted that the e-filing system will be soon used in all hospitals and polyclinics. — By Meshaal Al-Enezi

Kuwaiti doctors treat refugees

ANKARA: Kuwait's Al-Shifaa medical team conducted 50 checkups and 27 surgeries for Syrian patients at Sevgi hospital, Reyhanli town, Hatay province, south Turkey, on Saturday. The surgeries include 21 ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgeries and six digestive endoscopy ones, said Dr Ibrahim Al-Tawaleh, member of the team. Four Qatari surgeons, Faisal Al-Hajery, Hamad Al-Omeira, Mohammad Al-Hatem and Abdullah Al-Nuaimi conducted nine genitourinary surgeries, he pointed out. The Kuwaiti and Qatari doctors conducted 50 medical examinations for the Syrian refugees from various age groups and offered free medicines to them, Dr Tawaleh added. — KUNA

Driver killed on Seventh Ring Road

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A motorist died in an accident reported on the Seventh Ring Road. The victim, Kuwaiti, lost control over his SUV and it flipped over on the highway, according to the police report. Firefighters and paramedics arrived to the scene shortly after the accident was reported and handled the situation. The circumstance behind the accident is being investigated. Separately, a vehicle caught fire after it slammed into sidewalk metal barriers near Souq Mubarakia, said security sources, noting that the fire was controlled without reporting any casualties.

In other news, a fire broke out yesterday morning in a Farwaniya building, said security sources, noting that on rushing to the scene, firemen found that the blaze had broken out in some abandoned furniture left at the entrance. The flames were contained and prevented from spreading elsewhere. An investigation is in progress to determine the cause of the fire.

Meanwhile, a fire broke out in a Salmiya shopping mall, said security sources, noting that firemen from Salmiya and Bidaa fire stations rushed to the scene and found the fire had started in a billboard outside the mall. The fire was controlled and prevented from spreading to the mall. No casualties were reported but further investigations are in progress to determine the cause of the fire.

Another fire broke out in a house in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, said security sources, noting that firemen from Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Qurain rushed to the scene and found a cabin on the roof had caught fire. The house was evacuated and the flames were controlled in record time. No casualties were reported and further investigations are in progress to determine the cause of the fire.

In the meantime, firemen from Ardiya and Jleeb were dispatched to deal with a blaze reported in a restaurant in Ardiya industrial area. On arriving at the scene, firemen found the fire had started in the restaurant's chimney. No casualties were reported.

Kuwait Times


Established 1961

Ramadan Kareem

History of Kuwait




KUWAIT: An old scene showing the Safat Square circa 1949. Classic cars are seen lined up next to traditional buildings. (Source: The KOC archive. Researched by Mahmoud Zakaria, Researcher in Heritage, the Ministry of Information)



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Zain partners with ‘2,000 Projects’ campaign

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, partnered with the ‘2,000 Projects’ charitable campaign in collaboration with Direct Aid and as part of its CSSR Campaign during the holy month of Ramadan. The campaign succeeded in collecting over KD 3 million of donations in less than 12 hours.

Zain’s partnership of this charitable campaign for the third consecutive year comes in line with the company’s Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy that seeks to contribute to the welfare of the society in several ways under the company’s comprehensive social campaign during the holy month of Ramadan. Zain prides itself on its long track of records and contributions it has put in philanthropic areas by collaborating with various non-profit organizations such as Direct Aid. The company strongly believes that such initiatives help infuse a sense of responsibility into members of the society, to help support those who are in need of help.

The ‘2,000 Projects’ campaign, launched by Direct Aid, aimed at collecting donations through the official online portal and Zain’s SMS service, and it succeeded in collecting over KD 3 million of donations in less than 12 hours. All of the campaign’s proceeds will go to supporting 2,000 projects in Africa with the aim of achieving sustainable development for remote villages.

The campaign’s 2000 projects include drilling 500 wells to provide clean drinking water with the aim of preventing the spread of epidemics and helping children focus on education instead of bearing the burden of collecting water every day. In addition, the campaign will see the creation of 500 health projects that offer free treatment and surgery for the most remote areas where basic medical services are not available. Moreover, the campaign aims at offering 1000 development projects that enable poor families economically and help transforming them into productive families that depend on themselves and contribute to the growth of their communities.

It is worth noting that Zain recently launched its charitable campaign ‘Ya Baghi Al-Khair Aqbil’ for the third year in collaboration with Direct Aid, where the company will donate 500 Fils (half a KD) each time a customer pays their bill anytime during the holy month of Ramadan through one of Zain’s electronic or direct channels, including Zain’s website, Zain’s smartphone app, any of Zain’s Quickpay machines, and the company’s main branches available throughout the country. The collected donations will be used to support Direct Aid’s Medical Sciences College project at Kenya, where 6 classrooms will be built for the Environmental Health section in the college after the holy month of Ramadan.

Zain also recently launched ‘Zain Al-Khair,’ an online donation portal (khaire.kw.zain.com) that allows Zain customers - both prepaid and postpaid - to donate to any of the listed charitable organizations with any amount ranging from 1 - 80 KD. Customers can simply select the preferred organization, pick one of the available projects to donate to, then specify the donation amount. The donated amount will then be automatically added to the customer’s monthly phone bill or prepaid balance with ease.

Zain stressed that it has always been keen to launch a number of social and humanitarian initiatives during Ramadan to support the various sectors of the Kuwaiti society, and the company is keen on reflecting the religious as well as traditional humanitarian values and principles to enrich the art of giving and to increase bonding between individuals.

The company further affirmed its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility campaign during the holy month of Ramadan, which includes an extensive array of programs that cover different areas. The initiatives and programs include humanitarian, voluntary, cultural, religious, sports, and recreational activities to cater to the different segments of society.

‘I love the time between iftar and prayers’

By Nawara Fattahova

Ramadan is a joyful time of year in the Muslim world as fasters gather at sundown to break their fast with family and friends. In Kuwait, there are many traditions and activities that take place every year. To commemorate Ramadan and the experiences of our readers, this year the Kuwait Times is asking readers what they love about Ramadan. What is your favorite food, activity, memory, event, or thing that you absolutely adore and look forward to each year? We want to know. Email local@kuwaittimes.com with your answer and it might end up in the newspaper.

Ibtisam, a Syrian expat who came to Kuwait almost 20 years ago, loves the atmosphere and the rituals of Ramadan both in Kuwait and her home country. “I love the time between iftar and Isha prayers, when I leave home to go to pray taraweeh prayers in the mosque. I feel this

moment is very spiritual. This is the most beautiful moment for me every Ramadan,” she told Kuwait Times.

“The memory of Ramadan that I will never forget is from my childhood. When we were children, my father used to wake us up for suhour to eat and be ready for fasting. After I grew up, I really missed this habit. This moment is not in my life now, but it was my father’s habit to have all the family gathered at the suhour table,” Ibtisam said.



Palms Beach Hotel and Spa hosts outstanding Shami Ramadan ghabqa



KUWAIT: Responding to an initiative extended by the Managing Director Engineer Ghosson Al-Khaled and the General Manager of the Palms Beach Hotel and Spa Rabie Al-Atrash, Foreign and Arab Ambassadors to Kuwait gathered with their families along with Hotel Corporate Clients on May 8th 2019, to celebrate the Palms Ramadan Nights at the Palms Beach Hotel and Spa.

The respective guests were warmly welcomed by the General Manager and the Management team to the new outstanding Shami Ramadan tent with its magnificent atmosphere and setup at Palms Ramadan Shami Tent.

On the other hand, the invitees expressed their admiration about the Palms Shami tent and its unique Shami theme and appearance with its panoramic view on the Arabian Gulf,

which exceeded all expectations with its magnificent atmosphere ghabqa where they enjoyed the program and the rich buffet full of Ramdan sweets, juices in addition to the live cooking corners, were prepared by the best chefs while enjoying the live Oriental music and the selective flavors of Shisha. The elite invitees commended the merits of the events and expressed warm appreciation for the warm hospitality

and well planned and organized night with its impressive theme and the lavish food and its wide variety and diversity.

The General Manager Rabie Al-Atrash raised this opportunity to wish the Ambassadors and Corporate Clients best success in their mission and praised the distinguished relations between the Diplomatic Corps, Corporate Clients and the Palms Beach Hotel and Spa.



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REEM AL-MULLAH
Class of 2011 - Communication & Media
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Kuwait Football Association

OMAR KHALIL
Class of 2019 - Computer Science
Leader of the 1st place team in the NASA Space Apps Challenge (Kuwait)

MOHAMMED & SALMAN AL-MOSAWI
Class of 2019 - Electrical Engineering
World Champions in Karate

LAMEES NAJEM
Class of 2011 - Graphic Design
First Kuwaiti woman to reach the North Pole



Afghan refugee entrepreneurs thrive in Turkey

Money, guns and brides fuel South Sudan’s cattle wars

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ALLAHABAD: Indian voters queue at a polling station to cast their vote yesterday in the sixth phase of India's general election. — AFP

‘Love vs hate’ in latest Indian polls

Tens of millions cast ballots in penultimate phase of seven-round general election

NEW DELHI: Tens of millions voted yesterday in the penultimate round of India’s increasingly bad-tempered election, with all eyes on the coveted capital New Delhi after an ugly campaign of slaps and savage pamphlets. India’s almost-seven week election, the biggest on Earth with Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking a new term from the 900 million voters, wraps up next Sunday with results due on May 23.

Notoriously unreliable opinion polls put Modi, 68, as favorite but likely with a reduced majority, with the vote seen as a referendum on the Hindu nationalist’s five years in power in the world’s biggest democracy. Modi has sought to deflect opposition attacks on his economic record by striking a fiercely patriotic tone following February’s bust-up with Pakistan, portraying himself as India’s “chowkidar” or “watchman”.

He has also sought to turn the tables on corruption allegations levelled by Rahul Gandhi of the opposition Congress party with claims Rahul’s assassinated father Rajiv used a Navy ship for a family holiday in 1988. “Narendra Modi used hate and we used love and I think love is about to win (this election). We will respect whatever people decide,” Gandhi, 48, told reporters as he voted in Delhi on Sunday.

Common man
Fifty-nine seats were up for grabs across the country of 1.3 billion people yesterday on the sixth voting day, with just over 100 million Indians eligible to cast ballots. The tussle for Delhi is front and center, with all eyes on chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, whose Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) – or Common Man party – was formed seven years ago on an anti-corruption platform. It has since taken control of Delhi’s regional government and is fighting to add to its four seats in India’s lower house of parliament.

“More schools need to be built,” said Delhi voter Purvek Shah. “And my other big concern is air pollution in Delhi. We see that Delhi has one of the worst pollution levels.” Kejriwal, a tax commissioner turned campaigner, has suffered more than most in India’s notoriously rough-and-tumble political bullying. Since 2013 and his first term as Delhi chief minister, the 50-year-old has been the target of at least seven attacks, including when his car was set upon by a mob with iron rods.

In November his face was smeared with chilli powder inside the Delhi government building. Last week a man climbed onto the open top car Kejriwal was campaigning in

and slapped him. AAP candidate Atishi Marlena broke down in tears last week after a vicious anonymous pamphlet accused her of being a prostitute and of having sex with a fellow teacher. Both Atishi and Kejriwal accused Gautam Gambhir, a former international cricketer and candidate for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), of being behind the pamphlet. He vociferously denied it. “People of Delhi have been fooled by a bunch of no-gooders who promised a new kind of politics. But they have become synonymous with anarchy and obstructionism,” Modi told a Delhi rally on Wednesday.

Bengal battleground
Voting also took place yesterday in the eastern state of West Bengal, another key battleground where chief minister Mamata Banerjee and her Trinamool Congress party are seeking to stop Modi. The state – home to some 90 million people – has long been a hotbed of political violence, and authorities yesterday drafted in tens of thousands of extra security forces. At least one of the state’s constituencies is in an area prone to attacks by Maoist rebels, who on May 1 killed 15 Indian elite commandos and their driver in the western state of Maharashtra.

“We are scared to cast our votes because



NEW DELHI: Indian National Congress president Rahul Gandhi (left) and Indian President Ram Nath Kovind show their ink-marked fingers after casting their votes yesterday. — AFP

of violence,” Sabita Mondal, a voter of Ghatal constituency, told AFP by telephone. “Many voters preferred to stay indoor fearing troubles.” Yesterday police with batons charged, after locals pelted vehicles carrying BJP candi-

date Bharati Ghosh and her security staff with stones, authorities said. “I was pushed and assaulted by some women supporters of the Trinamool Congress when I went to polling booth in my constituency,” Ghosh said.—AFP

Former Maronite patriarch dies days before turning 99

BEIRUT: Lebanon’s former Maronite patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, who wielded considerable political influence during the country’s civil war and was an ardent advocate of a Syrian troop withdrawal, died yesterday, the church said. Sfeir, who was about to turn 99 on May 15, died at 3:00 am (0100 GMT) “after days of intensive medical care”, said a statement by the Maronite church. He became the leader of the church in 1986 until he resigned in 2011 due to his declining health, and held the title “76th Patriarch of Antioch and the Whole Levant”.

He was a respected power broker during the 1975-1990 civil war, which saw bitter infighting between rival militias including opposing Christian factions. Sfeir, who spoke fluent Arabic and French, was made a cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 1994. Born in 1920 in Rayfoun, a village in Lebanon’s Kesrwan mountains, Sfeir studied theology and philosophy but was never shy to delve into Lebanon’s tumultuous politics.

His backing of the 1989 Taif agreement

that brought the 15-year civil war to an end bolstered Christian support for the accord, but reduced the powers of the presidency – a seat reserved for Lebanon’s Maronite Christians under the country’s confessional power-sharing. Maronite Christians made up the most powerful single community prior to Lebanon’s 1975-1990 civil war, but their influence has since waned as they have been outnumbered by Shiite Muslims in the multi-sectarian country.

Sfeir also spearheaded the opposition to Syria’s three decades of military and political domination over Lebanon. “His biggest struggle was to end the Syrian presence in Lebanon, which we all thought was impossible because of the divisions in Lebanon,” his biographer Antoine Saad told AFP. “But he worked on it steadily, objectively, meticulously and quietly,” he said. Sfeir refused to visit Syria during his time as patriarch, even when John Paul II made a trip to the country in 2001.

His outspokenness helped swell the anti-Syria movement in 2000. It eventually lead to the withdrawal of thousands of Syrian troops from the country five years later, following the assassination of former prime minister Rafik Hariri, whose murder the opposition blamed on Damascus. Sfeir’s opinion and advice continued to be sought by politicians of all stripes, not only Christians, after he



Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir

stepped down. “He was completely against war,” Saad said of the cleric who enjoyed hiking in nature until his late years. “His loss can’t be compensated for.” — AFP

Yemen govt blasts Houthi ‘deception’ over port pullout

DUBAI: Yemen’s government yesterday accused rebels of a “policy of deception” after they announced a pullout from a string of Red Sea ports in a long-delayed move agreed under a ceasefire deal last year. The docks serve as a life-line for millions in the impoverished Arabian Peninsula country, which has been pushed to the brink of famine by more than four years of devastating war. According to the United Nations, the Houthi insurgents began to withdraw from the ports of Hodeida, Saleef and Ras Issa on Saturday.

The pullback is considered a first step in implementing a hard-won truce agreement for Hodeida struck in Sweden in December between Yemen’s Saudi-backed government and the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels. The flashpoint city is the main entry point for Yemen’s imports and humanitarian aid. But government officials cast doubts over the handover process, saying it was unclear who was taking control of the ports,

and experts said it was too soon to say if the move represented genuine progress.

“The (Sweden) agreement is very difficult to execute because the lines are blurry and each side interprets it the way it wants to,” said Yemen expert Farea Al-Muslimi, a visiting fellow at the London-based Chatham House think tank. “Overall, the next two weeks will show if this is a handover or a yet another hangover,” he told AFP.

Yemen’s information minister accused the rebels of faking the pullout. “What the Houthi militia did is a repeated theatrical play of handing over control of the port to its own forces (in different uniforms),” Moammer Al-Eryani tweeted yesterday. “This shows its continued manipulation and evasion to implement the Sweden agreement... by adopting a policy of deception.” The governor of Hodeida, Al-Hasan Taher, said Saturday the insurgents were merely reshuffling personnel.—AFP



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DIYA THASNIM C.
THODI (96.3%)



HANEEN ABOUL
RASHEED (96%)



ANNA BRIDGET BIJU
(96%)

COMMERCE STREAM - TOPPERS



RACHEL LOURDES
FERNANDES (95.6%)



ALITA JANICE
QUADROS (95%)



RUKAYYA M. FAZAL
(94.8%)



NOOREEN KAUR
CHADHA (94.8%)

HUMANITIES STREAM - TOPPERS



JOE MAMMEN JOHN
(94.8%)



KYRA HOLLYN
RODRIGUES (93.6%)



SHAIKH KASHIFA
(92.4%)

100 MARK ACHIEVERS



JOE MAMMEN JOHN
(Psychology)



RESHMA S. MATHIEW
(Chemistry)



ANITTA ROSE SIBI
(Informatics)

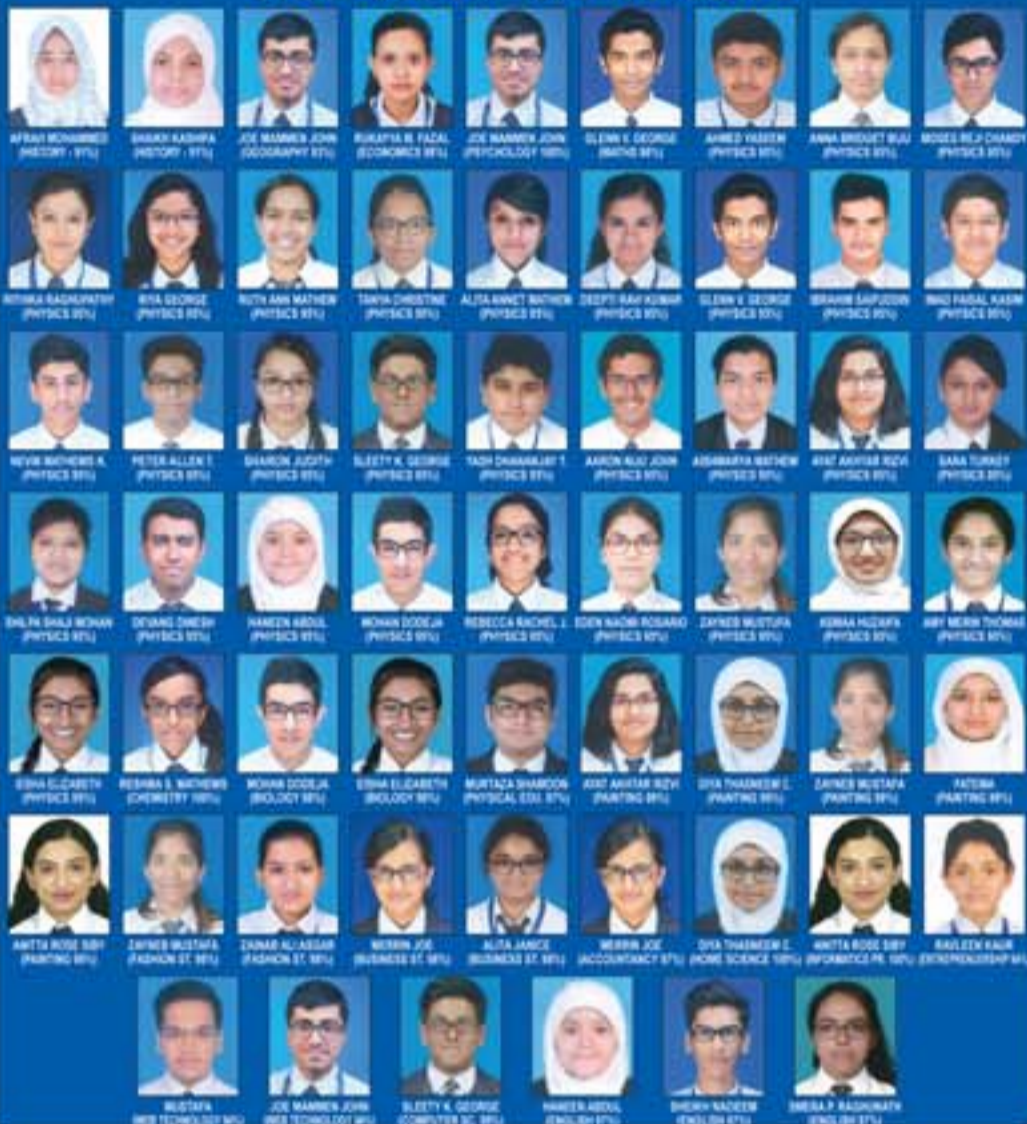


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SUBJECT TOPPERS



90% AND ABOVE



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ROBIN (97.8%)

- Gulf Topper with 99.6 marks (Megha Johnson)
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- 296 students appeared - the highest in Kuwait
- 100% pass - a marvelous achievement
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- 14 students scored 100 marks

100 MARK ACHIEVERS



MEGHA JOHNSON
(FRENCH)



SIDDARTH SUNIL
(MATHS)



ATHARV GOEL
(MATHS)



ALMA TRISHA SUNIL
(MATHS)



KUMMEET KAUR
(HINDI)



ASHWIN THOMAS
(SOCIAL SC.)

SUBJECT TOPPERS



90% AND ABOVE



International

Money, guns, brides fuel South Sudan's cattle wars

Livestock serve as bank account and play core role in every aspect of life

UDI,ER, South Sudan: Weak rays of early morning sun seep through the smoke rising from smoldering piles of dried dung, keeping flies away from the precious cattle. Children instinctively reach down for the white ash, a natural mosquito repellent, and rub it on their skin as women set to milking and men prepare for a long day seeking pasture at the peak of the dry season. The passing of centuries seems to have changed little in the ebb and flow of life for herders in remote South Sudan, whose cattle serve as a bank account and play a core role in every aspect of life.

There has, however, been one devastating shift. Instead of their traditional spears, cowherds now carry automatic rifles that have transformed cattle raids, a generations-old phenomenon, into massacres that have unleashed brutal cycles of vengeance. "It is good to have a weapon because it helps you to protect the cattle," said Puk Duoth, 25, a herder from a camp outside the northeastern village of Udi.

While South Sudan's elites signed a power-sharing truce in September 2018, cattle raids have worsened, highlighting the herculean task required to resolve local conflicts in a society shattered by war. According to the UN peacekeeping mission UNMISS, 218 members of herder communities were killed in January in tit-for-tat attacks - almost three times the toll of 73 in the four months from Oct 2017 to Jan 2018. Observers blame a deadly cocktail of factors for the rising body

count: A breakdown of law and order in the war-torn nation, an influx of guns and inflation in the bride price - paid in cattle.

Cash cows

In these parts, cows are everything. In the culture of the Nuer and Dinka peoples - South Sudan's largest herder communities - boys are named after a favored bull, and songs are written to glorify the long-horned beasts. "If you are sick, then the cow can be sold and the money used for treatment," says Beny Chuer, a Dinka chief from Amading camp outside the central city of Rumbek - one of the areas worst affected by raids and revenge killings. "If a mother dies leaving a small baby, that child will live because a cow will be milked to feed it."

Cattle is currency - each head worth about \$500. The more a man owns, the more admiration he garners. "If you are sitting in a community meeting and you are talking rubbish, but people know you have many cows, you will be honored," said Peter Machar, of the NGO Saferworld working on local conflicts. In his 1940 study of the Nuer people, British anthropologist Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard found this single-minded preoccupation frustrating in his research efforts. "I used sometimes to despair that I never discussed anything with the young men but livestock and girls and even the subject of girls led inevitably to that of cattle," he wrote.

Costly brides, rampant guns

"For us, a cow is the source of money," said chief Chuer, well over two metres (6 feet, 7 inches) tall - a genetic legacy perhaps of tall women being viewed as more valuable in herder communities. He boasts that his tallest daughter earned him a whopping 250 cows. This is part of the cause of conflict, said Peter Machar's colleague Majok Mon, his own first name a Dinka word for the markings on a bull.

Bride prices soared as donor money poured into the country after independence from Sudan, allowing politicians, military men and the well-connected to enrich themselves and "get a lot of money" to pay for a wife, he said. The average price went up from about 20 head of cattle to 100, in a country where the majority of people follow the tradition.

Suddenly, many young men could not afford to get married unless they raided cattle from other communities. Guns flooded the country between the war for independence, achieved in 2011, and the internal conflict that erupted two years later as President Salva Kiir and rival Riek Machar fell out. Both sides armed young herders and mobilized them to fight, said Peter Machar.

As any semblance of law and order collapsed, the warring also destroyed traditional systems, managed by tribal chiefs, for settling feuds. "What brought the issue of cattle raids is the gun... if you don't have a gun, then you will be monitored slowly, slowly until you are



UDI,ER, South Sudan: Villagers herd their cattle ahead of vaccinations administered by the International Committee of the Red Cross with the help of local community workers in Kirgwi village on March 9, 2019. — AFP

shot and your cows taken", but if you have your gun, then you can shoot" in defense, said Chuer.

Out of control

While fighting has stopped in most of the country as a result of the peace deal, this has

changed nothing for herder groups nursing long-standing grievances unrelated to the national tug of war for power. And with the attention elsewhere, armed herders are launching increasingly deadly military-style attacks on rival camps, with women and children among the victims. — AFP

US, EU spar over sharing electronic evidence in probes

WASHINGTON: In Aug 2016, the lifeless bodies of a young French man and woman were discovered on a beach in Madagascar, with murder suspected. The secret to the case could be in the last messages they sent, but those are stored in the databanks of US tech giants who don't have to turn over the information to French investigators. The case is one of a growing number highlighting how key evidence needed to solve crimes could sit in computers a continent away under completely different legal jurisdiction.

Washington and Brussels have both proposed solutions to facilitate relatively easy cross-border access to the data for law enforcement officials. But the issue has stirred up a hornet's nest of opposition over privacy rules and legal procedures. Rights groups fear the solutions will lower the barriers to access private data, allowing abuse by governments who could conceivably use their access powers against political opponents or rights groups.

Extraterritorial evidence

The young French man and woman, volunteers for a local whale protection group, communicated Facebook's instant messaging service Messenger and via emails on Microsoft's Outlook. Knowing their final messages and movements could be "decisive" in settling the investigation, according to sources familiar with the case. But given the rise of cloud computing, such evidence is often stored far from the jurisdiction of investigating police.

Getting to it is hampered by old, bulky agreements on international legal cooperation and evidence sharing written before the rise of the internet and social media. The problem has been growing for several years. In 2013 US authorities obtained a search warrant in a narcotics case to get user information held by Microsoft. But even though it is a US company, Microsoft fought back in court, saying the data was on extraterritorial Microsoft servers located in Ireland, out of the reach of US investigators.

Ten months to obtain evidence

In the European Union, 85 percent of criminal investigations involve electronic evidence, of which two-thirds is stored in another country. But obtaining potential evidence from Facebook account today takes Europeans on average 10 months. A European investigating judge must ask an official of his government to send an official request to the US government. Then a US judge, who isn't familiar with the case, then makes the request to Facebook. The FBI then reviews the evidence to ensure it does not contain confidential information unrelated to the original request. The data is then sent to the requesting government which passes it to the investigators. "This doesn't work, the operations are totally blocked," a frustrated European justice official said. "We all know that virtually every serious threat we investigate today requires access to electronic evidence like the contents of emails, instant messages, photos, traffic data, session logs, subscriber information, and the like," Richard Downing, a top US Justice official, said in a speech in London last month. "Our collective safety and security depends on our ability to maintain lawful and efficient cross-border access to that evidence."

US seeks bilateral deals

Seeking a longer-term solution, in March 2018 the United States passed the Cloud Act, which sets up the possibility of easier cross-border cooperation in obtaining the communications and other digitally-stored evidence needed in investigations. The act would allow foreign governments to request the information - emails, text messages, and stored records - directly from US-based communications and internet companies holding it. The act would require bilateral agreements that give Washington reciprocal rights to obtaining electronic evidence. But many Europeans remain suspicious of Washington's bilateral approach, rather than dealing with the European Union as a whole. — AFP

Conservatives battle Brexit ballot bloodbath

BRISTOL: British Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservatives are facing a battering at this month's European Parliament elections amid the Brexit impasse, presenting their candidates with quite a challenge in the campaign for votes. With May's authority hanging by a thread, Brexit postponed, voters fed up and eurosceptics deserting the party in droves, according to opinion polls, Ashley Fox, who leads the Conservatives in the outgoing European Parliament, concedes that this election campaign is "difficult".

"I understand why people are angry," the 49-year-old MEP said, drinking a cup of tea in the Conservative Party offices in Bristol, southwest England. In June 2016, 52 percent of voters were in favor of Britain leaving the European Union. Brexit was originally set to happen on March 29 this year. But MPs could not agree on the divorce deal May struck with Brussels and now the departure date has been set back to Oct 31. As a result, Britain must take part in the European Parliament elections, being held in the UK on May 23, to elect MEPs who may take

their seats for a few months only.

Protest vote fears

The election "will be difficult for my party because electors are frustrated, and we saw that in the local elections," said Fox. In the local authority polls on May 2, both main parties - the Conservatives and the Labour opposition - took a pounding as exasperated voters switched elsewhere. The Brexit Party, newly formed by eurosceptic figurehead Nigel Farage, is leading the opinion polls for the European Parliament elections. "We would prefer that they wouldn't be taking place. But we will fight them," said Fox, as he urged voters not to defect to Farage's single-issue start-up.

A survey by pollsters Opinium, out Sunday in The Observer newspaper, put the Brexit Party on 34 percent, Labour on 21 percent, the anti-Brexit Liberal Democrats on 12 percent and the Conservatives on 11 percent. The campaigning enthusiasm shown by Fox is not matched by Conservative headquarters in London. Perhaps sensing which way the wind is blowing, the center-right party is yet to hold an official campaign launch, leaving the battle to the foot soldiers.

Standing for re-election in the southwest England constituency, which returns six MEPs, Fox has planned a limited campaign focused on social media rather than door knocking. He insists that is not out of fear of meeting the voters, but due to the lack of time between now and polling day



BRISTOL: Bristol Liberal Democrat MEP candidate Stephen Williams speaks to a local resident during canvassing ahead of the forthcoming European parliamentary elections on May 8, 2019. — AFP

for elections he never expected to be standing in. With less than a fortnight to go until the polls, Stephen Williams, who is standing for the Liberal Democrats, is hoping the centrist party can maintain the impressive resurgence it witnessed in the local elections.

He is out knocking on doors almost every day. "My main message is: We want to stop

Brexit," Williams told AFP while out campaigning in Redcliffe in the heart of Bristol. Calling at one opulent house, he is met by a young man who seems startled by the knock and uninterested in the election. But Williams, 52, is used to the hazards of door knocking: He has been doing it for 35 years and was the Bristol West member of the British parliament from 2005 to 2015. — AFP

Far from Brussels, Latvians are European at heart

REZEKNE, Latvia: A Latvian border guard helicopter hovers over a vast forest split by a long, narrow strip of sandy land where a fence topped with barbed wire marks the EU's border with Russia. Fifteen years after Latvia joined both NATO and the European Union, the Baltic state's remote Latgale region - closer to Moscow than to Brussels - is among the bloc's poorest areas, but its residents are staunchly pro-European.

Smuggling cheap alcohol and cigarettes from Russia has been a mainstay of the local economy since Latvia regained its independence in 1991 after a half century of Soviet occupation. A growing stream of illegal migrants crossing over from Russia, mostly from Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Syria, prompted Latvian authorities to start building the fence in 2016 to protect a 300-km stretch of the EU's eastern border.

As Latgale gears up to vote in European Parliamentary elections on May 25, locals may differ on the candidates they choose, but there is no doubt that pro-European sentiment prevails overall, largely thanks to the EU's generous development subsidies and open markets. A eurozone member of 1.9 million, Latvia has absorbed a net Å7.2 billion (\$8.1 billion at the current rate) in EU subsidies since 2004, making it the bloc's fourth-largest beneficiary per capita.

'More European'

Nestled deep in the forest, Zilupe - population 3,000 - is one of the EU's easternmost municipalities. "The European Union is helping us like nobody before," Skaidrite Marcenoka, a local farmer and municipal official, told AFP as she reflected on Latvia's turbulent history. Over the last century, Latvians suffered under Soviet and Nazi occupation which brought the Holocaust and then Stalinist-era mass deportations to Siberia. Forced Russification and atheism during nearly half a century of Soviet rule was intended to strip Latvians of their language and cultural identity.

"Now, we're receiving EU farming subsidies for agricultural machinery, better livestock and farm development," said Marcenoka, who has used the payments to buy new equipment to run



PASIENE, Latvia: A baby deer tries to pass the newly constructed barbed wire fence of the Latvian-Russian border near Pasiene in eastern Latvia on April 10, 2019. — AFP

her 150-hectare farm. Classified as "green" or eco-friendly, it receives around Å230 for every hectare per year in direct EU farm payments. "On average, the EU covers around 40 percent of agricultural investments," Marcenoka adds. She also breeds Latvia's traditional brown cows with Limousine and Charolais bulls from France, saying that "this way my own livestock becomes more European".

Heading west away from the Russian border, vast forests give way to small patches of farmland and the occasional village or town able to overhaul often rickety public infrastructure thanks to EU funding. "Over the last decade, we've received 16.2 million euros in EU funding for 90 different projects," says Edgars Mekss, the mayor of Ludza, a poor rural town of 12,000 people. "For every euro we spend for street repairs, construction works, laying water pipelines, church and synagogue restoration, we receive 4.7 euros from European coffers. Our border region won't be able to develop and create new jobs without it," he adds, although some critics warn that a lack of oversight on how funds are spent raises the risk of graft.

For Andris Meiers, business is booming even without subsidies. Latvia's geopolitical shift from Moscow to Brussels has opened new, lucrative markets for his traditional Latgalian sausages, hams and smoked bacon. "We take our simple rural food and travel all around the EU to various food fairs," he tells AFP. "In the past, we visited St Petersburg and Moscow; now that border seems closed but others have opened," he says, pointing to fellow EU members Germany, Poland and Sweden. — AFP

Guaido urges to reject 'fear' as Maduro clamps down

CARACAS: Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido on Saturday urged his supporters to reject fear and maintain nationwide protests against President Nicolas Maduro, who has been ratcheting up pressure on the lawmaker since a failed military uprising. Some 1,500 to 2,000 people filled a square in an opposition-friendly part of eastern Caracas to hear Guaido, but that was far fewer than the several thousands who took part in earlier protests.

Anti-Maduro rallies in other cities also appeared to be smaller than in previous weeks, based on photos and videos posted on social media. The smaller turnouts were seen as a sign of possibly waning interest - or simply exhaustion - after months of protests climaxed in a failed uprising April 30, leaving six people dead. "We are at a historic moment," Guaido told the crowd in Caracas, urging them not to give up their fight. "Either we are prisoners of fear, hopelessness and inaction... or else we continue to fill the streets with hope, with power, with confidence."

Melquides Rosales, a 42-year-old Guaido supporter at the Caracas rally, said he had expected a bigger turnout but added, "We may all be afraid of repression, but we cannot stay home." Guaido, who is recognized by more than 50 countries as Venezuela's interim president, has faced a series of setbacks. His deputy Edgar Zambrano was arrested by Maduro's SEBIN intelligence service and stands accused of "treason, conspiracy and civil rebellion," the Supreme Court said. Three other lawmakers have sought refuge in diplomatic facilities in Caracas, while one fled to neighboring Colombia. Guaido issued a call on Twitter late Friday for people to turn out Saturday and "take to the streets for our National Assembly... (and) for our brave lawmakers who are giving everything they have and for an entire nation that remains mobilized to win its freedom." Against a backdrop of spiraling economic crisis and grave shortages of food and medicine, Guaido and Maduro have been battling each other since early this year when the 35-year-old lawmaker, the head of the National Assembly, declared himself acting president. Guaido, who says Maduro rigged his own re-election last year, has repeatedly led street demonstrations and called on the military to turn their backs on Maduro, who retains key support from China and Russia.

So far, the armed forces have remained in Maduro's corner, except for about 30 military personnel who heeded Guaido's call for an uprising last month. The attempt to unseat Maduro, the political heir of the late Hugo Chavez, proved abortive. On Friday, Maduro accused his sacked intelligence chief of being a CIA "mole" and the architect of the failed military uprising. "He was captured by the CIA a year ago and was working as a traitor, mole and infiltrator," Maduro said of Cristopher Figuera, who has defected to the opposition. — AFP



CARACAS: Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed interim president Juan Guaido waves to supporters during a rally on Saturday. — AFP

International

Refugee entrepreneurs from Afghanistan thrive in Turkey

Administrative procedures simple for setting up a new business

BEYLIKDUZU, Turkey: When Afghan businessman Haji Yakup Burhan fled the violence of his home country 30 years ago, he brought with him his family - and all his money. He headed to Saudi Arabia, where he opened a restaurant, but as refugees, his children had difficulty getting into a school. Then he moved to the United Arab Emirates, but Dubai's costs seemed impossible. So, two years ago, he moved to Turkey and opened a restaurant in Istanbul's Esenyurt neighborhood, taking advantage of the country's relatively open business environment for refugees.

"I have 15 people working for me in this restaurant. They are Afghans, Iranians and Turks. I have invested about \$120,000 in this restaurant so far," Burhan, 52, told AFP at his Afghan Kebab establishment. "Over 60 percent of our customers are Afghans living here. The rest are Arabs, Iranians and Turks," he said. Afghan refugee entrepreneurs appear to be increasingly finding success in Turkey, where they bring to the local economy, not only their savings, but sought-after know-how, whether in restaurants, commerce or skilled crafts and specialties.

In turn, Turkey offers refugees simplified administrative procedures for setting up a new business. Turkey hosts nearly four million refugees, with Syrians making up the largest group, but Afghans number more than 145,000, according to Amnesty International figures released last year. Some people in Turkey view refugees as a burden, but a different picture emerges in Burhan's bustling Istanbul suburb, where refugees like him have made significant investment in the Turkish economy.

Citizenship investment

Inside Burhan's restaurant, a TV blares Afghan channels showing Turkish soap operas over the hum of customers eating the popular Afghan dish Qabili Palaw - rice with lamb meat and mixed with caramelized carrots, raisins and almond slivers. "We are the only Afghan restaurant in this neighborhood for now," he told AFP, sitting cross-legged on a mattress, sipping green tea.

To attract more investment at a time when the Turkish economy was struggling last year, the government in September slashed from \$1 million to \$250,000 the threshold at which Turkish citizenship is offered to foreigners buying property. It sparked an 82-percent increase in foreigners buying real estate in the first quarter of this year, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) said. Afghans likely account for a small percentage of this hike -

precise figures are unavailable - but not all those fleeing the war-ravaged country are destitute. Mehmet Yasin Hamidi, an Afghan who runs the Royalist real-estate agency in Beylikduzu, on Istanbul's outskirts, told AFP that their sales of homes had doubled this year compared to the same period last year. "People cannot protect their lives and money in Afghanistan," Hamidi, who has lots of Afghans among his clients, said. "If you have money, you or your children could get kidnapped. The businessmen are threatened there. That is why they bring their money here."

Rare skills

Construction of new housing has exploded in Beylikduzu in recent years to meet a growing demand for real estate investment by foreigners. The Association of Housing Developers and Investors says that foreigners bought \$4.6 billion of Turkish property in 2018 and the figure is expected to jump to \$10 billion this year. Many refugees arriving in Turkey bring with them diverse skills and experience that allow them to make a contribution to the country's workforce.

Hadi Ekhlās, an engraver from Afghanistan's Hazara ethnic group, left the war-torn nation eight years ago. He first went to neighboring Pakistan to sell his skills. He then moved to Turkey, where he now engraves Islamic and Ottoman scripts on gemstone rings and semi-precious stones - a skill he learned from his grandfather - in Istanbul's Grand Bazaar, one of the world's oldest covered markets. "In the past, some Turkish traders would import stones with engravings from other countries, but now I am making them here and taking orders," Ekhlās told AFP.

Ekhlās has a Turkish partner, who helps him with marketing, and runs one of the 42 Afghan shops in the Grand Bazaar. "I plan to expand my business in the near future. I'd also like to teach my skills to other Turks here," he said. In another corner of the Grand Bazaar, Khalil Nuri, an expert Afghan jeweler, sells rings, necklaces, pendants - just about anything that can be found in Kabul's many curiosity shops. "I am a jeweler and an expert in handicrafts and I wanted to continue my profession here," said Nuri, who fled Afghanistan and has been doing business for the past 12 years in Istanbul. Meanwhile, Burhan said that he hoped his business continued to do well "because there are a lot of Afghans living here". "There are also people who want to give the taste of Afghan cuisine a try," — AFP



ISTANBUL: Expert Afghan jeweler Khalil Nuri poses for a picture in his shop at the Grand Bazaar on April 11, 2019. — AFP

Pakistan PM slams hotel attack as bid to damage economy

ISLAMABAD: An attack on a luxury hotel in the southwestern city of Gwadar was a bid to "sabotage prosperity", Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan said yesterday, as police confirmed all the attackers had been killed. Five people were killed Saturday after gunmen stormed a luxury hotel in the southwestern Pakistani city of Gwadar, the centerpiece of a multi-billion dollar Chinese infrastructure project. A Baloch separatist group, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), claimed responsibility for the attack via Twitter.

During the attack "5 individuals got Shaheed (martyred) including 4 hotel employees and a Pakistan Navy soldier," the military said in a statement. One of the hotel staff killed was a security guard shot at the entrance. Six others were injured including four security service officers and two hotel staff members. The military said all three terrorists had been killed. Local police had earlier claimed there had been four attackers.

"Such attempts especially in Balochistan are an effort

to sabotage our economic projects and prosperity. We shall not allow these agendas to succeed," Khan said in a statement issued by his office. The Chinese embassy in Islamabad also strongly condemned the incident. Mohammad Aslam, a police official in Gwadar, told AFP Saturday that only staff were present in the building at the time of the attack. The BLA is one of a myriad of insurgent groups fighting in tightly-guarded Balochistan province, which has been rocked by separatist, Islamist and sectarian violence for years.

'The next Dubai'

The Pearl Continental, part of Pakistan's largest five-star hotel chain, is the only luxury hotel in Gwadar, frequented by foreign and Pakistani business delegations as well as diplomats. It sits isolated on a ridge overlooking the Arabian Sea port city that was formerly a small fishing village, but now touted by officials as "the next Dubai" thanks to the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Part of China's Belt and Road initiative, CPEC seeks to connect the western Chinese province of Xinjiang with Gwadar, with the development of the port as the plan's flagship project. Gwadar will provide China with safer and more direct access to the oil-rich Middle East than the waterway trade route it currently uses through the narrow Malacca Straits. — AFP

Latest Lanka arrest throws spotlight on Wahhabism

KATTANKUDY, Sri Lanka: Sri Lankan authorities have arrested a Saudi-educated scholar for what they claim are links with Zahran Hashim, the suspected ringleader of the Easter Sunday bombings, throwing a spotlight on the rising influence of Salafi-Wahhabi Islam on the island's Muslims. Mohamed Aliyar, 60, is the founder of the Centre for Islamic Guidance, which boasts a mosque, a religious school and a library in Zahran's hometown of Kattankudy, a Muslim-dominated city on Sri Lanka's eastern shores.

"Information has been revealed that the suspect arrested had a close relationship with ... Zahran and had been operating financial transactions," said a police statement late on Friday. The statement said Aliyar was "involved" with training in the southern town of Hambantota for the group of suicide bombers who attacked hotels and churches on Easter, killing over 250 people. A police spokesman declined to provide details on the accusations. Calls to Aliyar and his associates went unanswered. Reuters was unable to find contact details for a lawyer.

The government says Zahran, a radical Tamil-speaking preacher, was a leader of the group. Two Muslim community sources in Kattankudy told Reuters his headline views were partly shaped by ultra-conservative Salafi-Wahhabi texts that he picked up at the Centre for Islamic Guidance's library around 2-3 years ago. The sources are not affiliated with the center. "I used to always run into him at the center, reading Saudi journals and literature," said one of the sources.

During that time, Zahran started criticizing the practice of asking saints for help, for instance, arguing that such pleas were an affront to pure Islam. "That kind of teaching was not in Sri Lanka in 2016, unless you read it in Salafi literature," the source added, requesting anonymity to avoid repercussions in Kattankudy. Salafism, a puritanical interpretation of Islam that advocates a return to the values of the first three generations of Muslims and is closely linked to Wahhabism, has often been criticized as the ideology of radical Islamists worldwide.

Wahhabi Islam has its roots in Saudi Arabia and is

Delhi leader defies slaps and shoes to step up poll fight

NEW DELHI: He has been smeared with chilli powder and slapped, but Delhi's chief minister will still be leading the fight against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in yesterday's penultimate round of the Indian election. Fifty-nine seats are up for grabs across the country on the sixth voting day of the marathon ballot. The tussle for the capital will be front and center, with all eyes on its chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, whose Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) - or Common Man party - was formed just seven years ago amid outrage over corruption.

It has since taken control of Delhi's regional government and is fighting to add to its four seats in India's lower house of parliament. Modi's right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will be trying to stave off the onslaught and keep the seven seats it currently holds. Kejriwal, a tax commissioner-turned-campaigner, has suffered more than most in India's notoriously rough and tumble political bullying.

Since 2013 and his first term as Delhi chief minister, the 50-year-old has been the target of at least seven attacks. Ink has been thrown at him twice, with eggs also hurled on



COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan army soldier stands guard outside St Theresa's Church yesterday as Catholic churches hold services again after the Easter attacks. — AFP

backed by its rulers, although Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has committed the kingdom to a more moderate form of Islam. Other than the fact that Zahran visited the center, the sources in Kattankudy said they did not know of any personal ties between him and Aliyar. Aliyar founded the center in 1990, a year after he graduated from the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh, in what one resident said marked a key moment in the spread of Salafi doctrine in Kattankudy. The center was partly funded by Saudi and Kuwaiti donors, according to a plaque outside.

Troublemaker

Reuters spoke to three members of the center's board before Aliyar's arrest. They asked to remain anonymous, citing security concerns amid a backlash against some Muslims. They said Zahran was a troublemaker and that they had warned authorities about his extremist views. The members said they thought Zahran frequented the library around a decade ago, but had no recollection of him visiting recently and denied that any of its books were to blame for his views.

Funding for the center came from local donations, student fees, and private donors who were classmates of Aliyar's in Riyadh, the center's sources said. Reuters was unable to immediately determine further details about the funding of the center. The Saudi government communications office in Riyadh did not respond to requests for comment on the funding of the center. — Reuters

one of those occasions. In 2016, a shoe was thrown while Kejriwal made an announcement, a rickshaw driver hit him and his car was attacked by a mob with iron rods. In November a man smeared chili powder on his face inside the Delhi government building. His latest brush with danger was last week when a man mounted the open top car Kejriwal was campaigning in and slapped him.

That attack has become a new political battle, with AAP deputy leader Manish Sisodia saying BJP rivals may have wanted Kejriwal murdered. Modi's party questioned whether the chief minister organized it all himself. Kejriwal, whose party has 67 of 70 state assembly seats, said in recent interviews that one month ago he thought his party faced a "tough fight" in Delhi but now he hopes to take all seven parliament seats. "Our only aim is to stop Modi and BJP president Amit Shah from coming back to power. We will support anyone other than that duo," he told Press Trust of India news agency.

Creating anarchy

With the opposition Congress party also in the contest, the anti-BJP vote could be divided. Still, the ruling party faces an increasingly tough battle in the election, observers say. The BJP won 282 seats in 2014 but some analysts predict it will suffer major losses when the final results are announced on May 23. Congress won 44 seats in that election, an historic low since independence in 1947. The AAP is also looking for a major boost and Modi has stepped up verbal attacks on Kejriwal in recent rallies, accusing him of "creating anarchy" in the capital. — AFP

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13 EU rich-poor divide widens but still a worldwide low



14 Markaz: A resilient start to 2019 with AUM reaching a 5-year high



LONG BEACH: Unloaded containers from Asia are seen at the main port terminal in Long Beach, California. Amid rising fears over US-Chinese trade tensions and mounting tariffs, President Donald Trump said on Saturday that firms could easily avoid additional costs by producing goods in the US. —AFP

Trump to China: Strike a trade deal now

It will be ‘far worse’ after 2020, warns president

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump warned China on Saturday that it should strike a trade deal with the United States now, otherwise an agreement would be “far worse for them if it has to be negotiated in my second term.”

Washington and Beijing are locked in a trade battle that has seen mounting tariffs, sparking fears the dispute will damage the global economy. Two days of talks ended Friday with no deal. China’s top negotiator said the two sides would meet again in Beijing at an unspecified date, but warned that China would make no concessions on “important principles.”

“I think that China felt they were being beaten so badly in the recent negotiation that they may as well wait around for the next election, 2020, to see if they could get lucky & have a Democrat win-in which case they would continue to rip-off the USA for \$500 Billion a year,” Trump said in a tweet Saturday.

“The only problem is that they know I am going to win (best economy & employment numbers in US history, & much more), and the deal will become far worse for them if it has to be negotiated in my second term. Would be wise for them to act now, but love collecting BIG TARIFFS!”

Trump had accused Beijing of reneging on its commitments in trade talks and ordered new punitive duties, which took effect Friday, on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports, raising them to 25 percent from 10 percent.

Amid trade war, floods compound farmers’ woes in Nebraska

ORCHARD, United States: Already hurt by the US-China trade war, farmers in Nebraska are reeling from this year’s devastating floods, which ravaged crops and left little time to plant for the next harvest. Damage from the March rains in the Midwest is visible across the landscape north of Omaha, the state’s biggest city: trees have fallen, growing fields are caked in mud and rivers are at elevated levels. “Road Closed” signs pop up often in particularly water-logged areas where bridges and dikes were overwhelmed, making neighborhoods uninhabitable and cutting off public services. Cows are visible in some pastures but many breeders are still tallying their losses.

Some animals died in the floods and others perished after being sickened by bad water. “I know people who lost a lot of their animals because they were stranded in the floods,” said Jim Dinklage, a farmer in Orchard, about three hours from Omaha. “You couldn’t have access to them.” Of

He then cranked up the heat further, ordering a tariff hike on almost all remaining imports — \$300 billion worth, according to US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer—from the world’s second-biggest economy.

Those tariffs would not take effect for months, after a period of public comment.

Trump also said Saturday that firms could easily avoid additional costs by producing goods in the United States. “Such an easy way to avoid Tariffs? Make or produce your goods and products in the good old USA. It’s very simple!” he tweeted, echoing a similar message he sent Friday—and even retweeted.

Only a week earlier, the United States and China had seemed poised to complete a sweeping agreement. Washington wants Beijing to tighten its intellectual property protections, cut its subsidies to state-owned firms and reduce the yawning trade deficit: China wants an end to tariffs as part of a “balanced” deal.

While supporters laud Trump as a tough negotiator, free-trade-minded Republicans have warned that the tariffs could do real damage to the economy, and many farmers—including Trump supporters—say the tariffs have hit their bottom line. As the trade war spread, China imposed \$110 billion in duties on farm exports and other US goods.

Republican Senator Chuck Grassley, from the farm state of

Nebraska’s 93 counties, 81 have declared states of emergency, said Steve Wellman, director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. “So 85 percent of the state of Nebraska has been impacted by either flooding or blizzard conditions from the middle of March,” he said. Damages are estimated at more than \$800 million, about \$400 million in the livestock industry and \$440 million in crops.

Higher costs

Among the 50 states, Nebraska is the third-biggest corn producer and second-biggest ethanol producer. One out of four jobs is tied to farming, the state’s biggest sector. In Scribner, north of Omaha, Ruth and Sid Ready describe a closing window of opportunity for the season. Corn is usually planted from mid-April through May, while soybeans are sown through July 1. “It’s not like we’ve got a lot of alternatives out here. You either get your crop in the spring, or you are out of income for the entire year,” said Ruth Ready, adding that the floods shrank this season’s usable acreage, threatening the next harvest.

The couple, who also raise cows, estimate the rains will effectively double the costs in the Nebraska farm belt this year. Clare and Gayle Duda, corn and soy farmers in nearby Ponca Hills, said they were facing a similar situation. “We planted 300 acres and we were only able to harvest five acres,” or just two hectares, said Clare, adding that losses were hard to bear without revenue to make up for

Iowa, cautiously welcomed the new tariffs but urged negotiators to reach a quick solution “so we can avoid prolonged tariffs, which we know have an impact on the US economy.”

Cautious optimism

China and the United States have agreed to hold more trade talks in Beijing, Vice Premier Liu He said as US President Donald Trump ordered his trade chief to begin the process of imposing tariffs on all remaining imports from China. Liu voiced a measured optimism on reaching a deal, but said there were “issues of principle” on which China would not back down.

“Negotiations have not broken down,” Liu, China’s chief negotiator in the talks, said in Washington on Friday, according to state television on Saturday. “Quite the opposite, I think small setbacks are normal and inevitable during the negotiations of both countries. Looking forward, we are still cautiously optimistic,” Liu said.

The United States escalated a tariff war with China on Friday by hiking levies on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods in the midst of last-ditch talks to rescue a trade deal. Trump had delayed the tariffs as negotiations between Washington and Beijing were progressing. On Friday, Trump issued orders for the tariff increase, saying China “broke the deal” by reneging on earlier commitments made during months of negotia-

the investment in the crop.

Flood waters had pooled in the middle of the Dudas’ corn field, splitting it in two and cutting off access to much of the crops, consigning them to ruin. A church donation paid for antibiotics to treat E.coli infections in their goats, but the bacteria is also now present in mushrooms on the property. “We should be out planting today but because the river flooded, the soil gets so saturated, so wet, that we can’t,” said a forlorn Clare. Growers have fixed costs on land and machinery that do not lessen even if output is lower.

In many cases, farmers already purchased seeds for the season. Plus, transport costs have essentially doubled due to the dismal state of the roads. But there is a more fundamental hit to the region’s economic capacity, with nutrient-rich soil developed over generations suddenly stripped away. After taking stock of the damage, the Dudas concede the reality of climate change. “I accept it,” Clare said of the warming climate.

Trade war hit

Emergency calls from farmers to a hotline run by Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska have doubled over the last year. In the wake of the disaster, growers have been granted extensions on credit payments and loans, as well as the possibility in some cases to renegotiate loans at lower interest rates. The floods came as farm incomes have fallen about 50 percent since 2013 due to low crop

tions. China strongly opposes the latest US tariff hike, and as a nation, has to respond to that, Liu told a small group of Chinese reporters in the video clip.

“Right now, both sides have reached mutual understanding in many things, but frankly speaking, there are also differences. We think these differences are significant issues of principle,” Liu said. “We absolutely cannot make concessions on such issues of principle.” He added that talks would continue in Beijing, but gave no details. Underscoring a lack of progress in the talks, Trump ordered a further escalation of tariffs. Trump’s move would subject about \$300 billion worth of Chinese imports to punitive tariffs, US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in a statement on Friday. Lighthizer said a final decision has not been made on the new duties, which would come on top of an early Friday tariff rate increase, to 25 percent from 10 percent, on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports.

China’s widely-read Global Times newspaper, which while published by the ruling Communist Party’s official People’s Daily newspaper does not speak for the government, said in a Sunday editorial that the United States has “seriously underestimated China’s endurance”. “Washington tried to bring up terms that either harmed the sovereignty and dignity of China, or that were seriously unequal and unrealistic. Those requests have made the negotiations more difficult,” the paper said. —Agencies

prices, leading to debt levels not seen since the 1980s.

The situation has also been exacerbated by the trade war with China, which has closed off a key consumer market for some growers, particularly for soybeans. The Ready family sells both soybeans and corn to China. But they are sticking with President Donald Trump. “It was our products that are most affected by that trade war,” Sid Ready said. “Does that mean that we are all very happy about it because it’s costing us?” he added. “No, but we understand it.” “In the long run, we hope it works.” —AFP



CLEARWATER: Grain bin storages are seen next to a road near Clearwater, Nebraska. —AFP

Business

Jazeera Airways launches Bodrum route in Turkey, increases flights to Istanbul

3 flights a week to Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways, Kuwait's leading low-cost airline, operating regionally and internationally, yesterday announced that it has started serving for the first time the coastal city of Bodrum in Turkey with three flights a week.

The new Turkish destination is an addition to the three flights a week recently launched to Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (SAW), and to the existing daily flights to the new Istanbul Airport (IST).

Flights to Bodrum come in response to high demand during the peak travel season to the popular summer destination located on the Aegean Sea. Jazeera Airways has also enhanced its schedule to Istanbul to offer customers the choice between landing or departing from Sabiha Gokcen International Airport or the Istanbul Airport. Sabiha Gokcen is located in the Asian side of Istanbul while Istanbul Airport is located on the European side of the city.

Speaking of the new route launch, Jazeera Airways CEO, Rohit Ramachandran, said: "We are very excited to be starting flights to Bodrum during the summer season. It has become an extremely popular leisure destination for the Kuwaiti market. We are

also pleased to have increased flights to Istanbul and offer our customers the choice of airport to fly through. Istanbul is a great touristic destination that never ceases to amaze with every visit thanks to its deeply-rooted history and culture."

Jazeera Airways customers enjoy access to easy booking and self-check-in services on its website and native mobile apps, convenient alternatives to park, on-board duty free shopping and inflight entertainment on Jazeera Screens available on all routes, and a state-of-the-art experience in its dedicated Jazeera Terminal that is designed to make travelling more efficient and less stressful. Jazeera Airways flies to 28 popular destinations across the Middle East, India and Europe comprising high-demand business, leisure, family and weekend destinations including Dubai, Bahrain, Doha, Beirut, Amman, Alexandria, Cairo, Sharm El Sheikh, Assiut, Luxor, Sohag, Jeddah, Riyadh, Taif, Najaf, Mashhad, Kochi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, New Delhi, Lahore, Istanbul, Bodrum, Baku and Tbilisi.

The airline operates a fleet of Airbus A320s and an Airbus A320neo, the first to be operated in the Middle East.



| Flight schedule between Kuwait (KWI) and Bodrum Airport (BJV): | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|------|-----|------------------------|----------------------|
| Flight Number | Period | Frequency | From | To | Departure (Local Time) | Arrival (Local Time) |
| J9-309 | May 9 to Oct 26 | Mondays, Thursdays, Sundays | KWI | BJV | 11:45 | 15:35 |
| J9-310 | May 9 to Oct 26 | Mondays, Thursdays, Sundays | BJV | KWI | 16:20 | 19:50 |

NBK Money Markets Report

Demand for safety assets is on the rise

KUWAIT: Economic indicators released last week were minimal, hence markets' attention was directed towards the ongoing trade negotiations between the two largest economies. Risk aversion was the dominant theme throughout the week even before the trade war rhetoric resurfaced on Friday, President Trump elevated the tariffs rate from 10 percent to 25 percent on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports.

In addition, Trump threatened to go even further by imposing 25 percent levies on all imports from China. On the other side, Beijing stated it would retaliate even as the two sides pursue a last minute meeting to salvage a trade deal. China's Commerce Ministry said it deeply regrets the US decision, adding that it would take necessary countermeasures, without elaborating. It seems that months of easing trade tensions have dissipated, paving the way for safety assets to outperform.

Looking at the best performers in the FX market last week, the safe haven Japanese yen soared to a 3-month high of 109.46 and gained nearly 0.80 percent over the US dollar. The Swiss franc was the second strongest, rising by 0.46 percent. Euro displayed a lot of resilience appreciating around 0.35 percent versus the USD. What is worth mentioning is that the US dollar usually trades in positive territory during times of risk aversion. However, last week this wasn't the case. The DXY depreciated by around 0.23 percent in the past five trading sessions.

It appears that mounting fears of an escalation in the trade war theme could force US policymakers to cut interest rates. If China retaliates then the threat of a global trade war will affect the outlook of the US economy. In this case, the FED has more room to ease than most other central banks. The implied probability from the FED Funds futures for the US central bank to lower interest rates by 0.25 percent this year is around 40 percent.

As for the equities market, volatility was more evident compared to the FX market. Wall Street's favored volatility indicator spiked last week to 23.38, the highest level since early January. At the start of the weekly session, the volatility index was around 12.80. US stock markets performed poorly and the green zone was nowhere to be seen as investors rushed to safety assets. In weekly terms, the Dow Jones was down by 2.12 percent and a 2.18 percent loss for the S&P 500 was registered.

In the bond market, demand for US government bonds soared due to the risk aversion theme overshadowing financial markets. Bond prices rose, pushing long dated yields lower. Markets witnessed a slight inversion of the yield curve when the 10-year yield on Thursday fell by 6 basis points to below the 3-month yield. The curve was briefly inverted for a short period of time, although the gap has since then shifted back to above zero. On the other side of the Atlantic, the German 10-

year government bond yield sank and was headed to its largest weekly fall in seven weeks on Friday.

Inflation data

US annual wholesale prices remained unchanged in April for both the PPI and core data. The PPI is currently at 2.2 percent and the core index, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, remained at 2.4 percent. The aforementioned numbers have debilitated even as oil prices recovered. The PPI was at 3.4 percent in summer of 2018, while the core PPI hovered around 2.9 percent at the end of 2018. As for the consumer inflation, the CPI came in at 2 percent last week, way below the 2.9 percent recorded in July 2018. Price growth has been losing momentum and the FED's preferred indicator of overall inflation grew at the slowest pace in 14 months. The US central bank is trying to achieve a price stability of 2 percent and has failed to attain its target as the core PCE index was last recorded at 1.6 percent. Price pressures have remained moderate despite a strong economy and tightening labor market. Hence, the FED's hesitation towards elevating its overnight rate makes sense, especially with the global economy cooling down.

Euro-zone PMIs

The single economy continues to lose momentum at the start of the second quarter, pressured by the manufacturing sector that is in its steepest downturn since 2013. The Composite PMI, which combines the manufacturing and service sectors dipped to 51.5 in April. The manufacturing sector has been in a contractionary mode the past three months as the PMI figures came in below the 50 threshold. As for the service sector, it remains somewhat more resilient. The service PMI figure is currently at 52.8, down from 53.3 seen in March. The sector persists on contributing positively to GDP thanks to its expansionary status of above 50. However, the reading has weakened significantly since the start of the year from around 57. Hence, the above figures do support the ECB's view that no rate hikes are planned before the spring of 2020 and this dovish tone has made the euro less attractive. Year-to-date, the euro is down by nearly 2 percent versus the dollar.

UK GDP rebounds

The British economy rebounded in Q1 2019 to 0.5 percent q/q from a previous reading of 0.2 percent q/q. On an annual basis, the economy experienced the strongest rate of growth since Q3 2017 as GDP grew by 1.8 percent y/y. The fact that the UK succeeded in expanding faster than the eurozone growth of 0.4 percent q/q is at first glance, impressive. However, most of the positive contribution is attributed to factories rushing to complete orders before a Brexit that never came. A 2.2 percent increase in factory output was seen in the first quarter and marking the sector's biggest contribution to overall economic growth in nearly 20 years. In regards to other economic indicators, the services PMI came in only just above 50, the consumer sentiment resides near a six-year low and housing prices remain in a soft state. Overall, the economy got a sharp one-off boost due to Brexit stockpiling and the BoE expects growth in the second quarter to return to a lackluster figure of 0.2 percent.

Chinese inflation rises

Both consumer and producer prices inflated last month on the back of an increase in food inflation and higher oil prices

respectively. The annual CPI rate expanded to a six-month high of 2.5 percent from 2.3 percent. However, the rise is mainly attributed to a 14.4 percent y/y jump in pork prices. China's farming industry has been hit with the African swine fever and forecasts are revealing that the disease will leave 130m fewer pigs in China by end of year, limiting the supply of the country's preferred protein. Looking at producer inflation, the figure rose to 0.9 percent y/y its fastest pace of growth in 2019, from 0.1 percent y/y. Inflationary figures seem to be improving since the downfall in late 2018. However, this shouldn't be interpreted as evidence of stronger domestic demand. Price growth was mainly driven by supply-side disruptions and not by demand-pull inflation, where aggregate demand in an economy outpaces aggregate supply.

China's service sector

China's service sector displayed a slight improvement last month as the Caixin Services PMI edged up by 0.1 point to 54.5. The aforementioned figure registered the highest reading since January 2018 on the back of solid expansion in exports. The PMI survey revealed that growth in new export orders received by Chinese services entities expanded at its quickest rate since Caixin measurements began. Services PMIs (NBS & Caixin) indicate a resilient service sector thanks to a sustained recovery in domestic demand, which account for more than half of China's economy. Therefore, the resilient service sector could assist to counter any volatility in the country's manufacturing sector that has weakened since the trade war rhetoric arose. Job creation in the sector increased to a 10-month high, while a sub-gauge measuring the outlook for the year ahead remained subdued, capped by concerns over the strength of the global economy. Hence, Beijing could stay on its current easing monetary trajectory, especially as uncertainties over the trade talks have re-emerged and the manufacturing sector remains in a frail state.

It's all about the labor market

The AUD/USD appreciated considerably by 0.8 percent on Tuesday after the RBA board decided to maintain its cash rate at a record low of 1.5 percent for the 30th monthly meeting in a row. The overnight swap market indicated a 45 percent probability for a lower cash rate and in a Bloomberg survey, 15 economists had expected a 25 basis point cut versus 14 who expected a no change outcome. As for the Bank's forecasts, the RBA lowered its price growth expectations to 1.75 percent for the current year (previously 2.0 percent) and 2.0 percent for 2020 (previously 2.25 percent). Monetary officials also lowered growth estimate for 2019 to 2.75 percent from February's assessment of 3.3 percent. Despite weaker expectations for inflation and growth, the bank's argument for maintaining its monetary rate was based upon a robust labor market. It's still all about the labor market, that's what the RBA indicated.

As long as the labor market is strong and continues to improve, the central bank will continue to believe that a tightening labor market will boost wages and inflation. Overall, it seems that interest rate trajectory will depend on the labor market and if the labor market were to weaken, then cash rate cuts maybe the outcome.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30375
The USDKWD opened at 0.30375 yesterday morning.

Trade turbulence shows market vulnerability as stocks get pricier

NEW YORK: Stock valuations have climbed to levels reached just before Wall Street's late 2018 plunge, leaving the market at risk of shocks such as the sell-off this week as global trade tensions mounted. But stocks may have more support than last year, due largely to lower bond yields and a more dovish outlook on interest rates from the Federal Reserve. Under the traditional price-to-earnings (P/E) ratio method of valuing equities, stocks recently rose to their most expensive level since September. The benchmark S&P 500 index peaked last year on Sept 20, before sliding nearly 20 percent over the next three months.

The forward P/E for the index, which compares stock prices to estimated earnings over the next year, had climbed recently to 17 times, making the index about 13 percent more expensive than its historic average, according to more than 30 years of data tracked by Refinitiv. "Whenever you get up to these levels, you just become more vulnerable," said Matt Maley, equity strategist with Miller Tabak. "We know that valuations can stay high for extended periods of time, but it does make the market vulnerable to new negative developments and that is kind of what we are seeing this week."

After the S&P 500 hit record highs last week, US President Donald Trump spooked stocks by threatening over the weekend to raise tariffs on Chinese imports. This ratcheted up tensions in the long-running trade dispute between the world's two largest economies. Investors who had been optimistic about a US-China deal now worried that such a deal may not happen anytime soon. The S&P fell early on Friday but finished slightly higher after remarks from Trump and other officials fed hopes that Washington and Beijing would avoid the worst-case scenario of a complete breakdown in negotiations.

As of Friday's close, the S&P 500 was about 2.2 percent below its all-time high close, which in turn reduced the forward P/E multiple on the S&P 500 to nearly 16.8 times, still well above the historic average of 15.1 times. On Friday, the S&P 500 rose 0.4 percent. "The margin of error is thin based on the reaction we have seen to some of the rhetoric from the US-China trade agreement," said Michael Arone, chief investment strategist for State Street Global Advisors. Debate about valuations has taken hold broadly. Just this week, the Fed called stock prices "elevated" in its latest financial stability report.

Stocks may have a cushion, however, with lower interest rates, which help the allure of stocks. The yield on the benchmark 10-year US Treasury note sits at 2.46 percent, after eclipsing 3.2 percent in November, making bonds look less competitive as an investment versus equities. Stocks are typically valued through by estimating their future cash flows, which are more valuable at lower rates. The Fed, meanwhile, has signaled little appetite to adjust rates any time soon. As recently as December, the Fed had anticipated further rises in borrowing costs in 2019. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

| Al-Muzaini Exchange Co. | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES | |
| US Dollar Transfer | 305.000 |
| Euro | 345.110 |
| Sterling Pound | 398.480 |
| Canadian dollar | 229.240 |
| Turkish Lira | 52.630 |
| Swiss Franc | 303.630 |
| US Dollar Buying | 303.800 |
| ASIAN COUNTRIES | |
| Japanese Yen | 2.729 |
| Indian Rupees | 4.379 |
| Pakistani Rupees | 2.187 |
| SriLankan Rupees | 1.743 |
| Nepali Rupees | 2.737 |
| Singapore Dollar | 225.760 |
| Hongkong Dollar | 38.875 |
| Bangladesh Taka | 3.603 |
| Philippine Peso | 5.893 |
| Thai Baht | 9.616 |
| Malaysian ringgit | 78.005 |
| GCC COUNTRIES | |
| Saudi Riyal | 81.388 |
| Qatari Riyal | 83.826 |
| Omani Riyal | 792.723 |
| Bahraini Dinar | 810.420 |
| UAE Dirham | 83.095 |
| ARAB COUNTRIES | |
| Egyptian Pound - Cash | 20.850 |
| Egyptian Pound - Transfer | 17.726 |

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| Yemen Riyal/for 1000 | 1.225 |
| Tunisian Dinar | 105.170 |
| Jordanian Dinar | 430.670 |
| Lebanese Lira/for 1000 | 2.033 |
| Syrian Lira | 0.000 |
| Morocco Dirham | 32.344 |

| Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Rate for Transfer | Selling Rate |
| US Dollar | 304.340 |
| Canadian Dollar | 227.315 |
| Sterling Pound | 400.840 |
| Euro | 342.770 |
| Swiss Frank | 310.905 |
| Bahrain Dinar | 809.355 |
| UAE Dirhams | 83.265 |
| Qatari Riyals | 84.500 |
| Saudi Riyals | 82.055 |
| Jordanian Dinar | 430.540 |
| Egyptian Pound | 17.753 |
| Sri Lankan Rupees | 1.721 |
| Indian Rupees | 4.390 |
| Pakistani Rupees | 2.154 |
| Bangladesh Taka | 3.605 |
| Philippines Peso | 5.865 |
| Cyprus pound | 18.105 |
| Japanese Yen | 3.750 |
| Syrian Pound | 1.590 |
| Nepalese Rupees | 2.748 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 74.240 |
| Chinese Yuan Renminbi | 45.330 |
| Thai Bhat | 10.526 |

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Turkish Lira | 50.004 |
| Singapore dollars | 223.485 |

| BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| CURRENCY | BUY | SELL |
| Europe | | |
| British Pound | 0.389482 | 0.403382 |
| Czech Korune | 0.005297 | 0.014597 |
| Danish Krone | 0.041812 | 0.046812 |
| Euro | 0.335404 | 0.349104 |
| Georgian Lari | 0.132130 | 0.132130 |
| Hungarian Lari | 0.001338 | |
| Norwegian Krone | 0.030909 | 0.036109 |
| Romanian Leu | 0.065285 | 0.082135 |
| Russian ruble | 0.004686 | 0.004686 |
| Slovakia | 0.009109 | 0.019109 |
| Swedish Krona | 0.027653 | 0.032653 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.295040 | 0.306040 |
| Australasia | | |
| Australian Dollar | 0.205338 | 0.217338 |
| New Zealand Dollar | 0.195182 | 0.204682 |
| America | | |
| Canadian Dollar | 0.221876 | 0.230876 |
| US Dollars | 0.300500 | 0.305800 |
| US Dollars Mint | 0.301000 | 0.305800 |
| Asia | | |
| Bangladesh Taka | 0.003010 | 0.003811 |

| Chinese Yuan | 0.043257 | 0.046757 |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Hong Kong Dollar | 0.037062 | 0.039812 |
| Indian Rupee | 0.003776 | 0.004548 |
| Indonesian Rupiah | 0.000017 | 0.000023 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.002696 | 0.002876 |
| Korean Won | 0.000249 | 0.000264 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 0.069762 | 0.075762 |
| Nepalese Rupee | 0.002680 | 0.003020 |
| Pakistan Rupee | 0.001524 | 0.002294 |
| Philippine Peso | 0.005772 | 0.006072 |
| Singapore Dollar | 0.218226 | 0.228226 |
| Sri Lankan Rupee | 0.001376 | 0.001966 |
| Taiwan | 0.010167 | 0.010347 |
| Thai Baht | 0.009310 | 0.009860 |
| Vietnamese Dong | 0.00013 | 0.00013 |
| Arab | | |
| Bahraini Dinar | 0.793387 | 0.809887 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.017738 | 0.020338 |
| Iranian Riyal | 0.000084 | 0.000086 |
| Iraqi Dinar | 0.000210 | 0.000270 |
| Jordanian Dinar | 0.424715 | 0.433715 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | 1.000000 | 1.000000 |
| Lebanese Pound | 0.000157 | 0.000257 |
| Moroccan Dirhams | 0.021213 | 0.045213 |
| Omani Riyal | 0.784851 | 0.790631 |
| Qatar Riyal | 0.079376 | 0.084316 |
| Saudi Riyal | 0.080140 | 0.081440 |
| Syrian Pound | 0.001291 | 0.001511 |
| Tunisian Dinar | 0.097496 | 0.105496 |
| Turkish Lira | 0.044772 | 0.056272 |
| UAE Dirhams | 0.081507 | 0.083207 |
| Yemeni Riyal | 0.000990 | 0.001070 |

Business

EU rich-poor divide widens but still a worldwide low

Inequalities increased in most of EU countries over 1980-2017: WIL

PARIS: Although the gap between rich and poor has widened in the European Union over the past decades, the bloc is a world leader in fighting inequality, experts say.

Unequal between EU members

The internationally accepted Gini coefficient formula that measures income disparities gives the 28-nation EU, as a whole, one of the best rankings in the world for equality, alongside that of Canada. Both are rated at a rounded-off 31 out of 100 in the ranking (2017), in which higher indexes indicate greater levels of inequality. But the scores of various countries within the European Union differ markedly, with some of those of the former communist states in Eastern Europe bringing down the average. Bulgaria has the highest level of inequality with a Gini index of 40, according to the EU's statistics office Eurostat.

It is followed by the former Soviet states of Lithuania and Latvia, and then Spain, Portugal and Greece. Britain and Romania-another former Soviet satellite-are next, both measuring 33. Germany, France and Poland do slightly better, averaging around 29. Topping the list as the most egalitarian are the three former communist countries of Slovakia (23), Slovenia and the Czech Republic, both around 24. They are followed by Nordic countries Sweden, Denmark and Finland, along with Belgium, The Netherlands and Austria, all scoring between 26 and 28.

Four decades of widening

While Europe has been more successful than most regions in containing income inequality rises seen around the world, inequalities increased in most of its countries over 1980-2017, according to the World Inequality Lab (WIL). "The European top one percent

grew more than two times faster than the bottom 50 percent," the Paris-based group of experts said in an April report. It pointed to a focus on reducing inequalities between EU member states rather than within the countries themselves. The largest rise was in formerly communist eastern European countries that were the most egalitarian during the 1980s and moved towards capitalism in the 1990s. Here "privatizations associated with the transition from socialism to capitalism have benefited a small elite," the report said.

The tax effect

In Western Europe the richest 10 percent earn, on average, seven times more than the poorest 50 percent before taxes, WIL said. However, after tax, this is only five times more-a drop of 29 percent. The post-tax adjustment is 23 percent in southern and northern Europe and 15 percent in the east. While Western European countries tend to impose higher taxes on higher incomes, many eastern countries-such as the Baltic states, Bulgaria and Romania-have a flat tax rate, meaning poor and rich pay the same percentage. The lack of progressive taxation in some countries, in a context of economic competition, contributes to inequalities, including by undermining financing for public services, WIL said.

Europe still top of class

Despite a rise in inequality, the EU fares better than the United States, it said. The bloc's education and health systems are more egalitarian and social benefits play a major role. Since 1980 the revenues of the poorest half of the European population increased by 37 percent while they stagnated in the United States. Meanwhile the income of 0.01 percent of the most well-off increased more than 300 percent in the



BRUSSELS: The European Union Commission headquarters in Brussels. — AFP

United States, twice as much as Europe. The Gini index put the United States at 39, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), eight points higher than the

EU. Most of the OECD's non-European members have a higher coefficient than the EU, for example 33 in Australia, 34 in Japan and as high as 62 in South Africa. —AFP

Tense future for US-China ties, with or without trade deal

BEIJING: With or without a trade deal, US-China relations are destined to deteriorate as they enter an era of increasingly nationalistic rivalry in the diplomatic and economic arena, according to analysts. The United States faces a growing challenge to its lone superpower status from a Communist-ruled China whose global influence, military might and high-tech capabilities are rapidly rising. The toughening stances on both sides in their trade war showed that the two powers are ready to play hardball to protect their national interests.

President Donald Trump followed through Friday on a threat to target all remaining Chinese exports with tariffs, then warned Saturday any trade deal would be "far worse for (China) if it has to be negotiated in my second term". Beijing said it would make no concessions on core principles, even as the two sides eye more talks. There are many other sources of tension ripe for flare-ups: US military aid to self-ruled Taiwan, Chinese territorial claims in the disputed South China Sea, US criticism

of Beijing's Belt and Road global infrastructure program, and US security warnings against Chinese telecom champion Huawei.

"US-China relations are continuing their steady deterioration, which I think is an inevitable consequence of national interests that are starting to overlap and bump into each other and cause friction," said Jonathan Sullivan, a China specialist at the University of Nottingham. "Despite the Trump wild card factor, I would suggest that the current trade war is a symbol of things to come."

Clash of civilizations

The downward spiral coincides with increasing top-level nationalism in both countries. Xi touts his "Chinese dream of national rejuvenation"-a return to the nation's former glory — which sounds like Trump's "Make America Great Again". The director of policy planning at the US State Department, Kiron Skinner, raised eyebrows last month when she described the rivalry as a "a fight with a really different civilization and a different ideology."

Skinner put it in racial terms, telling a security forum the China was first US "great power competitor that is not Caucasian". Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang hit back, calling it "absurd and utterly unacceptable" to look at bilateral ties "from a clash-of-civilizations or even racist perspective." The trade war is stirring nationalist sen-



WASHINGTON: A photo illustration shows a label inside an item of clothing reading "Made in China," in New York. —AFP

timent in China. "Objectively, trade war has unprecedentedly mobilized hostility between Chinese and American societies toward each other," the editor-in-chief of China's nationalist Global Times tabloid, Hu Xijin, wrote on Twitter on Saturday.

"I am very worried the mutual hostility could spiral out of control, causing a big retrogression of the entire international relations." The trade war has made "many more people in China, not just the paranoid cadres, but a much broader swath of the elite and population realize or believe that America's goal is to keep China down," said Bill Bishop, publisher

of the Sinocism China Newsletter. Beijing could attempt to harness nationalism in the trade war, he added, though it is a "double-edged sword" that could spiral out of control.

"There's a pretty deep wellspring of anti-foreign, anti-American sentiment," Bishop told AFP, which could trigger consumer boycotts of US goods or even protests, like those that followed the 1999 US and NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. "We've yet to see any real significant news for boycotts of American goods," he said, "but that's something that's in the toolkit." —AFP

China's BAIC seeks to buy 5% Daimler stake

BEIJING/FRANKFURT: China's BAIC Group is seeking to buy a stake of up to 5 percent in Daimler as a way to secure its investment in Chinese Mercedes-Benz manufacturing company Beijing Benz Automotive, three sources familiar with the matter told Reuters.

BAIC informed Daimler of its intention to buy a 4-5 percent stake in the German maker of Mercedes-Benz cars earlier this year, two of the three sources said.

BAIC has asked local authorities in Beijing to sup-

port a 4-5 percent stake purchase, two of these sources said. BAIC has started acquiring Daimler shares on the open market, one source said.

"Daimler's share price is currently being underpinned by a buyer who appears to be building a stake," a person familiar with the matter said.

BAIC did not respond to repeated phone calls and text messages seeking comment outside regular business hours. Daimler declined to comment.

It remains unclear whether BAIC Group can raise the nearly 3 billion euros that a 5 percent stake in Daimler would cost, based on the German carmaker's closing market value on Friday of 57.6 billion euros, two of these sources said. German regulatory filings do not show BAIC as a significant shareholder of Daimler. German takeover rules allow a buyer to acquire a stake of up to 3 percent before a regulatory disclosure is required.

Clouds over Tata Steel UK plant after merger collapse

LONDON: The future of Tata Steel's main European operations, based in the UK, faced fresh uncertainty Friday after German industrial conglomerate Thyssenkrupp scrapped merger plans with the Indian giant.

A deal was seen as positive for Tata's Port Talbot plant in Wales that employs more than 4,000 staff but following Friday's news, the head of a union representing British steelworkers was quick to express concern. "Sadly, this may mean yet another period of uncertainty for steelworkers and their families," said

Community general secretary Roy Rickhuss.

Commenting on the merger collapse, Tata Steel said in a statement that it "would explore all options" but "remains committed" to creating "a sustainable portfolio in Europe".

Tata Steel executive director Koushik Chatterjee added in a conference call:

"One of the fundamental strategies of going ahead in the (merger) deal was to create a more sustainable business. Obviously we will go back to the drawing board and look at more options."

The Welsh plant's future had already been at risk in 2016 before Tata ended that year by pledging its commitment to its operations across Britain that currently employ more than 8,000 staff.

"Now is the time for calm heads and a clear focus on the future of Tata Steel Europe," Rickhuss said on Friday. "It's vital that the business is kept intact and the right steps are taken to safeguard



More uncertainty in Port Talbot. — AFP

jobs and continue investment to ensure a sustainable future," he added.

Following the merger collapse meanwhile, Thyssenkrupp said it would slash 6,000 jobs worldwide in a structural

shakeup. The German group said "continuing concerns" from the European Commission had sunk its bid to join its steel business in Europe with that of Tata's. —AFP

Companies trying to do good face stiff competition from each other

AMSTERDAM: Competition for funding among companies trying to do good by doing everything from harvesting rainwater to making prosthetic limbs can be fierce.

Taking part in international contests that reward the best business ideas with prize money is a way for social enterprises to raise funding without giving away equity. Some of the largest contests include Facebook's Social Entrepreneurship Award, the Global Social Venture Competition in Berkeley, Calif., and the Tata Social Enterprise Challenge in India.

"Going to fairs and events is time consuming and also very expensive, with participation fees and travel... especially if you are a small startup like us," said Valentina Longobardo, co-founder of Vegea, an Italian social enterprise.

Vegea, which turns waste grape skins and pips from wine making into an alternative to leather, was one of a cohort of 20 social enterprises selected to take part in Chivas Ventures, a competition by global drinks company Pernod Ricard.

The 20 shortlisted social enterprises where flown out to a Chivas Ventures event at Europe's largest tech summit, The Next Web Conference in Amsterdam. Five finalists, who were selected by a public vote, then pitched their businesses in front of an audience of 2,000 investors, entrepreneurs and tech enthusiasts at the glitzy event. Xilinat, a Mexican social enterprise that uses agricultural waste to create a sugar alternative won the overall competition, scooping up the \$50,000 prize, while the other competitors got a smaller share of the fund.

Among the judges was "Avengers" star Zoe Saldana, who told the Thomson Reuters Foundation she also found it very difficult to get funding for her business, Besse, which aims to tell stories of under-represented groups in the United States.

Because Chivas Ventures covers the social entrepreneurs' expenses, it was easier to take part in the competition, said Longobardo.

With more than 8,000 applicants to Chivas Ventures from around the world, it was fiercely competitive to win a place, said Michal Matus - whose Slovakian social enterprise, Save the Bees, sells technology to beekeepers so they can monitor their hives. "You are like a needle in the haystack," he said about getting selected for such competitions, having been named one of the top 10 finalists at Chivas Ventures.

For Vulcan Augmetics, a Vietnamese social enterprise that makes affordable prosthetics to help amputees in poorer countries get back into the workforce, it is a challenge to raise funds domestically, said General Manager Trinh Khanh Ha. Travelling overseas to attend such events helps, she said on the sidelines of the Chivas competition.

"It is little bit hard for us to get the message out that business can do good and be profitable at the same time in Vietnam," she said.

Likewise, in Argentina, the amount of investment available for social enterprises is growing but still, "really small" said Nicolas Wertheimer, founder of Agua Segura, a social enterprise that collects and filters rain water for rural communities. He took part in Chivas Ventures not only with a view to winning money and meeting investors, however. —Reuters

Business

Markaz: A resilient start to 2019 with AUM reaching a 5-year high

Net profit to shareholders KD 3.64 million, a 113% y-o-y growth

KUWAIT: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” reported total revenues of KD 7.38 million during Q1 2019 compared to KD 4.90 million in Q1 2018. Net profit attributable to shareholders of Markaz was KD 3.64 million (EPS 8 fils per share) for Q1 2019, with a margin of 49 percent.

Manaf A Al-Hajeri, CEO of Markaz, said in a statement, “I am pleased to announce that Markaz has started 2019 on a positive note, delivering a sustainable financial performance across our asset management, investment banking and principal investments. Asset management fees reached KD 1.77 million up by 6.2 percent y-o-y and investment banking fees, a very transaction timing driven business, were at KD 0.15 million for the quarter. Our principal investments delivered revenue of KD 5.36 million, an increase of 82.1 percent y-o-y, and achieved 3.84 percent quarterly returns on shareholders equity. The AUM at the end of the quarter touched a five-year high at KD 1.16 billion, registering a growth of 12 percent y-o-y.

Developed markets ended the quarter positively, with the NASDAQ Composite Index and the S&P 500 Index advancing 16.5 percent and 13.1 percent respectively. Encouragingly, the MSCI World Index expanded as well gaining 11.9 percent and emerging markets rebounded with the MSCI Emerging Market Index gaining 9.6 percent. The constructive dialogue between China-US on their negotiations and the conservative position taken by the Federal Reserve with no anticipated rate hikes for the rest of the year have contributed to the upswing.

Coming to the GCC markets, the Saudi Arabia benchmark was the top performer and gained 12.7 percent in the quarter. In the UAE, both Dubai and Abu Dhabi markets recorded gains after recovering

from losses during Q4 2018, with the Dubai index gaining 4.2 percent and the Abu Dhabi index gaining 3.2 percent. Kuwait was the GCC’s second highest performer, with the All-Share Index gaining 10.6 percent on higher volumes led by large caps and the banking sector. The Kuwait markets would further benefit from the anticipated upgrade to emerging market status by MSCI in June 2019. In line with the market, Markaz’ equity funds achieved notable growth with Markaz Investment & Development Fund (MIDAF) and Markaz Fund for Excellent Yields (MUMTAZ) recording returns of 7.90 percent and 8.67 percent YTD respectively.

The GCC economies have started to show initial signs of stabilization in Q1-2019 with government led initiatives such as relaxation in restrictions on foreign property ownership, implementing new visa regulations and adopting economic stimulus plans. These measures are expected to be positively reflected across real estate pricing dynamics.

Despite the sharp decline in oil prices and unstable geopolitical conditions last year, resulting in weak performance of GCC real estate markets, the MENA Real Estate team was successful in maintaining occupancy levels across its portfolio of income generating assets. Occupancy rates were about 95 percent in Markaz managed assets across Kuwait, UAE and KSA. In addition, leasing activities commenced in Al-Rihab, a 148 unit residential compound in Riyadh, with initial positive feedback. During Q1 2019, Markaz also commenced the roll-out of in-house property management activities for select assets as part of its ongoing initiatives to reduce operating costs. Markaz’s flagship fund, MREF was able to weather market conditions and register a positive YTD total return of 1.04 per-

cent to investors during the quarter.

Internationally, commercial real estate continued its positive trend in Q1 2019 with property prices marginally increasing by approximately 0.5 percent (CPI) and the NAREIT index increasing by 16.7 percent during the quarter. Stability in Federal Reserve rates in 2019 is expected to have a positive impact on REIT values and the NAREIT index.

Real estate fundamentals remained stable with estimated YTD rent growth of industrial 2.2 percent, office 0.8 percent and multifamily 0.5 percent. Vacancy rates across asset classes have also remained stable with completions matching demand levels. However, in the near term, elevated supply levels in the industrial and multifamily sectors are expected to result in marginally higher vacancy rates.

During Q1 2019, Markaz started construction on two new industrial development projects in the US located in Stockton, California and Phoenix, Arizona. Our development strategy will continue to target locations with strong fundamentals, rental growth and development projects with inherent competitive advantages. Our International Real Estate team continues to expand its investment program designed to capitalize on value-add opportunities in the US and selected European markets such as Poland and Germany. The Kuwaiti M&A market started 2019 strongly with a substantial number of transactions across various sectors such as energy and banking. In Q1 2019, our Investment Banking team received many requests for various advisory mandates and interest from both buyers and sellers for M&A transactions. Sectors such as education, healthcare and food and beverage continue to attract strong interest from potential buyers. We expect more transactions

going forward as the valuation gap between buyers and sellers continues to converge. We are now in the final stages of closing existing mandates. Our Investment Banking team continues to leverage its sector experience and execution excellence to deepen relationships with existing and potential clients.

Overall, the global capital markets have recorded a positive start to the year although sentiment remains unpredictable and continues to be impacted by muted industrial growth forecasts and persisting geopolitical tensions. As the markets tread with caution, the Markaz management team is focused on providing customized and insightful advice to its core corporate and investor clients with a view to achieving their wealth management objectives. Markaz capital market team completed the first listing of the year on Boursa Kuwait for Al-Manar Finance and Leasing Company during February 2019. Markaz also assisted United Projects Company for Aviation Services in raising funds through a capital increase with total size of KD18 million. We also continue to streamline our business operations by refining internal procedures and lowering costs without compromising quality. Markaz is one of the leading wealth management and investment banking financial institutions in the region that gained the trust and loyalty of its clients over the last 40 years.”



Manaf A Al-Hajeri

Al-Tijari announces winners of Al-Najma weekly account

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:

- Al-Najma weekly account - the prize of KD 5,000 and was for the share of Monther Yousef Al-Qashaami
- The “Salary & Cash on top campaign” prize of KD 1,000 and was for the share of Mahmoud Hasan Al-Enezi

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 5,000, 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 KD of 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.

Ahli Capital Investment Company hosts investors forum with BlackRock

KUWAIT: Ahli Capital Investment Company, the investment arm of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK), held its first ever Ahli Capital Investors’ Forum at the Chairman’s Club for its clients. The event, held on April 17, was held in partnership with BlackRock, the world’s largest asset management firm.

The investors’ forum was organized to provide our investors about the global economic outlook and also how modern technological resources are being utilized in today’s investment world.

Muhsen M Al-Harbi, Chief Executive

Officer at Ahli Capital Investment Company, opened the forum, which was well received by the audience. Hugh Gimber, a Multi-Asset Investment Strategist within the BlackRock Investment Institute (BII), gave a presentation on the ‘Global Investment Outlook,’ while Simon Weinberger, a member of BlackRock’s Systematic Active Equity team, spoke on the subject of ‘Harnessing Data in the Investment World.’

Founded in 1988, BlackRock is today the world’s largest asset manager, with a total of \$6.52 trillion of assets under management as of March 31, 2019. The firm maintains offices in more than 30 countries around the world.

Ahli International Multi Asset Holding Fund is a multi-asset multi-geography fund for which Ahli Capital Investment Company is the Fund Manager and BlackRock is the Investment Manager. BlackRock’s extensive global resources are being utilized for the investment management of this Fund.



KFH: 10 customers win KD 250 each in ‘Hesabi’ for Youth draw

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the winners of the 10th 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: Lujane Al-Manae, Fouz Alnusif, Fatima Almutairi, Hadeel Majeed, Hessa Hassan, Areej Abushaibah, Amani Almutrafi, Abdulrahman Ghallab, Sara Awad, and Dalal Aladwani.

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



KFH representatives after the draw

Ithmaar Holding, Ithmaar Bank, report first quarter profits

MANAMA: Ithmaar Holding B.S.C., a Bahrain-based financial institution, and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Ithmaar Bank B.S.C. (closed), a Bahrain-based Islamic retail bank, each announced their financial results for the first quarter of 2019 with both entities reporting profits for the period.

The announcement by the Ithmaar Holding Chairman, Prince Amr Al-Faisal, who is also the Ithmaar Bank Chairman, follows the review and approval of both Boards of Directors of the consolidated financial results of the two entities for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019.

Ithmaar Holding, which is licensed and regulated as a Category 1 Investment Firm by the Central Bank of Bahrain and listed on the Bahrain Bourse, Boursa Kuwait and Dubai Financial Market, reported a net profit of \$8.62 million for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019, an increase of 79 percent compared to the net profit of \$4.81 million reported for the same period in 2018.

The net profit attributable to equity holders for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 was \$7.10 million, an increase of 329 percent compared to the \$1.66 million net profit reported for the same period in 2018. Earnings per share (EPS) increased to US cents 0.24 compared to US cents 0.06 for the three-month period ended 31 March 2018. Total owners’ equity increased to \$120.52 million as at 31 March 2019, compared to \$116.36 million as at 31 December 2018. “On behalf of the Ithmaar Holding Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce that the Ithmaar Holding’s financial results show significant improvements in profit, and reconfirm that our strategic focus on our core retail banking business is paying off,” said Prince Amr.

“Ithmaar Holding’s income before overseas taxation for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 increased to \$17.55 million, a 45 percent increase from the \$12.09 million reported for the same period last year. Operating income for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 increased to \$76.08 million, a 5.4 percent increase from the \$72.16 million reported for the same period last year,” he said.

Ithmaar Holding Chief Executive Officer, Ahmed Abdul Rahim, who is also the Ithmaar Bank Chief Executive Officer, said the results of both the Investment Firm (Ithmaar Holding) and the Islamic Retail Bank (Ithmaar Bank) clearly demonstrate that efforts to turn the Group around are paying off, with both entities reporting increased profits.

“Ithmaar Holding’s total assets stood at \$8.02 billion as at 31 March 2019, compared to \$8.49 billion as at 31 December 2018, and \$8.29 billion as at 31 March 2018,” said Abdul Rahim.

“I am pleased, also, to report that Ithmaar Bank’s financial results continue to show stable growth,” said Abdul Rahim. “The Bank’s latest financial results show that the Bank continues to perform well, with increased profits for the first quarter of the year,” he said. Ithmaar Bank is licensed and regulated by the CBB as an Islamic Retail Bank and is a distinct legal entity by its parent, Ithmaar Holding. Since the implementation of the new Group structure in January 2017, Ithmaar Bank has reported profits for 2017 and 2018, and continues to report stable, consistent improvements to its financial performance.

“I am pleased to report that Ithmaar Bank’s financial results show a net profit of BD2.80 million for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019, compared to a net profit of BD2.03 million for the same period in 2018. The net profit attributable to equity holders for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 was BD1.67 million, compared to the BD0.83 million net profit reported for the same period in 2018,” said Abdul Rahim.

“Ithmaar Bank’s income before overseas taxation for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 grew to BD6.29 million, an increase of 34 percent compared to the BD4.69 million reported for the same period last year,” said Abdul Rahim. “The Bank’s operating income for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 grew to BD21.42 million, a 4.2 percent increase compared to the BD20.57 million reported for the same period last year,” he said. “The Bank’s total income for the three-month period ended 31 March 2019 grew to BD40.60 million, a 10.5 percent increase compared to the BD36.75 million reported for the same period last year mainly due to growth in core income,” he said.



Prince Amr Mohammed Al-Faisal



Ahmed Abdul Rahim

“Ithmaar Bank’s total assets stood at BD2.94 billion as at 31 March 2019, compared to BD3.13 billion as at 31 December 2018 and BD3.11 billion as at 31 March 2018,” said Abdul Rahim. “Meanwhile, despite challenging market conditions, the equity of unrestricted investment account holders stood at BD0.997 billion as at 31 March 2019, compared to BD0.995 billion as at 31 December 2018 and BD1.063 billion as at 31 March 2018. Total owners’ equity stood at BD86.89 million as at 31 March 2019, compared to BD85.38 million as at 31 December 2018 and BD101.16 million as at 31 March 2018,” he said.

What's On



Celebrate the Ramadan spirit at Sheraton a Luxury Collection Hotel Ramadan tent

Ramadan is the month that brings together families and friends from around the world to share their happiness and to celebrate the spirit of this Holy Month. The Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel welcomes you back once again to its annual Ramadan Tent located in the Coral Ballroom which is acquired from the authentic Turkish heritage and decorated with navy-blue, maroon and golden colors for a unique

experience with your loved ones.

During this Holy Month, our highly-experienced Chefs offers you with a wide variety of lavish Iftar and Ghabqa dishes that compliments everyone's tastes and includes different types of soups, cold and hot appetizers, salads and sushi bars of your choice. We also offer you with a range of assorted main dishes and live cooking stations providing you with traditional and interna-

tional dishes which includes shawarma, pasta, pizza, and oriental Arabic and Kuwaiti dishes as well as seafood dishes. For all the dessert lovers, you will enjoy our wide variety of delectable oriental and Arabic sweets, seasonal fruits, and Ramadan drinks including Jallab, Tamar Hindi and Erk Sous.

The Ramadan Tent at Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel also takes pride in hosting all your

Ramadan events with its high services and live instrumental band playing your favorite Oud tunes in the background for an authentic and pleasant ambience. In addition to that, our Ramadan Tent also hosts all your Ghabqa and Suhour occasions starting at 10pm until past midnight with the best selections of Ramadan dishes and live oud band to make your evening a memorable one.

Taiba Hospital celebrates International Nurses' Week

Taiba Hospital celebrated the International Nursing Week for the 10th consecutive year, which spurs out of the hospital's belief of the significant and vital role of nurses in providing medical and therapeutic services to the patients. Taiba Hospital is always keen to keep abreast of global health events; and in this spirit, this event was held.

During the celebration, many competitions and activities were held for the nurses who presented their talents in a festive atmosphere, while gifts were distributed toward the end of the day. For its part, Taiba Hospital is dedicated to continuously providing international training to its nursing staff. First, because of its belief in the importance of their role; and second, because of the significance



of their abilities to provide patients with the highest quality standards.

Aysha John, the Chief Quality Officer, stated in a speech she delivered at the celebration, "The nurses' role is no less important than the role of the doctor. I want to thank them for their part in facilitating the doctors' work, providing them with continuous support, and in providing excellent care for patients which requires patience, commitment and dedication to them and their treatment." She also added, "We salute, respect, and

appreciate our Caregivers. The hospital management appreciates humanitarian efforts you carry out in order to maintain the good reputation of Taiba Hospital".

The nursing staff at Taiba Hospital is keen to communicate with the patients, meet all of their health needs, and ensure that they receive comprehensive care in the best possible way through effective monitoring and continuous development to ensure that the nursing staff always remains at a high level of quality and excellence.



ACK organizes first teaching and learning excellence forum

Under the patronage of the Secretary General of the Council of Private Universities Prof Habeeb Abul, the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) held the first forum for excellence in teaching and learning, with the participation of a group of academics and executives, to highlight the means of learning and teaching and how to develop the same to build a leading generation that can lead the progress of the beloved State of Kuwait.

The forum started with keynote speeches by the President of ACK, the Australian Ambassador to Kuwait, the Dean of Students at Kuwait University, representatives from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the World Bank, and Educational and Quality Management consultants.

Following the opening ceremony, two panel discussions were held. The first panel consisted of academics from several universities (Kuwait University, Arab Open University, and American University of Kuwait, Gulf University and ACK) and several private educational institutions. The second panel included a group of specialists and executives from the industry (Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), National Bank of Kuwait, Boubyan Bank, Al-Bahar Institutions, International Investment Corporation, etc).

The forum was attended by a large audience of academics, university professors, education counselors, and school principals, employees from the Ministry of Education, consulting firms and employment companies. The forum highlighted several challenges facing the teaching and learning processes in Kuwait, which requires all educational institutions to work collectively to develop innovative educational pedagogies that contribute to the development of the sector in Kuwait.

The forum concluded with list of recommendations in various areas, including cooperation on joint research between the educational institutions and the industry to meet the needs of the labor market, support the governmental

bodies and stimulate the opening of new universities and different disciplines as more competition leads to higher quality. Universities must provide projects based on analytical and practical analysis because it supports the long-term understanding of students and finally schools need to prepare students for the future and not only for doing exams and motivate them to become life-long learners.

In conclusion, all participants agreed, after reviewing the current status of the education sector in Kuwait, that there is a weakness in the teaching and learning methods, which should be developed with the integrated efforts of all the concerned stakeholders. Kuwait Vision 2035 is very purposeful and it will be feasible to achieve if the desired development in the educational sector is achieved as it is fundamental to the development of any country.

The participants confirmed that the task of academics is to work towards achieving the best and pave the road to reaching the desired goal in Kuwait through the establishment of an influential workforce in society and the economy. It was decided to establish a task force to prioritize few objectives that can be achieved with a 1 year time frame before the planned upcoming forum in 2020.



Burgan Bank sponsors TEDxAUK

Burgan Bank, one of the leading supporters of creative initiatives and knowledge-transfer locally, recently sponsored the American University of Kuwait's second TEDxAUK, organized by AUK's Center for Research in Informatics, Science and Engineering (RISE) which was held at the Salwa Sabah Al Ahmad Hall. This was following last year's successful TEDx platform that hosted an outstanding line-up of inspirational speakers, who shared their personal and professional success stories. This year Burgan Bank supported RISE Center under the umbrella of KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding).

The 2019 TEDxAUK saw vibrant discussions among student and non-student participants, spearheaded by eight motivational speakers shared their experience. The theme of TEDxAUK will be formed around voyages; concepts of

perseverance, learning, personal growth and self-actualization. TED talks are now a global movement emphasizing meaningful change through the power of ideas. TEDx programs are created in the spirit of TED's mission to grant communities, organizations and individuals the opportunity to stimulate dialogue through TED-like experiences at the local level. They are designed to inspire innovation, through leadership and visionary insight.

Burgan Bank continues to contribute to youth development through innovative and impactful knowledge-transfer initiatives aimed at widening opportunities for the local youth and building a brighter tomorrow. Burgan Bank's support of this initiative falls under its dynamic full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural and health driven initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a leading Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the community.



Members of the Diplomatic Women committee recently attended a Ghabqa banquet held by Sheikha Al-Anoud Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber, sister of His Highness the Amir, at Al-Zahra Palace. The Ghabqa was also attended by Sheikha Ayeda Salem Al-Ali, the spouse of the FM.

Health

Crisis-hit Greeks foot steep bills for health, education

ATHENS: Every month, when his respiratory medicine runs out, Dionysis Assimakopoulos heads to the most unlikely pharmacy in Athens. Amid derelict stadiums dating from the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, the volunteer-staffed social pharmacy of Hellinikon has handed out free medicine to hundreds of poverty-stricken patients, keeping some of them out of death's reach. "My wife and I have been unemployed for over two years. We need about 150 euros for medicine every month," says Assimakopoulos, a former baker.

Established at the height of the crisis in 2011, the pharmacy runs on donated medicine and disposables. Some 40,000 people have brought medicine, many from abroad, says on-duty pharmacist Dimitis Palakas. Another patient waiting in line is Achilleas Papadopoulos, a retired tenor. His pension of 700 euros is not enough to cover the antibiotics he has come for. During nearly a decade of cuts imposed as Greece struggled to avert national bankruptcy, public education and health were among the sectors hit the hardest as the country lost a quarter of its national output.

Amid sweeping layoffs, wage cuts and tax hikes, many could not maintain their social insurance contributions and were pushed out of state-provided health support. "Only 11 percent of

Greeks can currently afford private insurance giving full health coverage," says Grigoris Sarafianos, head of the association of private Greek health clinics. According to the national statistics service, Greeks paid 34.3 percent of their medical expenses out of their own pocket in 2016.

The crisis exposed "huge state shortages", says Petros Boteas, a member of the Hellinikon health team, which serves over 500 patients every month. "There are fewer doctors and hospital staff. Money for medicine has been cut. There is a long waiting list for doctor's appointments... we had a cancer patient given an appointment in three months," he said. To avoid a long wait — especially in an emergency — many are forced to seek private health-care, regardless of the cost. There are currently over 120 private clinics in the country.

'Go to a better school'

A similar scenario casts its shadow over education. When Aspasia Apostolou's son was 11 years old and finishing Greek public primary school, his class teacher did something unexpected. "He told us our son is bright and that he should be in a better school," says Apostolou, a 44-year-old lawyer. According to the government, public funding for education fell by about 36 percent during the crisis.

Thousands of trained staff including teachers and doctors emigrated — part of an exodus of some 350,000 people — or opted to retire. A recent study by the London School of Economics found 75 percent of Greek crisis emigrants hold university degrees. The OECD in a 2017 study — prepared at Greece's request — said austerity cuts had "a major impact on the demands on the Greek education system, and on those working within it."

It said that in 2015, there were approximately 25,000 posts vacant for teachers in primary and secondary education schools. Apostolou now pays 5,800 euros (\$6,500) a year in tuition fees at a private school where her son can be assured of a well-structured curriculum. "At our old school, the children usually come home early. So many school hours are lost because of teacher shortages during the year," she says. "There is no evaluation, no reward for effort in a public school. You wallow in mediocrity."

Between 2011 and 2014, the state cut education wages and expenses by 24 percent, the OECD study said. While school books are provided by the state free of charge, the cuts continue to affect other essential resources including computers and petrol for heating. It is not uncommon for schools to be shut down for lack of heating. — AFP

300 Himalayan yaks starve to death in India

NEW DELHI: Indian officials yesterday said that at least 300 yaks starved to death in a remote Himalayan valley after a bout of unusually harsh winter weather. Officials in the northeastern state of Sikkim said they received the first distress call from around 50 people cut off in the remote Mukuthang Valley in December.

Following very heavy snowfall the residents asked for help providing feed for their herd of around 1,500 yaks, a source of local milk, milk products, transportation and wool. "We made several attempts to reach them but couldn't. No roads or air transport could reach there

because of the weather conditions. We reached there now and have already confirmed at least 300 yak deaths," local official Raj Kumar Yadav said.

"The local families say that 500 yaks have died because of starvation. We are trying to confirm that. Around 50 yaks are also receiving urgent medical attention," Yadav added. Yaks are one of the mainstays of the region's tourism-dependent economy. A few yaks die because of extreme conditions in the region each year, but the authorities say that this year's toll is unprecedented.

"The weather was too harsh. One heavy spell of snowfall in December was followed by even more snowfall and even the grass didn't grow. They died because of both cold and starvation," Yadav added. The authorities are making arrangements to bury the dead yaks and assist local families in the valley, around 70 kilometers from state capital Gangtok. — AFP

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- ◆ Single Port Surgery
- ◆ Treatment of Colo-Rectal Diseases, Including Colorectal Cancer
- ◆ Surgical Treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Abscess
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- ◆ VAAFI Procedure (Treatment of Fistula through Fistuloscope)
- ◆ Treatment of Irritable Bowel Symptoms
- ◆ Colonoscopy & Gastroscopy
- ◆ Stomach Balloon Insertion & removal
- ◆ Bariatric Surgery - Lap Sleeve Gastrectomy
- ◆ Gallstones & Abdominal Hernias Surgery
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- ◆ American Board of Colo – Rectal Surgery
- ◆ American Board of Surgical Critical Care

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

daralshifa
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DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

Academic Certificates – Training

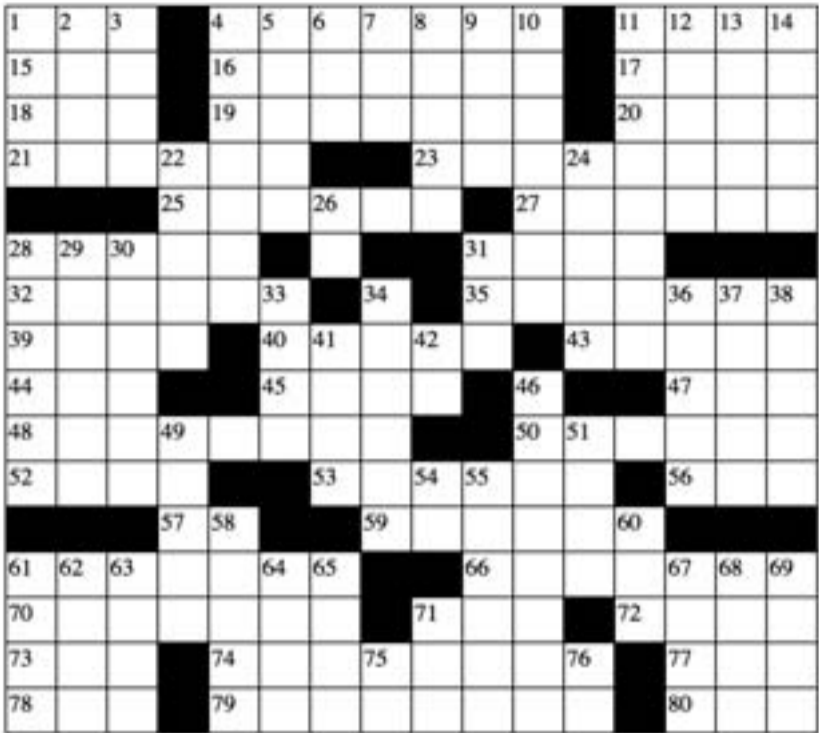
- ◆ Kuwait Board of General Surgery.
- ◆ (IFSO) member .
- ◆ Faculty member of (BEST).
- ◆ Member of Kuwait Surgical Association.

Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

CROSSWORD 2206



ACROSS

1. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
4. Dry red Italian table wine from the Chianti region of Tuscany.
11. (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
15. Nut of any of several trees of the genus *Corylus*.
16. United States composer of musical comedies (especially in collaboration with Oscar Hammerstein II and with Lorenz Hart) (1902-1979).
17. Sweet pulpy tropical fruit with thick scaly rind and shiny black seeds.
18. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
19. Give or delegate power to.
20. Engage or hire for work.
21. English illustrator of several of Dickens' novels (1815-1882).
23. The waterfront of a seaside town.
25. French operatic composer (1799-1862).
27. A genus of small kites of both Old and New Worlds.
28. Tropical American bird resembling a blue jay and having greenish and bluish plumage.
32. Absence of the pupil in an eye.
35. Characteristic of or peculiar to a woman.
39. (law) Lacking any legal or binding force.
40. God of wealth and love.
43. An Arab country on the peninsula of Qatar.
44. A user interface in which you type commands instead of choosing them from a menu or selecting an icon.
45. English monk and scholar (672-735).
47. (informal) Of the highest quality.
48. Clothing for the hands.
50. Deer grass.
52. The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
53. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
56. Noisy talk.
57. A unit of information equal to 1024 bytes.
59. With good sense or in a reasonable or intelligent manner.
61. American theologian whose sermons and writings stimulated a period of renewed interest in religion in America (1703-1758).
66. A small flat triangular bone in front of the knee that protects the knee joint.
70. The title of the ancient Egyptian kings.
72. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
73. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
74. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
77. A human limb.
78. Outer space as viewed from the earth.
79. A mountain peak in south central Sri Lanka (7,360 feet high).
80. (meaning literally 'born') Used to indicate the maiden or family name of a married woman.

DOWN

1. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
2. Old World wild swine having a narrow body and prominent tusks from which most domestic swine come.
3. A Spanish river.
4. Having a margin with rounded scallops.
5. Industrial city of Belarus southeast of Minsk.

6. Automatic data processing in which data acquisition and other stages or processing are integrated into a coherent system.
7. Gone by.
8. Full of news.
9. A tall perennial woody plant having a main trunk and branches forming a distinct elevated crown.
10. Of or relating to or characteristic of Israel or its people.
11. A member of a people of India living in Maharashtra.
12. A negatively charged atom.
13. (anatomy) Any structure that resembles a horn in shape.
14. The Uralic language spoken by the Yeniseian people.
22. A round shape formed by a series of concentric circles.
24. Bottle that has a narrow neck.
26. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
29. Of or relating to or resembling the eye.
30. A town in northwest Illinois on the Mississippi River.
31. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
33. A French abbot.
34. A state in southeastern India on the Bay of Bengal (south of Andhra Pradesh).
36. Inability to coordinate voluntary muscle movements.
37. A sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue separating or binding together muscles and organs etc.
38. A person or animal that is markedly unusual or deformed.
41. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
42. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
46. A wooden peg that is used to fasten timbers in shipbuilding.
49. The capital and chief port and largest city of Senegal.
51. Exhibiting or restored to vigorous good health.
54. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
55. The capital of Turkey.
58. An alloy of copper and zinc.
60. An affirmative.
62. East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a yellow dye.
63. Marked by keen caution and watchful prudence.
64. Amino acid that is formed in the liver and converted into dopamine in the brain.
65. Adopted in order to deceive.
67. A series of steps to be carried out or goals to be accomplished.
68. A unit of area (4840 square yards) used in English-speaking countries.
69. A language unit by which a person or thing is known.
71. (in Scotland or Ireland) A mountain or tall hill.
75. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
76. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Watch out for people who are trying to make you move at an uncomfortably fast pace today. Someone who's pushing you to make a decision or commit to a partnership might have ulterior motives, so ask if the deal can wait a few days while you do some further research. If this person balks, then you should consider yourself lucky. This is not a good time to let yourself get pressured into anything. Trust your gut, and move forward at a speed that feels comfortable to you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Listening to someone is never a waste of time, no matter how impatient you may feel. What is a waste of time is making a hasty decision that turns out to be the wrong decision—and then you have to go back and start all over again. You need to be more patient right now and focus on research and planning rather than taking action. Put in the time it takes now to make the right choices and listen to the opinions of people who care about you.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You cherish your friends like the precious jewels that they are. But make sure that you do not get too possessive of them. Like you, they are allowed to have other friends, and there is no reason to feel threatened by social groups that don't include you. Consider hosting a big party and inviting friends along with friends of friends. It would give you a great opportunity to get to know some new people better.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Even people whom you know inside and out can evolve in startling ways. Today you may notice that someone you've always thought of as bashful is trying to break out of her or his shell. If this person approaches you for help, ask questions about the motivations behind this change—you might be amazed by what you hear. This erstwhile wallflower may motivate you to make some personal changes—and might just turn into one of your greatest inspirations.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your latest achievement has not gone unnoticed by some people who could be called celebrities in your world. You should be even prouder than you are. It's time you looked in the mirror and saw what you are instead of what you are not. Giving your opinion more often to more people is not a bad thing—especially when you know what you are talking about! Revel in this acclaim—you've earned it!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The good news is that any school or work issues you've been struggling with are finally being resolved—and your spirit will soar, now that your load has been lightened. But the bad news is that a miscommunication between friends could cause a new problem to land right in your lap. You are (once again) being put in the middle of a tense situation between dramatic personalities. Before they ask you to choose sides, you should declare yourself neutral—even if you're not.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today you might start feeling like a ping-pong ball being bounced back and forth by two different people. And each is trying to convince you to do something for him or her—but while one is trying to trick you or coerce you into doing it, the other is straightforwardly asking for your help. Always go in the direction of honesty. Avoid people who are being vague or manipulative—and never align yourself with people who refuse to face reality.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Be prepared to revise some of your plans at the last minute today—that famous flexibility of yours is going to come in quite handy! In the middle of a project, you'll notice an unusual minor detail that has until now escaped your eyes. Instead of getting caught up in assigning blame, just fix whatever needs to be fixed. You don't have a lot of time to waste on figuring out what went wrong. Just get done what you need to get done.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Someone who has been wasting your time needs to be told to move along today! This person has been all talk and no action for some time now—and you know that empty promises are not going to bring you satisfaction. Don't be afraid to cut losers like this loose from your life. You may fear that you'll have some awkward social situations ahead, but you won't. Moving on will cause only good things in your life.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today you can expect to have to deal with a swarm of seemingly insignificant—but greatly annoying—problems. If you swat them away as you'd swat at mosquitoes, they'll keep coming back (and driving you nuts!). Find thorough solutions to these problems. Half-measures won't work today. Taking a few moments to apply some insect repellent and light a citronella candle will end up costing you a lot less time than a day full of swatting!



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Not every romance moves speedily toward long-term commitment, so don't despair if your latest conquest isn't warming up to you as quickly or as enthusiastically as you'd like. You cannot make the mistake of thinking that passion and infatuation are the same thing. A fire that is too hot often goes out too quickly. What you should seek now is a slow burn that can keep things sizzling for a good, long time!



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You have some secret recipes for success, and they work wonders in many social situations. But why would you divulge them to anyone else? Don't be too specific about where you get your ideas. You need to protect your sources of inspiration. Plus, other people need to find their own unique pathways. Giving them shortcuts will truly only make their lives more difficult, in the end. Generally speaking, today is not a good day for dealing with details.

Wordsearch Puzzle

USA Presidents Word Search

Find and circle all of the United States Presidents that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Abraham Lincoln quote.
Note: Although Cleveland appears twice in the list, he is only in the puzzle once.

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

1. WASHINGTON 13. FILLMORE 24. Cleveland 35. KENNEDY
2. J ADAMS 14. PIERCE 25. MCKINLEY 36. L B JOHNSON
3. JEFFERSON 16. BUCHANAN 26. T ROOSEVELT 37. NIXON
4. MADISON 16. LINCOLN 27. TAFT 38. FORD
5. MONROE 17. A JOHNSON 28. WILSON 39. CARTER
6. J Q ADAMS 18. GRANT 29. HARDING 40. REAGAN
7. JACKSON 19. HAYES 30. COOLIDGE 41. G H W BUSH
8. VAN BUREN 20. GARFIELD 31. HOOVER 42. CLINTON
9. W HARRISON 21. ARTHUR 32. F D ROOSEVELT 43. G W BUSH
10. TYLER 22. CLEVELAND 33. TRUMAN 44. OBAMA
11. POLK 23. B HARRISON 34. EISENHOWER 45. TRUMP
12. TAYLOR

Yesterday's Solution

Flowers 1 - Solution

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

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| AMARYLLIS | GLADIOLUS | PETUNIA |
| ASTER | HEATHER | SNAPDRAGON |
| CALLA | HYACINTH | STOCK |
| CLEMATIS | IMPATIENS | TULIP |
| DAFFODIL | JASMINE | VIOLET |
| DELPHINIUM | LILAC | |
| FREESIA | LISIANTHUS | |
| GARDENIA | NARCISSUS | |

Daily SuDoku

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hard

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2019



A young woman poses for photographs in front of the cherry blossoms at Kolomenskoye Park in Moscow. —AFP

Hollywood loves Georgia’s low taxes but fumes over strict abortion law

Hollywood producers have flocked to the southern US state of Georgia in recent years, lured by its low taxes and affordable lifestyle. But the Peach State has offended many in the industry by passing abortion laws that are among the country’s strictest-and the backlash is growing. A coterie of film stars led by actress-activist Alyssa Milano, including Alec Baldwin, Don Cheadle, Ben Stiller, Mia Farrow and Amy Schumer, had threatened in late March to refuse to work in Georgia if it adopted the new abortion restrictions.

But the state’s Republican governor, Brian Kemp, signed the bill into law on Tuesday. Several independent film and television production companies have since pledged to boycott the state unless the legislation—which bans abortion as soon as a fetal heartbeat can be detected, generally in the sixth week of pregnancy—is rescinded.

“I can’t ask any female member of any film production with which I am involved to so marginalize themselves or compromise their inalienable authority over their own bodies,” said David Simon, the creator of several successful TV series including HBO’s “The Wire.” “Killer Films will no longer consider Georgia as a viable shoot-

ing location until this ridiculous law is overturned,” the company’s CEO Christine Vachon wrote on Twitter. Actor-producer Mark Duplass chimed in: “Don’t give your business to Georgia.”

Tooth and nail

Milano, the one time star of “Charmed” and “Who’s the Boss?”—whose profile has risen as the #MeToo movement has taken hold—said she would honor her March pledge. “I will fight tooth and nail to move ‘Insatiable’ to a state that will protect our rights,” Milano told BuzzFeed News, referring to her current series on Netflix. “I will do everything in my power to get as many productions as possible, including ‘Insatiable,’ to move out of this state.”

She said she was contractually required to complete another month of filming in Georgia, but added that she would leave the show if production were not shifted elsewhere for subsequent seasons. Milano took to social media on Friday to call on women to join her in a sex boycott until the law was repealed. “Until women have legal control over our own bodies we just cannot risk

pregnancy,” she wrote on Twitter. “JOIN ME by not having sex until we get bodily autonomy back.”

Blood money

Georgia offers filmmakers and production companies a number of enticements: a far lower cost of living than in Los Angeles, a variety of landscapes and, since 2008, tax credits of up to 30 percent. Blockbuster movies like Marvel’s “Black Panther” and “Avengers: Infinity War” were filmed in the state; television series including “Stranger Things,” “Ozark” and “The Walking Dead” have also been shot there. Last year, more than 450 productions were set in Georgia, where they spent the non-negligible sum of \$2.7 billion.

But the new law could be a tipping point. “I understand the tax breaks are terrific, the geography diverse, the cost of living cheap... but by criminalizing abortion after six weeks, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp just turned the millions you save, and the billions you infuse into the state economy, into blood money,” Los Angeles Times critic Mary McNamara wrote in a column. “Blood from all the women and girls who will now have to resort to

knitting needles and kitchen table ‘doctors’ to terminate their pregnancies,” she went on.

Caution from major studios

The Writers Guild of America, representing screenwriters, said the law would make Georgia “an inhospitable place for people who work in the film and television industry.” But the major studios—with huge financial stakes at issue—have remained largely quiet. Chris Ortman, a spokesman for the Motion Picture Association of America—which represents some of Hollywood’s biggest heavyweights: Paramount, Sony, Universal, Disney, Warner Bros. and Netflix — said the group would continue to “monitor developments.”

“It is important to remember that similar legislation has been attempted in other states, and has either been enjoined by the courts or is currently being challenged,” Ortman said. “The outcome in Georgia will also be determined through the legal process.” The film industry, he added, supports 92,000 jobs in Georgia. McNamara doesn’t buy that wait-and-see approach. “Hollywood needs to leave now,” she wrote. —AFP

Peggy Lipton, star of ‘Mod Squad’ and ‘Twin Peaks’, dead at 72

Actress Peggy Lipton, who gained fame in the late 1960s with her star turn on the counter-culture cop show “Mod Squad” and returned to TV two decades later on “Twin Peaks,” has died at age 72 after a battle with cancer. Her daughters Rashida and Kidada Jones, from her marriage to legendary music producer Quincy Jones, confirmed her death on Saturday in a statement to US media. “We are heartbroken that our beloved mother passed away from cancer,” they said. “She made her journey peacefully with her daughters and nieces by her side.”

Born in New York on August 30, 1946, Lipton launched her career in modeling as a young teenager. By age 19, she was getting bit parts on television shows such as “Bewitched.” But she catapulted to fame in 1968 with the premiere of “Mod Squad,” on which she starred as Julie

Barnes, a reformed juvenile delinquent turned undercover cop. The show was one of the first to feature an interracial cast. Lipton earned four Emmy nominations for the role and a Golden Globe award.

She took a long break from acting that coincided with her marriage to Jones, who is black. The couple wed in 1974, not long after “Mod Squad” went off the air, and divorced in 1989. Both of their daughters went into acting. Rashida Jones is best known for her roles on “The Office” and “Parks and Recreation.” Lipton returned to the small screen on David Lynch’s cult supernatural show “Twin Peaks,” playing Norma Jennings, the owner of the Double R Diner. “I lost a sister today. She was a true angel on earth. Always the coolest in the room,” “Twin Peaks” co-star Madchen Amick said on Twitter. —AFP



In this file photo Actress Rashida Jones and her mother actress Peggy Lipton, right, arrive at the premiere of ‘I Love You, Man’ held at Mann’s Village Theater in Westwood, California. — AFP



Kristen Bell likes to do nesting stuff to celebrate Mother's Day

The 38-year-old actress - who has daughters Lincoln, six, and Delta, four, with her husband Dax Shepard - is set to celebrate the annual holiday, and has said her favorite way to ring in the occasion is to "cuddle" with her brood, or go on a trip to a flea market to pick up things for their home. She said: "The best way to succeed at Mother's Day is it's so specific to the girl. Every girl has different love languages. I like to nest so for me, I love cuddling with my kids and I love spending time with them but I make that a priority daily." "What I don't get to do - and this is going to be embarrassing - is open a drunk drawer and just roll my sleeves up and be like 'you're mine.' Or going to the flea market and being like this dresser is perfect and it's \$40. Nesting stuff." And the 'Good Place' star says the "best way to succeed as a dad" on the day is to get top tips from the woman's close friends. Speaking to E! News, she added: "For other girls, it is flowers and chocolate so you have to use some intuition. The best way to succeed as a dad is talk to the woman's girlfriends or gay friends." If Kristen does take her daughters to a flea market this weekend, her eldest daughter Lincoln will be able to show off her "cool" new haircut, as the 'Frozen' actress recently revealed she has shaved the side of her head. Kristen said: "My oldest daughter shaved the side of her head a couple weeks ago. I gave her permission. She just woke up one morning and was like, 'I need to shave this whole side right here.' "And I was like, 'What?' [She said] 'It's got to be buzzed.' And I was like, 'I've never been, nor will I ever be, that cool to shave the side of my head.' "And she did it, and she rocks it and she loves it. And she even said, 'I need a little trim. It's getting long.' And I was like, 'Oh, you're just like a skater girl. That's so cool.'"



Kylie Jenner spends \$50,000 on two bags

The 21-year-old make-up mogul visited the vintage accessories store What Goes Around Comes Around NYC, where she purchased a Louis Vuitton Multicolour Monogram Mink Fur Bum Bag for \$24,500 and the 1996 Vivienne Westwood for Louis Vuitton Monogram Bum Bag. Kylie is so proud of her handbag collection that she even enlisted Martyn Lawrence-Bullard to create a special closet to hold them. Speaking previously, he said: "There is a huge closet for her regular everyday clothes. Then she has a workout closet which is strictly for workout clothes. And then obviously there is a purse closet that is dedicated to her collection of incredible bags." "There are at least 400 bags, mostly Hermes, lots of Birkin bags and then Louis Vuitton, lots of Chanel and some Dior and Fendi. "Lots of them are collector's items. She's bought some as investments and they're treated like works of art." Kylie can afford to splash out on luxury handbags as she was recently named the world's youngest self-made billionaire and the star has said that she could only achieve her huge success thanks great "help" from her family and friends including mom Kris Jenner.

Katie Price resurrects her pop career by singing at funerals

The 40-year-old TV star - who was once the runner-up in the search for the UK's entry for the 'Eurovision Song Contest' - is currently charging £5,000 to sing at funerals around the UK. A source told The Sun on Sunday newspaper: "She will happily pop along to a funeral and sing a couple of songs of choice. "If she can put a smile on a few people's faces, then why not?" In 2010, Katie released the single 'Free to Love Again' - but her attempts to make the transition into the music industry have not led to any sustained success. Now, she's open to performing at a variety of events, including weddings and funerals, as she bids to revive her pop career. The insider explained: "Katie has an agreed price list for PAs, TV appearances and magazine shoots. "But she realized she was missing a trick - she could perform at weddings, Bar Mitzvahs and funerals, too, so now they have been tacked on to her CV." Meanwhile, Katie revealed in April that she was in talks for a Netflix drama series about her life. The TV star said she's been working with the online streaming platform to create a series, though she was coy about the specific details of the project. Speaking about her future plans, Katie shared: "I've got a new book out next year. There's so much to put in it. "And I'm in talks with Netflix about doing a drama series about my life. I'm not going to give too much away - you'll have to wait and see."



Priyanka Chopra wants to start a family with Nick Jonas

The 36-year-old actress tied the knot with the 26-year-old singer five months ago and Priyanka revealed that she is eager for kids with her spouse. Speaking to E! News, she said: "Yeah. Always. I've always wanted to. I think, you know, whenever God wants it to happen." Priyanka also revealed before her wedding that she was feeling broody. She said: "I just have a few of my friends who are having babies right now and I'm like, 'God I need to catch up!'" And Nick has been open about his desire for kids, previously saying: "I definitely want to be a father someday. I think that's a real dream, and I think I have had to grow up pretty quick. With that, you could look at it two ways, you could say that was unfair, or you could say it has given me some real perspective at an early age. And I have seen a lot of life at an early age and I hope to be able to share that with a kid of my own someday." Priyanka also opened up about her close relationship with her sisters-in-law Sophie Turner and Danielle Jonas, who dub themselves 'The J Sisters'. She said: "I don't know what our collective talent is yet. We're funny, we're cute, but I dunno...we love each other so much and we get on really well, thank God. Whenever we come together, we make a night of it and that's what really the J sisters are about to me, just like, family that are friends."



Cara Delevingne wants to attend military school



The 26-year-old model-and-actress - who is dating Ashley Benson - would love the challenge of army training and thinks it would be helpful in teaching her to establish some "boundaries" for herself. She said: "This is odd, but sometimes I think it might be a good idea to go to military school to give me some boundaries. I'm very physical and love being challenged." And the 'Suicide Squad' actress would love to put her survival skills to the test by being abandoned on a desert island by TV adventurer Bear Grylls. She added to Marie Claire magazine: "I also think Bear Grylls is amazing, and I would like to be left on a desert island. It would be exciting to see the end of the world because I know I'd be able to survive." While she hasn't enrolled in military school yet, Cara makes sure she attends a yoga and meditation course every year in order to "connect" with herself following a busy period because she insists it is "very important" to take care of herself. She said: "I wouldn't be able to do what I do without any self-care. I go on a yoga and meditation course once a year after [autumn/winter] fashion week. "It's a good time to go away because January and February are always very busy. "The course is eight hours a day, very intense, and it allows me to connect with myself. "And that practice carries me through the year, so it's very important. "As a kid, I could just leave my make-up on for days and just carry on, but as I get older, I take self-care more seriously."

Constance Wu upset over Fresh Off the Boat's renewal

The 37-year-old actress took to Twitter on Friday to launch an expletive-laden rant after the TV show - on which she plays protective mother Jessica Huang - was renewed for a sixth season, which seemed to indicate she was upset about the news. She wrote at the time: "So upset right now that I'm literally crying. Ugh." When a fan wrote: "Congrats on your renewal! Great news :)," the star responded: "No it's not." But now, she's said her tweets came as the show's renewal meant she had to cancel another project she had been lined up for in favor of returning to the ABC comedy series. In a lengthy Twitter post uploaded on Saturday, she said: "These words are my truth. I hope you hear them. I love FOTB. I was temporarily upset yesterday not bc I hate the show but bc its renewal meant I had to give up another project that I was really passionate about. So my dismayed social media replies were more about that other project and not about FOTB. "But I understand how that could feel interconnected and could get muddled. So here is me un-muddling it with my truth: FOTB is a great show that I'm proud of and that I enjoy. I've gotten to fully explore my character and I know her like the back of my hand. So playing Jessica is fun and easy and pleasant. I get to work with a kind and pleasant cast/crew. Which makes it all quite enjoyable - so obviously I don't dislike doing a show that is fun and easy and pleasant. (sic)" Constance went on to say the other project would have been a "challenge" for her as an actress, and she had been looking forward to trying something new. The 'Crazy Rich Asians' star insists she does "regret" the way her original tweets sounded, and says she never meant to insinuate that she was disappointed in the 'Fresh Off the Boat' renewal.



GIGI HADID HAD HER TWITTER ACCOUNT HACKED

The 24-year-old model took to Instagram on Friday to clear up any confusion about tweets that were being made from her Twitter account, as she insisted she'd been hacked and wasn't writing any of the messages herself. She posted on the photo sharing site: "Hope it goes without saying ... my Twitter was hacked." The hacker seized control of Gigi's Twitter account earlier on Friday, where they launched a racist tirade with several tweets which praised Adolf Hitler, and claimed she "wishes Germany won WW2 (sic)". The culprit then also tweeted claiming Gigi was a supporter of controversial US President Donald Trump, although the model has been outspoken about her opposition to Trump's immigration policies. Thankfully, Gigi managed to secure control of her Twitter account once again, and has thanked her fans for "rallying" around her. She wrote on her account: "Secured my Twitter, folks. Thanks for rallying for me. Joke's on the hacker ... I don't use Twitter DM's." Meanwhile, the blonde beauty recently said fame can make her feel "out of control" at times. She said: "It makes me emotional because at times, fame makes you feel out of control of your life. I think it's tough. Obviously, people judge you." And Gigi says her fame and hectic lifestyle has stopped her from being able to make friends, because she already struggles to "give attention" to everyone she cares about.





Members of a traditional music and dance group perform at the first cultural centre to open since the Islamic State (IS) group's rule ended in the eastern Syrian city of Raqa. — AFP photos



In north Syria, the arts return to former jihadist bastion

More than a year after the Islamic State group fled, Syrian boys and girls are finally back on stage-bobbing to the rhythm of drums in the northern city of Raqa. At the first cultural centre to open since the jihadists' draconian rule ended, sunlight floods into the brand new library, while books line shelves along a wall that still smells of wet paint. After almost four years under IS, which banned music and the arts, US-backed forces expelled the last IS fighters from Raqa in October 2017. But it's taken a bit of time to resuscitate cultural life.

"I can't describe how happy I am," said Fawzia al-Sheikh at the centre's opening earlier this month, in the still largely devastated city. "After all this destruction, and no arts or culture, we finally have a centre where we can listen to song and poetry" again, the Raqa resident added. In the Raqa Centre for Arts and Culture's brightly lit gallery, paintings hang beside charcoal drawings, near sculptures of human figures.

In the concert hall, Malak al-Yatim stepped off stage after performing-exhilarated to finally

be able to sing in public again. "I feel like a bird sweeping through the spring sky," he said. Yatim added that IS smashed his instruments and banned him from singing. "We were like nightingales in a cage," he lamented. "If we did anything, they'd chop off our head or whip us." IS overran Raqa in 2014, making the city its de facto Syrian capital and imposing a brutal interpretation of Islam on everyone in its orbit.

Books 'saved from the ruins'

Before IS arrived, the city had more than 20 cultural centres, the largest housing 60,000 books. But the extremists forced all these facilities to close, burning and destroying books and paintings. But in the new centre's library, hundreds of volumes that survived the extremists adorn shelves. "These books you can see-we saved them from the ruins," said Ziad al-Hamad, the centre's director. "During IS' rule, residents hid them wherever they could," added the 62-year-old, dressed neatly in a brown V-neck jumper over a stripy white shirt.

"When the city was liberated, they gave

them back to us," added Hamad, who also sits on the city council's culture and antiquities commission. The Kurdish-led and US backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) expelled IS from the village of Baghouz, its last scrap of Syrian territory, in late March. While the jihadists have continued to claim deadly attacks in areas controlled by the SDF-including Raqa-local artists have returned to their easels. In the cultural centre's gallery, painter Amal al-Attar has work on display after returning from exile in Beirut.

Among her works is a painting of a white boat adrift on an ocean, and another of a home on the shoreline. "It's like a re-birth," the 37-year-old said of the centre's opening, sunglasses perched atop her dark shoulder-length hair. Attar used to run a studio for artists, but when IS overran the city they told her art was forbidden. She left 50 works behind when she fled to neighboring Lebanon. "IS burned them," she said. "I can't forget what happened back then, but this cultural centre will give us a new drive," she said.—AFP



Amal al-Attar, a 37-year-old artist, looks at her artworks on display during an exhibition at the first cultural centre to open since the Islamic State (IS) group's rule ended in the eastern Syrian city of Raqa.



Ziad al-Hamad, director of the first cultural centre to open since the Islamic State (IS) group's rule ended in the eastern Syrian city of Raqa.



Will Smith brings own fun-loving Genie to new 'Aladdin'

Hollywood star Will Smith was reluctant at first to play Genie in the live-action remake of Disney's "Aladdin" as it meant following in the big footsteps of late comedian Robin Williams who voiced the character in the 1992 animated film. Smith, who shot to fame in the 1990s television series "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air," added a personal touch - and some hip hop and rap - to portray the energetic CGI-enhanced blue Genie who emerges from a lamp in a cave of treasures.

Speaking to Reuters at the musical film's premiere in London on Thursday, the 50-year-old actor and rapper said his first reaction about taking on the role was: "Hell no, no way." "Robin Williams didn't leave much room to improve on the Genie. ... So I looked at it and the first thing for me was that it was going to be live action. I thought it could be a little different," Smith said.

"Robin Williams ... took his essentially stand-up persona and just infused his stand-up persona into the Genie. ... I was like I could just use the extreme version of almost my 'Fresh Prince' persona to be able to infuse that into this wild character. I felt I'd be able to capture the nostalgia while at the same time being able to make something new." The film follows the 1992 movie plot that saw poor street hustler Aladdin fall in love with headstrong Princess Jasmine, but director Guy Ritchie said the story "needed updating." "We are half an hour longer and there's just a difference between an animated film and live action," he said.

"Somehow you can take broader strokes in the animated movies that you can't afford in live action. Jasmine was the principal character that needed evolving and developing." That character is played by "The 33" and "Power Rangers" actress Naomi Scott, who will also



US actor Will Smith poses on arrival for the European Gala of Aladdin in central London. — AFP

star in the upcoming "Charlie's Angels" remake. "(Jasmine) finds her voice and she goes through a journey to find it. ... I want little girls to see that," she said.

Newcomer Mena Massoud, who starred in last year's "Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan" series, plays the title role in the movie. Cast members said animals of all kinds and some 1,000 extras were involved in making the musical spectacle, which features original songs from the animated film as well as new tunes. "Aladdin" is the latest live-action remake from Disney, which has revisited old animated films like "The Jungle Book" as well as "Dumbo" and will put out a new version of box-office hit "The Lion King" this summer. — Reuters

Bieber, Sheeran drop new tune tackling mental health

After teasing it for weeks Justin Bieber and Ed Sheeran early Friday released their new single "I Don't Care," melding a jaunty melody with lyrics that confront mental health. The track, sure to become a summer earworm, comes just months after Bieber, 25, said he was stepping back from music to focus on his health and family. "I have been looking, seeking, trial and error as most of us do, I am now very focused on repairing some of the deep rooted issues that I have as most of us have, so that I don't fall apart," the Canadian singer posted on Instagram in March.

In his collaboration with Sheeran, 28, the superstar sings of feeling out of place and battling anxiety. "With all these people all around / I'm crippled with anxiety / But I'm told it's where we're supposed to be," he sings. The bop then turns into something of an ode to love, purportedly aimed at Bieber's wife, model Hailey Baldwin, and Cherry Seaborn, the partner of British star Sheeran.

"And you're making me feel like I'm loved by somebody / I can deal with the bad nights when I'm with my baby," the pair sing in the chorus. It is their second duet, the pair having joined up for the song "Love Yourself" from Bieber's last album "Purpose," released in 2015. In recent months Bieber has been spoken candidly about his depression, telling Vogue that "I've struggled with the feeling that people are using me or aren't really there for me."

"One of the big things for me is trusting myself. I've made some bad decisions personally, and in relationships," he said. "Those mistakes have affected my confidence in my judgment." The former child star abruptly cut short his 2017 tour, later saying he needed to work out "insecurities." The move came as Bieber was becoming known more for his antics than his music, including accidentally striking a photographer with his car.

The star faced legal trouble for incidents that included racing a vehicle through Miami and throwing eggs at a neighbor's house. In 2017 China said Bieber was not welcome to perform in the country due to his "bad behavior," saying he had a lot of growing up to do if he wanted to return.—AFP

Women painters take center stage at NY art auctions

With a new record expected for a work by Lee Krasner and another one possible for a Helen Frankenthaler, the appetite for female abstract painters, and women artists in general, is growing fast as New York gears up for its spring auctions beginning on Monday. “We’ve seen an extraordinary recalibration in the market for female artists, both historical and contemporary,” said David Galperin, head of evening sales at Sotheby’s auction house.

Last year was already an auspicious one, with record-breaking auctions for the late Frankenthaler, as well as for 50-year-old Briton Cecily Brown, Grace Hartigan, who died in 2008, and above all Joan Mitchell, who died in 1992 and whose “Blueberry” went in May 2018 for \$16.6 million.

David Leiber, a partner at the David Zwirner gallery, which has exhibited a number of Mitchell’s works, recalled that although she found popular and critical acclaim very early on, only recently did her work profit from the increasing interest in women artists.

“These are artists whose work is just as powerful as

their male contemporaries and their historical peers, and yet their markets have for decades lagged behind their contemporaries,” said Galperin. Even if a reassessment of women’s works has begun, the prices they command still lag far behind the \$68.9 million for a Willem de Kooning, the \$58.4 million for a Jackson Pollack or the Mark Rothko that went for \$86.9 million. “It’s a long overdue readjustment of the market,” said Alexander Rotter, the head of Post-War and Contemporary Art at Christie’s.

The readjustment is due to several factors, one of them being the explosion in prices of works by male artists, many approaching or even topping the \$100-million mark. “I think there’s definitely a hunger and appetite for opportunities within the market and this is certainly one, in the sense that the market prices are still in a way accessible relative to works of comparable quality by their male peers,” said Galperin.

The upward trend is also affecting other female artists such as sculptor Louise Bourgeois, who died in 2010, and whose works could this week surpass her 2015 record of \$28.2 million. Just as it was four years

ago, the work on offer is a giant steel spider, which Christie’s estimates could sell on Wednesday evening for \$25 million to \$30 million.

Cherchez la femme

Another factor less directly linked to the art market is a recent trend toward rediscovering the work of women long overlooked, if not forgotten, in the arts, sciences and politics. “I hope it ends up in a world where we don’t need to make the distinction, where it’s natural, the prices are being made for the work of art rather than for the gender,” said Rotter. “But right now we’re being conscious that we’re paying attention to female artists.”

Some collectors are specifically looking to acquire works by women artists. “It always existed but it’s now obviously bigger,” Rotter said. The move has benefited many big names but also lesser-known artists such as Njideka Akunyili Crosby, a painter of Nigerian origin who sold a work for \$3.4 million last year at Sotheby’s, or the Anglo-Ghanaian Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, who had a painting go for \$1.5 million in 2018. The trend

also spans works from previous eras, with \$7.1 million paid in January for a canvas by Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842), a record for a woman among the old masters.

In light of this trend, auction houses are now offering more works by female artists, including in their major spring and autumn sales. “Presenting them in this new context is really critical in engaging new demographics of buyers and really shifting these markets,” said Galperin.

Unlike Leonardo da Vinci’s “Salvator Mundi,” which sold for \$450 million in 2017, or “Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)” by David Hockney in 2018 — which sold for \$90.3 million, a record for a living artist—no single work is expected to become a major event in itself during the four big sales in New York next week organized by Christie’s and Sotheby’s. But market watchers will be closely following Jeff Koons’ “Rabbit,” which could set a new record for the American artist, whose previous best-selling work netted \$58.4 million. —AFP

Hero of Berlin Airlift back in city for 70th anniversary



Guests attend a wreath-laying ceremony at the Berlin Airlift memorial outside Tempelhof airport in Berlin to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of the Berlin airlift. — AFP photos

When in 1948 US bombers started dropping tiny, improvised parachutes loaded with sweets into Berlin during the Soviet blockade, one little German girl wrote to complain. Mercedes Wild, now 78, recalled how she protested that the constant drone of airlift planes disturbed her chickens—and during the Soviet blockade of West Berlin, eggs were a valuable commodity. Then Gail Halvorsen, the US pilot who dreamed up the candy drops, wrote back, enclosing sticks of chewing gum and a lollipop with his letter.

His gesture sparked a long-lasting friendship between Halvorsen, Wild and their families, she told AFP. “It wasn’t the sweets that impressed me, it was the letter,” she said. “I grew up fatherless, like a lot of (German) children at that time, so knowing that someone outside of Berlin was thinking of me gave me hope.” “Candy bomber” Halvorsen insists that the real heroes of the Berlin Airlift—the mammoth logistical operation to air-drop supplies into West Berlin after the Soviet blockaded it—were inside the city.

“The heroes of the Berlin Airlift were not the pilots, the heroes were the Germans—the parents and children on the ground,” said the



Former Berlin Airlift pilot Gail Halvorsen from the US addresses guests during a wreath-laying ceremony.

American veteran. “They were the stalwarts of the confrontation with the Soviet Union, not the guys bringing in the food, it was the people (of West Berlin) standing up for themselves.” Sunday marks the 70th anniversary of the end



Former Berlin Airlift pilot Gail Halvorsen, right, from the US hugs Mercedes Wild, a German contemporary witness and friend of Halvorsen’s family, on the sidelines of a wreath-laying ceremony at the Berlin Airlift memorial outside Tempelhof airport in Berlin

of the 15-month Soviet blockade.

Uncle Wiggly Wings

The frail 98-year-old ex-pilot was back at Berlin’s former Tempelhof airport for the festivities to remember the operation by the western Allies in 1948-49. Halvorsen is guest of honor at Sunday’s festival to mark 70 years since the lifting of the Soviet blockade which sparked ‘Operation Vittles’, as the Berlin Airlift was officially known. It flew in supplies to West Berlin’s 2.5 million population amid cold war tensions in Germany’s ruined capital, still reeling from the Second World War.

Operating almost non-stop and through the harsh German winter, the Airlift carried more than two million tons of supplies on more than 277,000 flights, mainly into Tempelhof. At least 78 US, British and German pilots and ground crew lost their lives in accidents in the air and on the ground, as the Allies delivered fuel and food to prevent Berlin’s population from starving. It was the first major salvo of the Cold War.

“It’s not for us, it’s in memory” of those “who gave their lives,” said US veteran Ralph Dionne, 91, who was a flight engineer during the airlift. Halvorsen was the first American pilot to famously drop bundles of chocolate with handkerchief parachutes to children waiting below. To signal that he was about to release the candy-laden parachutes, Halvorsen would dip his plane’s wings, earning him the nickname “Uncle Wiggly Wings”. Halvorsen rose to the rank of colonel and eventually ended up commander of the airfield. Tempelhof closed as an airport in 2008 and is now a public park. The veteran flew from his home in Utah to throw the honorary opening pitch on Saturday as the Berlin Braves, the city’s baseball team, named their ground “The Gail S Halvorsen Ballpark” on the former airport site. After handing out candy to local children, Halvorsen urged “future leaders” in both Germany “and America” to protect their freedom —AFP.



A woman places flowers at the Berlin Airlift memorial outside Tempelhof airport in Berlin.



Former Berlin Airlift pilot Gail Halvorsen from the US holds a jersey of the Berlin Braves baseball team as he poses with his daughters, members of the local Baseball team ‘Berlin Braves’ and members of Boy Scouts of America during a ceremony at the Tempelhofer Feld, a former airfield in Berlin.

EUROVISION HOPEFULS TUNE UP IN ISRAEL AMID BOYCOTT CALLS



In this file photo Israel’s singer Netta Barzilai aka Netta celebrates with the trophy after winning the final of the 63rd edition of the Eurovision Song Contest 2018 at the Altice Arena in Lisbon. — AFP

Europe’s popular annual fest of kitsch and outrageous fashion kicks off Tuesday in Tel Aviv, with Israel hoping the Eurovision Song Contest may help burnish its image despite boycott calls. Last year’s winning performance by Israeli singer, Netta Barzilai, with her #MeToo-inspired song “Toy”—which included clucking sounds and chicken-like dance moves—secured her country the right to host this year’s televised extravaganza.

The largely European competition, which gifted to the world the Swedish super-group ABBA, dates back to the 1950s and has widened over the years to include broadcasters who subscribe to the European Broadcasting Union, spreading now as far as Australia. Many culture lovers openly sniff at the contest, deriding it as the height of bad taste. But its irreverent mix of glitz, glamour and over-the-top costumes has won a devoted following of millions, particularly among gay fans.

Madonna under pressure

Although it has waded into complicated geo-political waters in the past, this year’s competition has become embroiled in the deep divisions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Big-name rock stars including Pink Floyd’s Roger Waters and British singer Peter Gabriel have unsuccessfully urged that it be relocated to another country. US music icon Madonna has come under pressure to drop two performances she will reportedly give when the semi-finals culminate in the finals on Saturday, May 18. And the pro-Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement is calling for the event to be boycotted as part of its campaign against Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories. “We Palestinian singers, songwriters, dancers, musicians and other artists urge all Eurovision 2019 finalists to withdraw from the contest,” it said in a statement on its website.

But such moves have been dismissed by organizers and this year 41 nations are competing, with the Netherlands favorite to win, according to a survey of book-makers by independent fan website Eurovision World. Dutch singer Duncan Laurence sits at a piano to perform his love song “Arcade”. “Hosting Eurovision is one of Israel’s biggest coups in terms of popular culture on the international stage,” Israeli daily Haaretz wrote on its opinion page. “The prestige and primetime global attention for Israel may prove too big a temptation for Hamas to ignore.”

Voice of LGBT youth

Around 200 million people are expected to tune in for Saturday’s finals, and to mark the occasion Tel Aviv is also brushing up its gay-friendly image. “Eurovision is an opportunity for incredible global exposure,” the coastal city’s mayor Ron Huldai told a recent press conference. “Tel Aviv will welcome thousands of tourists, will host 1,500 journalists, and will be seen by tens of millions of viewers.” Israel won the job of hosting this year’s 64th Eurovision contest after Barzilai’s stunning show in Portugal last year. But this year, the Israeli entry “Home”, an operatic-style ballad sung by Kobi Marimi, has been ranked at a lowly 25th place. Other favorites for lifting the trophy include France, whose 19-year-old hopeful, Bilal Hassani, proclaims to be the “voice” and the “face of the LGBT youth who want to change things” with his song “Roi”, or king. A huge Eurovision fan since he was a young child, Hassani has become known for his blonde wigs and androgynous looks. But he has faced a barrage of homophobic insults and death threats.

Entries from Sweden, Russia and Azerbaijan are also among the top favorites. While Australia’s Kate Miller-Hedke is making waves with her haunting “Zero Gravity” apparently based on her experiences of post-natal depression. Promoter Live Nation Israel said last month that Madonna would sing two songs during the interval of the contest’s finals. An admirer of the Jewish mystical tradition of Kabbalah, she has performed in Israel several times and also made private visits.

Eurovision truce?

Apart from the boycott threat, there has also been talk of possible disruption by rocket fire from Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Last weekend the two groups rained rockets on southern Israel from launch sites in the Gaza Strip, drawing waves of Israeli retaliatory strikes. At least 25 Palestinians, including at least nine militants, were killed. Four Israeli civilians died in the Palestinian rocket attacks. The cross-border duelling petered out Monday after the Palestinians said they had agreed to a truce brokered by Egypt, but there were warnings it might not hold for long. The “contest might actually have saved the parties from escalating”, said Tareq Baconi, analyst with the International Crisis Group think-tank. Those who win through to Saturday’s final will join host Israel and the so-called “big five” of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain—all of whom are entitled to skip the elimination rounds. Barzilai’s win was Israel’s fourth victory and the country previously hosted the contest in Jerusalem in 1979 and 1999. —AFP

Classifieds

Monday, May 13, 2019

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817
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Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Hot and Partly cloudy with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain.

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate variable wind to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h and some high clouds will appear.

| WEATHER WARNING | | | No Current Warnings | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------|--|
| STATION | MAX. EXP. | MIN. REC. | SFC. CHART 12/05/2019 0000 UTC | |
| KUWAIT CITY | 38 °C | 28 °C | | |
| KUWAIT AIRPORT | 39 °C | 25 °C | | |
| ABDALY | 40 °C | 23 °C | | |
| BUBYAN | - °C | - °C | | |
| JAHRA | 41 °C | 26 °C | | |
| FAILAKA ISLAND | 34 °C | 25 °C | | |
| SALMIYAH | 33 °C | 27 °C | | |
| AHMADI | 34 °C | 28 °C | | |
| NUWAISIB | 34 °C | 25 °C | | |
| WAFRA | 39 °C | 22 °C | | |
| SALMY | 38 °C | 23 °C | | |

| 4 DAYS FORECAST | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--|--------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| DAY | DATE | WEATHER | Temperatures | | Wind Direction | Wind Speed |
| | | | MAX. | MIN. | | |
| Monday | 05/13 | Hot | 41 °C | 26 °C | NW | 15 - 40 km/h |
| Tuesday | 05/14 | Hot and Partly cloudy and rising dust | 41 °C | 28 °C | NW | 20 - 50 km/h |
| Wednesday | 05/15 | Hot and rising dust over open areas and some high clouds will appear | 42 °C | 29 °C | NW | 20 - 45 km/h |
| Thursday | 05/16 | Hot and some scattered clouds will appear | 42 °C | 27 °C | NW-SE | 08 - 28 km/h |

| PRAYER TIMES | |
|--------------|-------|
| Fajr | 03:29 |
| Sunrise | 04:58 |
| Zuhr | 11:44 |
| Asr | 15:20 |
| Sunset | 18:31 |
| Isha | 19:57 |

| RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| MAX. Temp. | 37 °C |
| MIN. Temp. | 26 °C |
| MAX. RH | 35 % |
| MIN. RH | 14 % |
| MAX. Wind | NE 50 km/h |
| TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR. | 0 mm |

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR SAHARA AIR CONDITIONING

Safety Engineer: - Engineering Degree, with 1 year of HSE course minimum 6 years working experience.
Safety Officer : - Science Degree, with 1 year of HSE course minimum 6 years working.
AC Foreman: - Diploma or ITI in Air Conditioning Trade with 5 years of experience as A/C Foreman.
Chiller Plant Foreman: - Diploma or ITI in Air Conditioning Trade with 5 years of experience as A/C Chiller Plant Foreman.
AC Mechanic: - Diploma or ITI in Air Conditioning Trade with 5 years experience as A/C Mechanic.
AC Electrician: - Diploma or ITI in Air Conditioning Trade with 5 years of experience of A/C Electrician.
BMS / Instrument Control Technician: - Secondary Education, 2 years Diploma or ITI Certificate in Electronics Trade, Minimum 5 years experience as BMS/Instrument Control Technician.
Electronic Control Technician: - Secondary Education, 2 years Diploma or ITI Certificate in Electronics Trade, minimum 5 years experience as Electronic Control Technician.

All above are required with Kuwait Driving License

AC Assistant: - Secondary Education, minimum 2 years experience, under 40 years age required.

Preference to candidates fluent in English speaking.
New visa can be given if Required. Good salary based on Good Experience. Interested Candidates can contact on mobile # 99765183 & can send CV's to Fax No. 23981916 or
Email to: contact@saharaac.com

CHANGE OF NAME

Given name and XAVIER as Surname with immediate effect. (C 5528)

I, SHANTI MOL XAVIER daughter of Pulickal Xavier, holder of Indian Passport No. K4659425, issued at Kuwait on 26/04/2012, permanent resident of Pulickal House, Puliyanmala P.O, Idukki DT, Kerala, India and presently residing Bldg 15, Block 10, Salmiya, Kuwait do hereby change my name from SHANTI MOL XAVIER to SHANTIMOL as

I, Rasheeda Abdul Kareem, Thannickal House, Pattoth, Koodaranhi P.O. Kozhikode, Kerala. Holder of Indian Passport No. 2311556 residing in Kuwait at present hereby declare the name changes as Given Name: Rasheeda Surname: Abdul Kareem (C 5527) 9-5-2019



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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

| Arrival Flights on Monday 13/5/2019 | | | | Departure Flights on Monday 13/5/2019 | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-------|
| Airlines | Flt | Route | Time | Airlines | Flt | Route | Time |
| FEQ | 441 | Asyut | 00:05 | AIC | 982 | Ahmedabad/Chennai | 00:05 |
| IGO | 1757 | Kochi | 00:10 | MSC | 412 | Asyut | 00:15 |
| THY | 772 | Istanbul | 00:20 | MSR | 615 | Cairo | 00:30 |
| JZR | 254D | Amman | 00:40 | FDB | 072 | Dubai | 00:30 |
| KAC | 102 | London | 00:50 | FEG | 342 | Sohag | 01:05 |
| DLH | 625 | Dammam | 00:50 | IGO | 1758 | Kochi | 01:10 |
| JZR | 722 | Alexandria | 01:00 | JZR | 713 | Sohag | 01:30 |
| JZR | 734 | Cairo | 01:00 | KAC | 677 | Dubai | 01:40 |
| KAC | 504 | Beirut | 01:00 | THY | 773 | Istanbul | 01:50 |
| RJA | 642 | Amman | 01:20 | DLH | 625 | Frankfurt | 01:50 |
| UAE | 853 | Dubai | 01:40 | KAC | 285 | Dhaka | 02:00 |
| KLM | 446 | Bahrain | 01:45 | KAC | 417 | Manila | 02:00 |
| KKK | 1268 | Istanbul | 01:55 | JZR | 701 | Asyut | 02:00 |
| QTR | 1086 | Doha | 02:30 | JZR | 111 | Doha | 02:10 |
| GFA | 211 | Bahrain | 02:50 | THY | 765 | Istanbul | 02:50 |
| JZR | 502 | Lahore | 02:55 | KKK | 1269 | Istanbul | 02:55 |
| OMA | 643 | Muscat | 03:05 | KLM | 446 | Amsterdam | 03:10 |
| ETD | 305 | Abu Dhabi | 03:05 | UAE | 854 | Dubai | 03:30 |
| JZR | 406 | Kochi | 03:05 | ETD | 306 | Abu Dhabi | 04:00 |
| MSR | 612 | Cairo | 03:15 | OMA | 644 | Muscat | 04:05 |
| KAC | 418 | Manila | 03:20 | QTR | 1087 | Doha | 04:15 |
| QTR | 1076 | Doha | 03:30 | MSR | 613 | Cairo | 04:15 |
| IGO | 1751 | Chennai | 04:10 | IGO | 1752 | Chennai | 05:10 |
| KAC | 346 | Ahmedabad | 04:15 | KAC | 303 | Mumbai | 05:15 |
| KAC | 784 | Jeddah | 04:25 | QTR | 1077 | Doha | 05:15 |
| DHX | 170 | Bahrain | 04:30 | JZR | 1221 | Jeddah | 05:25 |
| JZR | 404 | Hyderabad | 04:50 | THY | 771 | Istanbul | 06:30 |
| THY | 770 | Istanbul | 05:20 | GFA | 212 | Bahrain | 06:50 |
| KAC | 382 | Delhi | 05:25 | RJA | 643 | Amman | 07:00 |
| KAC | 344 | Chennai | 05:30 | KAC | 167 | Paris | 07:15 |
| KAC | 552 | Cairo | 05:45 | BAW | 156 | London | 07:40 |
| JZR | 112 | Doha | 05:50 | KAC | 173 | Munich | 07:45 |
| BAW | 157 | London | 06:10 | JZR | 211 | Jeddah | 08:00 |
| KAC | 284 | Dhaka | 06:15 | IGO | 1756 | CNN | 08:10 |
| KAC | 678 | Dubai | 06:40 | RBG | 214 | Sohag | 08:15 |
| KAC | 204 | Lahore | 06:45 | KAC | 163 | MXP | 08:35 |
| KAC | 302 | Mumbai | 07:05 | KAC | 545 | Cairo | 08:50 |
| IGO | 1755 | CNN | 07:10 | KAC | 501 | Beirut | 08:50 |
| RBG | 211 | Luxor | 07:25 | KAC | 561 | Amman | 08:55 |
| UAE | 855 | Dubai | 07:35 | MSC | 402 | Alexandria | 09:00 |
| JZR | 714 | Sohag | 07:40 | KAC | 117 | New York | 09:05 |
| JZR | 402 | Mumbai | 07:50 | UAE | 856 | Dubai | 09:05 |
| MSC | 401 | Alexandria | 08:00 | KAC | 787 | Jeddah | 09:15 |
| KAC | 352 | Kochi | 08:20 | KAC | 671 | Dubai | 09:15 |
| JZR | 702 | Asyut | 08:25 | KAC | 741 | Dammam | 09:40 |
| ETD | 301 | Abu Dhabi | 08:50 | ABY | 126 | Sharjah | 09:40 |
| ABY | 125 | Sharjah | 09:00 | KAC | 773 | Riyadh | 09:40 |
| KAC | 334 | Trivandrum | 09:00 | JZR | 731 | Cairo | 09:45 |
| FDB | 5055 | Dubai | 09:20 | ETD | 302 | Abu Dhabi | 09:55 |
| QTR | 1070 | Doha | 09:30 | KAC | 101 | London | 10:05 |
| IGO | 1753 | Ahmedabad | 09:40 | FDB | 5056 | Dubai | 10:15 |
| KAC | 384 | Delhi | 09:45 | KAC | 515 | Tehran | 10:35 |
| AXB | 889 | Mangalore/Bahrain | 10:20 | KAC | 617 | Doha | 10:40 |
| GFA | 213 | Bahrain | 10:40 | QTR | 1071 | Doha | 10:40 |
| AXB | 395 | Kozhikode | 10:40 | IGO | 1754 | Ahmedabad | 10:40 |
| MEA | 404 | Beirut | 10:55 | AXB | 890 | Mangalore | 11:20 |
| JZR | 1222 | Jeddah | 10:55 | JZR | 221 | Riyadh | 11:20 |
| QTR | 1074 | Doha | 11:00 | GFA | 214 | Bahrain | 11:35 |
| SYR | 341 | Damascus | 11:00 | AXB | 396 | Kozhikode | 11:50 |
| AXB | 789 | CNN/Bahrain | 12:10 | MEA | 405 | Beirut | 11:55 |
| SAW | 701 | Damascus | 12:30 | SYR | 342 | Damascus | 12:00 |
| RBG | 553 | Alexandria | 12:30 | JZR | 213 | Jeddah | 12:05 |
| THY | 766 | Istanbul | 12:30 | QTR | 1075 | Doha | 12:10 |
| UAE | 871 | Dubai | 12:45 | JZR | 123 | Dubai | 12:45 |
| MSR | 610 | Cairo | 12:45 | AXB | 790 | CNN | 13:10 |



KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti vendor displays okra at a market in Kuwait City during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Jews urge Pope to take care over ‘Pharisees talk’

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis is being urged by experts to take greater care when referring to “hypocritical” Pharisees, a stereotype that fuelled centuries of bad blood between Catholics and Jews. Catholic-Jewish relations blossomed after the Second Vatican Council - which in 1965 finally urged respect for Judaism - and Francis is a clear friend of the Jews, insisting the Church continue to seek pardon for anti-Judaism. But for centuries, Jesus’ Jewish origins were obscured and the Jews were held collectively responsible for his death.

And the pontiff’s tendency to quote directly from the New Testament, where Jesus slams members of the small religious and political group as “hypocrites”, has been troubling rabbis concerned about anti-Semitism. Some 400 Jewish and Christian bible scholars gathered in Rome last week to exchange research notes on

the Pharisees, a group which little is known about historically but which came to represent all Jews.

The image of the treacherous Pharisees appears down the centuries in dictionaries, academic articles, films and Protestant and Catholic preaching, with the word “Pharisee” becoming a synonym for hypocrite in the West. “They lacked life. They were, so to speak, ‘starved’. They were rigid... The people didn’t matter to them: the Law mattered to them,” Francis said of Pharisees in a homily in October.

The 110-year-old Pontifical Biblical Institute, headed by Jesuits, organized the conference and helped write a speech Francis delivered to the participants Thursday, in which he acknowledged the dangers of quoting the bible without context. “The word ‘Pharisee’ often means ‘hypocritical’ or ‘presumptuous’ person. For many Jews, however, the Pharisees are the founders of Rabbinic Judaism and therefore their spiritual ancestors,” the Argentine pontiff wrote.

“History has favored negative images of the Pharisees, despite there not being any concrete basis in evangelical narratives”, he said, describing the stereotype as “one of the oldest and most damaging”. Francis asked the experts to carry on with their research in order to arrive at a “more accurate vision of this religious group”. — AFP

Mosques attacked in Sri Lankan town after Facebook row

COLOMBO: Several dozen people threw stones at mosques and Muslim-owned stores and a local man was beaten in the town of Chilaw on Sri Lanka’s west coast yesterday in a dispute that started on Facebook, sources said. Three weeks ago in Sri Lanka Islamist bombers blew themselves up in four hotels and three churches, killing more than 250 people. Since then Muslim groups say they have received dozens of complaints from across the country about people being harassed.

“A police curfew has been imposed in Chilaw Police area with immediate effect until 6 a.m. tomorrow to control the tense situation,” police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera said. The police later said the curfew would be lifted at 4 am. A screenshot of the alleged Facebook exchange seen by Reuters showed a user had written in Sinhalese “It is difficult to make us cry” and added a local slur against Muslim men.

A Facebook user identified as Hasmar Hameed,

whom two locals said was the man later arrested, replied in English: “Dont laugh more 1 day u will cry.” Authorities said they arrested the author of a Facebook post, identifying him as 38-year-old Abdul Hameed Mohamed Hasmar. Locals in Chilaw, a majority Christian town, said Hasmar’s post was interpreted as menacing and an angry crowd beat him. Reuters was unable to determine what the original conversation was about or to contact Hasmar for comment.

“Later they pelted stones at three mosques and some Muslim-owned shops. Now the situation has calmed down, but we are scared of the night,” said one local Muslim man who asked to remain anonymous for security reasons. One mosque suffered extensive damage, he said. Video footage circulating online shows several dozen young men shouting and throwing stones at a clothes store called New Hasmars, which locals said belonged to Hasmar.

Some communities say they are fearful that the government, which failed to act on successive warnings about looming Islamist attacks, has not caught all potential militants. A week ago in Negombo, where more than 100 people were killed during Easter prayers, a violent clash erupted between local Muslims and Christians after a traffic dispute. Unlike after the Negombo clashes, the Sri Lankan government did not impose a ban on social media platforms on Sunday. — Reuters

Germany eyes ‘mosque tax’...

Continued from Page 1

newspaper’s own survey, several states had affirmed that mosque communities in Germany should be able to finance themselves.

Podcasters find niche in the...

Continued from Page 1

ultra-conservative kingdom of Saudi Arabia, according to Nawas. “I’ve been... surprised that actually my biggest market is Saudi Arabia,” said the former sales executive at an aviation company. “Everybody tells you (Saudis) only consume Arabic video content, so I was really delighted... to know that they also consume English-language audio content.”

Nawas, whose show is entirely self-funded, said she hopes to be able to draw financing from other sources. “It’s not sustainable,” she told AFP. “I am hoping in a couple of years, once I have the impact that I want... to start bringing investors on or bringing advertisers or sponsors on board.” Nawas gets messages about the podcast from around the world via social media, including Instagram and LinkedIn, and believes the podcast will gain even more popularity.

“I think the global future of podcasts is very positive, and the reason is people are not going to get less busy. We are only getting busier,” she said. “We need ways to consume content where it is a secondary activity.” She said most people listen to podcasts on mobile devices during their commute, or while cleaning or cooking.

Like Nawas, Sudanese-born Omar Tom and friends created a podcast in 2016 that touches on topics they feel are neglected in traditional media. One such issue his English-language podcast - the Dukkan Show - focuses on is life in the Gulf for members of its huge expatriate population. In the show, the hosts chat to guests as if sitting in a dukkan - or “corner store” - where it is common culture in the Arab world to socialise with friends and neighbors.

“I wanted to fight a couple of stereotypes,” said

The interior ministry of the regional state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania had said it was open to “mosque financing based on the church model” to reduce foreign influence, including “the danger of possible radicalization”. A spokesman for the interior ministry of Baden-Wuerttemberg state had also pointed to the threat of outside influence “on theological content and political opinion”. “In the worst case”, the spokesman had told the newspaper, this included “radical Islamist or anti-democratic content or aspirations”. — AFP

Tom, 30, who is sporting a Made in Sudan T-shirt. “One was the Sudanese stereotype when I first started, which is the lack of representation in media, and if there is a representation it doesn’t always speak for the diaspora or for the third-culture kids. “As Arabs we don’t look so good in international and western media. So how do we tackle that? The only way to do that is to speak in a language that everybody would understand, which at the moment just happens to be English.”

Many young Arab people now prefer podcasts over traditional radio programs. For Rami Baassiri, 26, podcasts allow him to be more productive and do two things at once. “There’s a lot of downtime in my day, whether I’m commuting to work, driving, in the gym, in queues in the mall, at the airport, so I like to make use of that time,” he said. “I think of podcasts as radio on demand. “Radio ... is very random. Podcasts allow me to control the radio by choosing whoever I want to listen to, whatever I want to listen to.”

Reem Hameed, a Canadian who takes part in the Dukkan Show, said podcasts are “here to stay and in the Arab world”. “We have, in the Arab world, an amazing tradition of radio. If you think about how deep radio and its history falls into the Arab world, podcasting is a natural, digital extension of that,” said Hameed, 36, who is of Iraqi and Filipino origins. Podcasts have been spreading across the Arab region, including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, and Lebanon.

In Oman, the platform Sowt - or “voice” - has aired an array of podcasts that touch on subjects ranging from politics to music since its launch in 2017. Hebah Fisher, chief executive and co-founder of Dubai-based network Kerning Cultures, the first venture-funded podcast company in the Middle East, said podcasts are the future. “Our seed round is a strong signal for the podcast industry in the Middle East: the medium is taken seriously, and its value for listeners and users is clear,” she told AFP in an emailed statement. “Podcasting is the future of media.” — AFP

Gloating over someone’s ...

Continued from Page 1

adversary, saying, ‘I swear by Allah that He will not forgive so - and - so!’ God Almighty responded thus: ‘Who is He that thinks he can control Me; claiming that I won’t forgive so - and - so? For, I have, indeed, forgiven him and rendered your deeds null and void.’ (Saheeh Muslim # 2,621)

Even if someone rejoices in your calamity, do not retaliate by doing the same when he suffers: ‘two wrongs cannot make a right.’ Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advised thus Ja’ber bin Saleem in a long prophetic narration: “... and if a person insults and humiliates you, do not retaliate in the same manner, because he will bear the evil consequences of that.” (Al-Albani rated it authentic

Iran: US military presence in Gulf...

Continued from Page 1

military is a normal matter,” said Behrouz Nemati in a summary of the Salami’s comments, according to parliament’s ICANA news site. Salami was appointed head of the Guards last month.

Separately, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet yesterday that US national security adviser John Bolton had made plans for the United States to withdraw from a landmark 2015 nuclear deal and take a more aggressive posture toward the Islamic Republic even before he took up his current post. Zarif tweeted a link to a 2017 National Review article written by Bolton with the headline “How to Get Out of the Iran Nuclear Deal.”

“A detailed blueprint for #FakeIntelligence, #ForeverWar and even empty offers for talks-only phone numbers were not included,” Zarif wrote in the tweet. CNN reported on Friday that the White House had passed a telephone number to the Swiss for contacting US President Donald Trump in case Iranian officials want to hold talks. The Swiss embassy in Tehran represents US interests in the Islamic Republic.

Meanwhile, an Israeli cabinet minister warned yesterday of possible direct or proxy Iranian attacks on

in Saheeh At-Tirmidhi # 2, 722).

Therefore, if anyone rejoices at your misfortune, leave it up to God Almighty to deal with him. Finally, in as much as we yearn for God’s forgiveness, especially during this auspicious month of Ramadan, let us learn to forgive and forget. “If you forgive someone for something they did to you, it doesn’t mean you agree with what they did or believe it was right. Forgiving that person means you have chosen not to dwell on the matter anymore; you have moved on with your life.”

Courtesy of the TIES Center: the TIES Center aims at empower Kuwait’s expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and inter-faith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, you can contact TIES at Tel: 25231015/6; Hotline: 94079777; e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

Israel should the stand-off between Tehran and Washington escalate. The United States has increased economic and military pressure on Iran, with President Donald Trump on Thursday urging its leaders to talk to him about giving up their nuclear program and saying he could not rule out an armed confrontation.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s government, which supports Trump’s hard tack against its arch-foe, has largely been reticent about the spiraling tensions. Parting with the silence, Israeli Energy Minister Yuval Steinitz said that, in the Gulf, “things are heating up.”

“If there’s some sort of conflagration between Iran and the United States, between Iran and its neighbors, I’m not ruling out that they will activate Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad from Gaza, or even that they will try to fire missiles from Iran at the State of Israel,” Steinitz, a member of Netanyahu’s security cabinet, told Israel’s Ynet TV.

Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad are Iranian-sponsored guerrilla groups on Israel’s borders, the former active in Syria as well as Lebanon and the latter in the Palestinian territories. The Israeli military declined to comment when asked if it was making any preparations for possible threats linked to the Iran-US stand-off. Israel has traded blows with Iranian forces in Syria, as well as with Hezbollah in Lebanon and Palestinian militants. But it has not fought an open war with Iran, a country on the other side of the Middle East. — Agencies

Sports

Pujols hits 2 HRs, ties Winfield in hits as Angels defeat Orioles

Dietrich lifts Reds to second straight win over Giants

LOS ANGELES: Albert Pujols hit two home runs, and the visiting Los Angeles Angels beat the Baltimore Orioles 7-2 on Saturday. It was the 59th career multi-homer game for Pujols, who homered in the first and fourth innings, and his first since July 12, 2018, against Seattle. He was 3-for-5 with three RBIs and three runs. The two homers and a single gave Pujols 3,110 career hits, tying him with Dave Winfield for 22nd place on the all-time list. Luke Bard (1-1) pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings of relief for the Angels, who have won 10 of 14. Dylan Bundy (1-5) took the loss, giving up three runs on four hits over five innings.

CUBS 2, BREWERS 1 (15 INNINGS)
Willson Contreras hit a walk-off home run in the 15th inning to lift Chicago over visiting Milwaukee. Contreras crushed a shot estimated at 424 feet into the left-field bleachers at Wrigley Field for Chicago's third walk-off victory since Tuesday. The Cubs have won 11 of their past 13 games. Tyler Chatwood (2-0) earned the victory after pitching four innings of hitless, scoreless relief in the marathon matchup, which lasted more than five hours. Brewers reliever Burch Smith (0-1) drew the loss after allowing the deep shot to Contreras.

REDS 5, GIANTS 4
Cincinnati jumped on Jeff Samardzija in the first inning for the second time in a week, and Derek Dietrich broke a tie with a two-out RBI single in the seventh, giving the visitors a win at San Francisco. Four relievers combined for five innings of one-hit, shutout relief, helping the Reds score a second consecutive win in San Francisco after the clubs split a four-game set in Cincinnati last week. After a solo home run by Eugenio Suarez had tied the score in the fifth, the teams played in a 4-4 dead-lock until Suarez doubled to lead off the seventh against the fourth Giants pitcher, Reyes Moronta (1-3). The right-hander retired the next two hitters before Dietrich blooped a single to left-center, scoring what turned out to be the winning run.

NATIONALS 5, DODGERS 2
Gerardo Parra hit a grand slam with two outs in the eighth inning to rally visiting Washington past Los Angeles. It was the first hit in a Nationals uniform for Parra, who signed with Washington on Thursday after he was cut loose by the San Francisco Giants earlier in the week. It was just the second home run of the season for Parra and eighth in his last two years. Dodgers starter Walker Buehler held the Nationals scoreless over seven innings before turning things over to the bullpen. Nationals starter Max Scherzer (2-4) gave up two runs on five hits over seven innings, earning a victory for the first time since April 7 at New York against the Mets.

RED SOX 9, MARINERS 5
Sandy Leon hit a three-run home run to cap an eight-run third inning as Boston rallied from an early deficit to rout visiting Seattle. Mitch Moreland also homered, and Rafael Devers and Jackie Bradley Jr. each had two RBIs. The Red Sox have won a season-high four straight and 10 of their last 12, outscoring opponents 89-34 in that stretch. The Mariners lost for the 11th time in their past 13 games. Red Sox starter Rick Porcello (3-3) gave up four first-inning runs before settling down to go 6 2/3 innings. Mariners starter Felix Hernandez (1-4), meanwhile, couldn't hold the early lead-though he did become the 36th pitcher in major league history to reach 2,500 career strikeouts.

Williams shocks Hurd to win super welterweight titles

LOS ANGELES: Julian Williams shocked previously unbeaten Jarrett Hurd to seize the International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Association super welter-weight world titles by unanimous 12-round decision on Saturday.
Williams sent Hurd to the canvas for the first time in his career on the way to the victory in an action-packed bout in Fairfax, Virginia, not far from Hurd's home turf in Maryland.
"I'm just so blessed," said Williams, who couldn't hold back tears as he was interviewed in the ring after the fight, draped in his world title belts. One judge scored the bout 116-111 and two others saw it 115-112 for Williams, who improved to 27-1-1 with 17 knockouts.
Williams went toe-to-toe with the bigger, physically imposing Hurd and in the second round a combination of punches sent Hurd down against the ropes. Williams pummelled Hurd again in the third before the champion began to assert himself in the middle rounds.
Williams, however, wouldn't go away pushing the action with solid punches to

RAYS 7, YANKEES 2
Yandy Diaz homered twice and drove in a career-high four runs as Tampa Bay beat New York in St. Petersburg, Fla., just the seventh loss in 24 games for the Yankees. Diaz hit a solo homer in the third off CC Sabathia and then drove in Tampa Bay's final three runs with a drive off Nestor Cortes with two outs in the eighth. Jonathan Holder (2-1) took the loss, while Ryne Stanek pitched two scoreless innings as the opener for the Rays before giving way to Yonny Chirinos (5-1).

TIGERS 5, TWINS 3 (GAME 1)
John Hicks hit a tiebreaking solo home run in the ninth inning, and Detroit opened a doubleheader in Minneapolis with a two-run win. Ronny Rodriguez hit two home runs, and Brandon Dixon also homered for Detroit, which won for just the second time in its last 11 meetings with Minnesota. Joe Jimenez (2-1) got the win despite giving up a tying homer to C.J. Cron in the eighth. Shane Greene picked up his American League-leading 14th save by pitching a scoreless ninth.

TWINS 8, TIGERS 3 (GAME 2)
Cron had four hits, including a three-run homer, and Marwin Gonzalez also homered as Minnesota earned the split. Eddie Rosario finished with three hits, and Byron Buxton and Gonzalez each had two hits for Minnesota, which improved to 11-2 following a loss. Kohl Stewart (1-1), making his sixth career start and second of the season, picked up the win, allowing three runs on six hits and two walks over six innings. He struck out two. Left-hander Gregory Soto, called up from Double-A Erie, took the loss in his major league debut. The Tigers' 2017 Minor League Pitcher of the Year allowed seven runs on nine hits and two walks in four innings, striking out one.

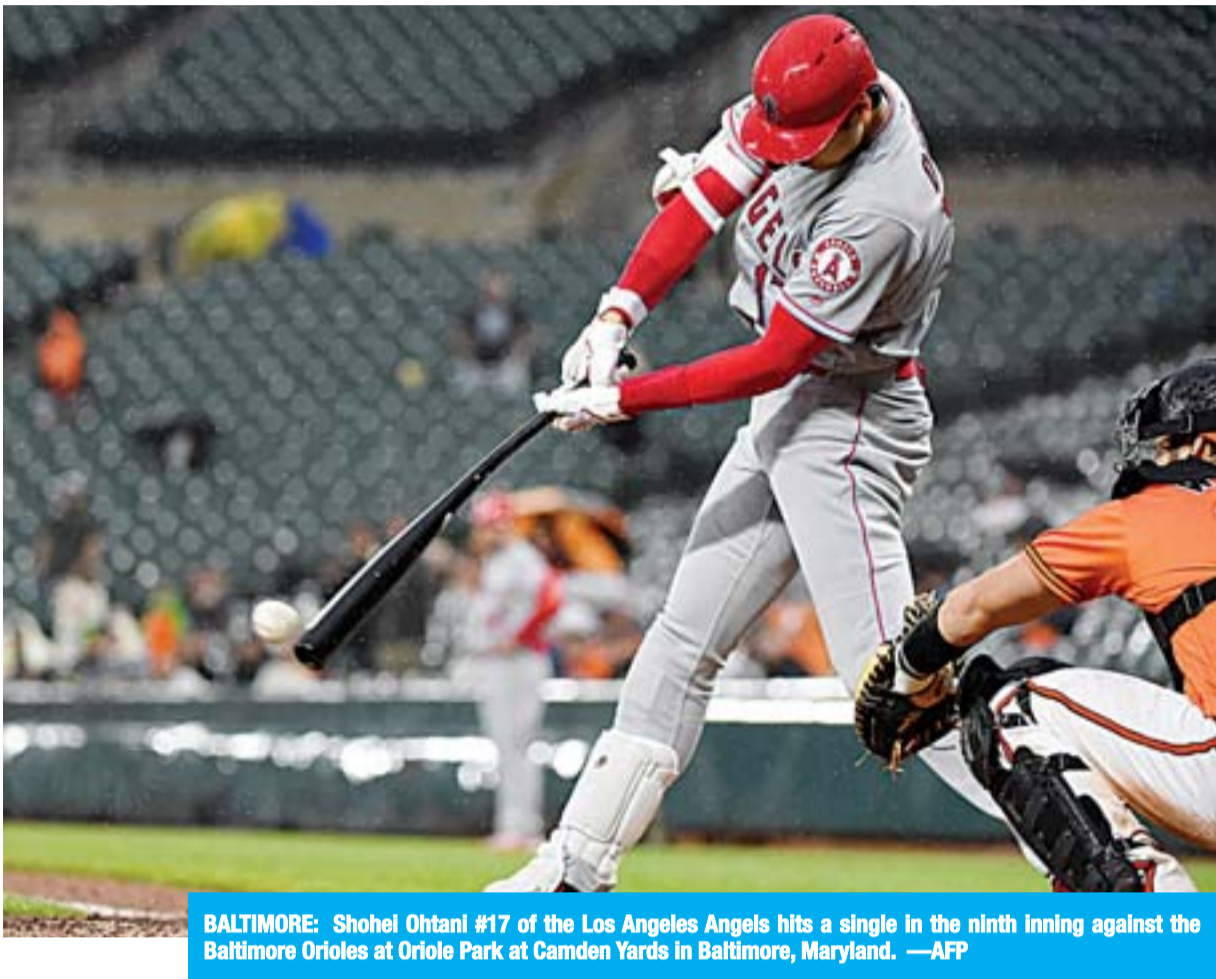
PIRATES 2, CARDINALS 1
Jordan Lyles allowed one run and one hit in six innings, and visiting Pittsburgh quieted St. Louis' bats for the second straight day. Lyles (3-1) struck out six and walked three while lowering his ERA to 2.09. Cardinals starter Miles Mikolas took the mound after a nearly three-hour rain delay in the third game of the four-game series. Mikolas (4-3) went seven innings, allowing two runs and three hits, striking out seven and walking one. Starling Marte led off the fourth with a single and then came home when Gregory Polanco hit a line drive that got through the right-center field gap and rolled to the wall for a triple. Josh Bell followed with a single to center, scoring Polanco for a 2-1 lead and extending his hitting streak to 11 games.

METS 4, MARLINS 1
Jacob deGrom pitched seven effective innings while rookie Pete Alonso and Michael Conforto hit back-to-back solo homers in the sixth inning as New York beat visiting Miami. The Mets won their second straight in a stretch of 16 straight games against sub-.500 opponents. The Mets also won consecutive games for the first time since April 22-23 and improved to 5-0 this season against Miami. DeGrom (3-4) held the Marlins to one run on five hits. He struck out eight, walked one and threw 78 of 106 pitches for strikes to win his first start since winning at Miami on April 3. He retired 11 of the final 13 hitters he faced.

WHITE SOX 7, BLUE JAYS 2
Yolmer Sanchez homered and had two RBIs, James McCann had four hits and an RBI and Ivan

Hurd's head and body. Hurd was cut around right eye in the eighth but came back hard in the ninth as both pressed the action to the end.
"J-Rock (Williams) was a better man tonight," Hurd said. "He put me down for the first time in my career and he came out with the victory." But, Hurd vowed, "I'll be back." Williams notched his fifth win since his lone defeat, a fifth-round knockout by Jermall Charlo in December of 2016.
He was emotional in recalling that many wrote him off in the wake of that setback. "I worked so hard," Williams said. "They told me I was done. They told me I had no chin. I just got basic. "The boxing world should stop condemning fighters after they take a loss. It's boxing, things happen. "Plenty of great fighters took losses." As to whether he next wants a rematch with Hurd or possibly a shot at Charlo—who takes on Brandon Adams on June 29 in a World Boxing Council title bout—Williams said he'd leave that to his camp. "That's not my business," he said.
Meanwhile, Mexico's Miguel Berchelt retained his World Boxing Council super featherweight world title on Saturday, overpowering Francisco Vargas with a sixth round stoppage, in a rematch of their 2017 fight.
Berchelt won by technical knockout when Vargas' corner waved the white towel as he sat on the stool after taking six rounds of brutal punishment at the Convention Center arena in Tucson, Arizona.
The one-sided bout was reminiscent of

their first fight two years ago when Berchelt easily dethroned 130-pound champ Vargas. Once again the 27-year-old Berchelt was too young, too powerful and too talented for the 34-year-old fellow Mexican.
The fight transpired the way many had predicted it would with Berchelt following the same strategy he used to punish Vargas in January 2017 when he knocked him out in the 11th round. It was pretty clear this one wouldn't go that far as Berchelt dominated all the rounds Saturday.
Vargas, who is prone to cuts and suffered several in the first fight, was also cut on the bridge of his nose in the third round on Saturday. After the fight Berchelt defended his decision to have a rematch against a fighter who many thought would deliver a predictable outcome.
"He gave me my first opportunity for a world title so it is only fair I give him a shot to win it back," said Berchelt, who improved to 36-1 with 32 KOs. "But his corner did the right thing." Berchelt has now won 14 of his last 15 fights by stoppage and has not lost a fight in five years.
Vargas wasn't arguing with the decision by trainer Joel Diaz to throw in the towel. "My trainer did what he is supposed to do. He is here to protect me," Vargas said. Berchelt said he wants to fight the winner of a 130-pound bout between Masayuki Ito and Jamel Herring. "I want to leave no doubt who the best junior lightweight in the world is," he said. —AFP



Nova pitched into the seventh inning as Chicago won at Toronto. Nova (2-3) allowed five hits and one run in six-plus innings to help the White Sox snap a three-game losing streak. Randal Grichuk homered and tripled for the Blue Jays while Toronto starter Marcus Stroman (1-6) allowed eight hits and four runs (three earned) in 6 1/3 innings-though he complained to manager Charlie Montoyo when he was removed from the game.

ATHLETICS 3, INDIANS 2
Ramon Laureano's bloop single to right field scored Matt Olson with one out in the ninth as host Oakland edged Cleveland. After retiring the side in the eighth inning, A.J. Cole (0-1) promptly issued a leadoff walk to Olson and a single to Kendrys Morales in the ninth. Stephen Piscotty's sacrifice bunt advanced the runners, and Laureano's bloop single off the end of the bat to shallow right field plated Olson for the Athletics' second straight walk-off win. Oakland closer Blake Treinen (2-2) entered Saturday's game in the ninth having recorded 32 consecutive scoreless innings at home, but that streak came to an end after Leonys Martin's single to left plated Jordan Luplow to forge a tie at 2. Cleveland had been 0-for-11 with runners in scoring position prior to Martin's single.

PHILLIES 7, ROYALS 0
Zach Eflin scattered four hits to record his second complete game in three outings and second career shutout as the Philadelphia rolled to an easy win in Kansas City. Rhys Hoskins and Andrew McCutchen each drove in a pair of runs, and Maikel Franco and Cesar Hernandez had RBI singles as the Phillies collected their ninth win in their last 13 games. Eflin (5-3), who struck out seven without walking a batter, benefited from 14 ground-ball outs to post his fourth career complete game. He also went the distance on April 28, allowing one run on seven hits in a 5-1 win over Miami.

Wrestler Silver King dies after collapsing in the ring

LONDON: Mexican wrestler Silver King, best known for playing the villain in the film "Nacho Libre", has died after collapsing during a show in London, the venue said yesterday.
The masked wrestler, 51, real name Cesar Gonzalez, was taking part in The Greatest Show of Lucha Libre event at the Roundhouse on Saturday.
He was reprising his role as the villain Ramses from "Nacho Libre", the 2006 sports comedy film starring Jack Black. Footage showed him being pinned down by opponent Juventud Guerrera, who then celebrated his victory before others came to Silver King's aid when he remained flat on his back on the canvas.
"Last night Silver King sadly lost his life during an event at the Roundhouse," the north London venue said. "At this stage the details are still being investigated so we don't have more information we can share.
"Our thoughts and condolences are with his family, friends and all of the Lucha Libre team." The London Ambulance Service said the first medics arrived five minutes after being called at 10:21pm (2121 GMT).



"Sadly a person died at the scene," a spokeswoman said. London's Metropolitan Police said they were treating his death as "non-suspicious". Lucha Libre wrestling sees competitors wear elaborate costumes and colourful masks.
Silver King was a former World Championship Wrestling luchador. Ex-WCW president Eric Bischoff said: "I am saddened to hear about the passing of Silver King. Like so many of the great Luchadores that helped Americans appreciate Lucha Libre and make Nitro the success it was, he will be missed. Thank you and RIP" —AFP

American big-shots bruised but victorious at World Relays

Brazil sweeps to a historic victory in the men’s 4x100m

YOKOHAMA: The United States’ track athletes were left with bloody noses at the World Relays yesterday but ultimately emerged victorious after a bruising two days of competition in Yokohama. American joy at finishing top of the medals table with five golds will be tempered by the disappointment of losing their proud unbeaten record in the 4x400 metres after electrifying performances from Poland and Trinidad and Tobago.

Team USA had dominated the event at the three previous editions of the World Relays but they were stunned by Poland’s women as Justyna Swiety-Ersetic anchored the European champions to an upset win in three minutes, 27.49 seconds.

The Americans came up just short, the hot favourites settling for silver in 3:27.65 with Italy taking bronze. “We can’t believe it,” said Patrycja Wyciszkiewicz. “It was such an amazing feeling to actually hit the line first.”

Lightning struck again in the men’s 4x400m final when Machel Cedenio produced an astonishing last 100 metres to give world champions Trinidad and Tobago gold in a photo finish with Paul Dedewo.

Cedenio ran a 44.41 split to give his team victory in a world-leading 3:00.81 seconds-three hundredths ahead of the Americans, who were later disqualified, bumping Jamaica up to the silver medal spot and Belgium to third.

The US hit back in the mixed 4x400m, Jasmine Blocker building a huge lead to give anchor Dontavious Wright the freedom of Yokohama and he brought it home for a runaway gold medal in 3:16.43, almost two seconds clear of Canada with Kenya taking bronze.

France then pulled off a shock victory in the women’s 4x200m after two fumbled handovers by a star-studded Jamaican team. Maroussia Pare anchored the French to gold from lane nine in 1:32.16 after butter-fingered exchanges from Olympic champions Elaine Thompson and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce.

FRENCH MAGIC

China grabbed silver in an Asian record of 1:32.76 with Jamaica salvaging bronze after their American rivals suffered another disqualification. “We were nervous about facing such big, big teams,” admitted Pare.

“But even though we were running against Elaine Thompson and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, the magic happened!” Jamaica failed to win a single event, their male sprinters coming up woefully short in the 4x100 and 4x200m as they continue to struggle without retired sprint king Usain Bolt.

The United States made no mistake in the men’s 4x200m as Remontay McClain romped home in 1:20.12 with clear daylight between him and South Africa’s Akani Simbine. Aleia Hobbs then hung on to give the Olympic champions a fifth gold medal in the women’s 4x100m ahead of fast-finishing Jamaica and Germany.

The Americans clocked 43.27 as Hobbs edged out Jonielle Smith by two hundredths with Rebekka Haase securing bronze for the 2017 winners. But the US were unable to close with a hat-trick of wins after Brazil swept to a historic victory in the men’s 4x100m, firing a further warning to Team USA before the world championships in Doha later this year.

Paulo Andre Camilo de Oliveira held off American Noah Lyles in the tightest of finishes to clock a world-leading 38.05 with world champs Britain taking bronze. A botched handover by American world champion Justin Gatlin left Isiah Young with too much work to do on the third leg.

After securing Brazil’s first-ever World Relays gold, de Oliveira was mobbed by his team-mates as they celebrated wildly in the stadium where their country’s footballers lifted the World Cup in 2002. —AFP



YOKOHAMA: Paul Dedewo of the US (C) falls into the finish line while Machel Cedenio of Trinidad and Tobago (L) crosses the line during the men’s 4x400 metres relay final at the IAAF World Relays athletics event at Nissan Stadium in Yokohama yesterday. —AFP

Women’s football tournament kicks off tonight

KUWAIT: Driven by our mission to provide female footballers with equal opportunities in professionally organized sports, “Eighty Percent” is proud to host the fourth consecutive Women’s Football Tournament at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. As always, we have aimed to make this year’s competition bigger and better than the last. In accordance with these efforts, it is our honor to announce a strategic collaboration with the Kuwait Football Association (KFA) and supported by LaLiga. Registration for WFT 4.0 is also open to any GCC or regional team, in order to increase the diversity and competitiveness of the tournament as well as creating a sense of cultural exchange! The women’s football tournament has created a ripple of positive change in the women’s football community in Kuwait. The tournament has revived a very imperative aspect to women in sports, as well as inspired real actions from both the private and public sectors who are actively contributing to the rise of women’s football, not only in Kuwait but the GCC. With unmatched efforts to build the right foundation for girls and women to play professional football in the country. The women’s football tournament is the brainchild of Eighty Percent sports company which is socially driven and aims to create unique sporting experiences that elevate the human condition and empower a new generation of athletes. By creating a professional brand under which the best female talents in football compete and shine, Eighty Percent and partners are directly empowering women in and outside of the football pitch.

About the Tournament:

The 2019 Women’s Football Tournament will be hosted at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium in Ardiya, from May 12th - May 23rd. Each team will consist of 12 players, 7 serving as starters and the remaining 5 as substitutes. Teams will participate in 40-minute matches every other day, each of which will be split by a 5-minute halftime break. Tournament Details:

Tournament Dates: Ramadan:

May 12th - May 23rd Duration: 10 Days
Timing: 9PM - 12AM

Location: Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.

Total number of Teams: 16+

Team Registration fee: 150 KD Individual Registration Fee: 15 KD WFT 4.0 updates for this year:

Strategic Partnership with KFA Football Festival Grassroots Festival for U15 / U17 [KFA]
Number of Teams (16) International Sponsors: LA LIGA Local Sponsors: Ooredoo, Wolf Nutrition, Bayan Dental, Mubkhar, Careem. Fitness and football side activations.

Tomorrow’s match:

9 PM Strikers v/s Sloths.

Nadal hoping for clay turnaround after Madrid Open semi exit

MADRID: Rafael Nadal heads into the final fortnight of the countdown to the French Open facing uncertainty after crashing out in his bid for a sixth title at the Madrid Open. Spain’s formerly invincible king of clay - who in most years would have at least one dirt title to hand upon arrival at Roland Garros - will have a last chance in Rome to pick up a trophy.

His mission at the Foro Italico from today will be to try and rescue his form prior to the start of the Grand

Slam where he dreams of collecting a record 12th title. Nadal went down in the Madrid semi-finals to young gun Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece 6-4, 2-6, 6-3, with the ninth-ranked “El Greco” exposing some of the emerging fault lines in the game of the 17-time Grand Slam champion.

“Not winning here means that I’m not going back to my hotel happy,” said Nadal, who also made semi-finals in Monte Carlo and Barcelona. “But I think I still have tennis ahead of me.” Nadal said his longer term focus was on Roland Garros, confident that an improvement would see him contesting titles later in the season.

“In Paris, I have 11 titles. Each week that I play in this tournament is a lot of memories, a lot of unforgettable memories,” he said. “What I have to do is to be fit and to play properly and have a high tennis level.

“If I manage to do that ... I think I will still have a very good opportunity to fight for titles for the rest of the year.” After starting slowly on clay last month after another knee injury pause, Nadal is hopeful of quick progress.

Resurgent Woods heads to PGA with Nicklaus record back in play

LOS ANGELES: Tiger Woods proved many doubters wrong with his triumph at last month’s Masters, where he not only completed a comeback story for the ages but also put Jack Nicklaus’s record of 18 major titles back into play.

Woods, who has not competed since collecting his 15th major at Augusta, will get his next chance to chip away at the landmark when he tees it up in Farmingdale, New York for the May 16-19 PGA Championship.

After Woods secured a one-shot victory to claim his fifth Green Jacket, the former world number one was naturally asked about his pursuit of the all-time major record. “I really haven’t thought about that yet,” Woods said at his post-Masters news conference. “I’m sure that I’ll probably think of it going down the road. Maybe, maybe not. But right now, it’s a little soon, and I’m just enjoying 15.”

Woods should feel good about the opportunity that lies ahead as he will undoubtedly bring a renewed sense of confidence into the year’s next two majors as well as the knowledge that he has won on both courses before.

The PGA Championship will be held at Bethpage Black, the scene of the 2002 US Open triumph by Woods, while the June 13-16 US Open will be held at Pebble Beach, where in 2000 he won that event by 15 strokes.

“Eighteen is, I think, a lot closer than people think,” said reigning PGA Championship and US Open winner Brooks Koepka. “I would say that’s probably what all fans, what we’re thinking. That he’s definitely back and 18’s not far.”

Pakistan the latest left wondering how to stop Buttler

SOUTHAMPTON: How do you stop Jos Buttler? It was a question that was being asked again after the talented batsman’s latest one-day international hundred saw England to a 12-run win over Pakistan in the second one-day international on Saturday.

With a home World Cup just weeks away, Buttler’s 110 not out, which saw him reach three figures off just 50 balls, was another reminder of his match-winning ability in white-ball cricket. This was Buttler’s eighth century in 129 matches at this level, with the England ODI wicket-keeper now having scored 3,497 runs at an average of 42.



Tiger Woods

When Woods held his nerve to close out his Masters win it ended a once-unthinkable major drought for the best golfer of his generation that stretched back to the 2008 US Open. During his barren run, Woods had to overcome a highly-public divorce following revelations of his marital infidelities, a DUI arrest he blamed on an “unexpected reaction” to prescription medicine and multiple career-threatening surgeries.

Through it all, Woods plummeted to 1,199th in the world rankings, given his long spells on the sidelines, while many onlookers never gave him a chance of winning another major.

But in his comeback campaign last year after spinal

But what makes Buttler a particularly devastating batsman in this format is a strike-rate of 119.88 — a figure bettered only by the West Indies’ Andre Russell (130.45) and Australia’s Glenn Maxwell (121.95). Russell, however, has only scored 998 runs in 52 ODIs, with Maxwell making 2,700 in 100 matches.

Alterations in field and bounce restrictions, a reduction in the number of overs in an ODI, generally shorter boundaries and the change to a ball from each end as opposed to just one for a full duration of an innings, make comparisons across the generations arguably even harder than they would be in Test cricket.

For many observers that means Vivian Richards remains the most destructive one-day batsmen they’ve seen. The West Indies great scored 6,721 runs in 187 ODIs including 11 hundreds at an average of 47, — a tally including a brilliant, match-winning 138 not out in the 1979 World Cup final against England at Lord’s with a strike-rate of 90.20.

But just as Richards revolutionised ODI batting with

“I’ve done a few steps forward, maybe not enough, but I have improved some things. We’ll see (for how long) I can (continue to) play at a high level - and I think I will be able to continue. “If I’m not able to do these things (play) properly, that is the end of the situation, period.

“This is a sport and in a sport it’s a matter of winning and sometimes losing and accepting both as naturally as possible.” As in Monte Carlo and Barcelona, Nadal will be defending a title in Rome after beating Alexander Zverev in the 2018 title showdown.

The second seed behind Novak Djokovic opens in the second round against one of two Frenchmen, Richard Gasquet or Jeremy Chardy. “I’ve played just three tournaments on clay this year,” Nadal said. “It’s not much.

“I play when I want to play and I play where I want to play. “I just play for my happiness and I play when I really want to play. That’s all.” —AFP



fusion surgery in 2017, Woods put himself in contention at both the British Open and PGA Championship before his triumph at the season-ending Tour Championship.

If there were any doubts left that Woods was back, he sent a resounding message to the golfing world with his win at Augusta National, a victory that left even Nicklaus, 79, wondering how much longer his record would stand.

“I felt for a long time he was going to win again,” Nicklaus told Golf Channel the night Woods won the Masters. “And, you know, the next two majors are at Bethpage, where he’s won, and at Pebble Beach, where he’s won. “He’s got me shaking in my boots.” —Reuters

extraordinary ‘inside out’ drives to the boundary off bowlers as fast as Australia’s Jeff Thomson, so are Buttler’s range of scoops and flicks helping expand the repertoire of present-day run-getters.

Buttler’s success is also a matter of attitude as well as talent-as evidence by the words “fuck it” he has written on the top of his bat handle to remind him of his best approach to batting.

‘NO ANSWER’

Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur admitted he was at a loss about the best way to stop Buttler following the 28-year-old’s batting fireworks in Southampton. “Oh, I don’t know, I’ve just asked the bowlers actually. They didn’t give me an answer either,” Arthur said after Pakistan fell 1-0 behind in this five-match series.

“We’ll sit down and analyse that and try to work out a plan. “I don’t think we’re going to stop him, we’ve got to find a way to get him out. The longer he bats he’s going to do some serious damage.” —AFP

Sports

Chelsea held to goalless draw at Leicester City

Tottenham draw 2-2 with Everton to finish fourth

LEICESTER: Gonzalo Higuain missed two first-half chances as Chelsea were held to a 0-0 draw by Leicester City at King Power Stadium yesterday, but the point was enough to secure third place in the Premier League for Maurizio Sarri's side.

Chelsea, who play Arsenal in the Europa League final later this month, finished the campaign with 72 points, one point clear of Tottenham Hotspur in fourth. Chelsea midfielder Eden Hazard, who has been the subject of much speculation that he could move away from Stamford Bridge, was dropped to the bench, while there was no place in the match-day squad for N'Golo Kante as he succumbed to a hamstring injury.

The two best chances of the opening half fell to Higuain, who put his first effort wide of the right post and then missed on the left when well-placed on both occasions. Hazard was introduced with 20 minutes remaining and had an appeal for a penalty after tumbling in the box, but referee Anthony Taylor waved play on as neither side were able to find a winner.

Meanwhile, Tottenham Hotspur toasted their extraordinary feat of reaching the Champions League final for the first time by booking their place in next season's competition, clinching fourth spot in the Premier

League with a 2-2 draw at home to Everton yesterday. Spurs were practically guaranteed a top-four spot as they led north London rivals Arsenal by three points and an eight-goal superior goal difference heading into the final game but the draw meant they missed out on finishing in the top-three, with Chelsea taking third place instead.

Eric Dier smashed home from close range in the third minute to put Spurs ahead in the third minute in a celebratory atmosphere following their against-the-odds win over Ajax Amsterdam, but former Arsenal forward Theo Walcott equalised in the 69th minute with a classy curling finish into the bottom corner.

Everton's traveling fans had been more preoccupied with events in the title race, hoping bitter rivals Liverpool would not win the league, and a cheer rang out from their end each time news filtered through of Manchester City goal against Brighton.

Everton went ahead three minutes later when Turkish forward Cenk Tosun bundled the ball over the line after a goalmouth scramble. Their lead did not last long, though, as Spurs' Danish midfielder Christian Eriksen netted with a curling free kick in the 75th, ensuring his side ended the campaign on 71 points. — Reuters



LEICESTER: Chelsea's Italian defender Davide Zappacosta (top) wins a header from Leicester City's English midfielder James Maddison during the English Premier League football match between Leicester City and Chelsea at King Power Stadium in Leicester, central England yesterday. — AFP

Woeful Man United end season with 2-0 defeat by Cardiff

MANCHESTER: Manchester United ended their Premier League campaign with a 2-0 home defeat by relegated Cardiff City after Nathaniel Mendez-Laing struck in each half to give the Bluebirds a fine farewell from the top flight yesterday.

With nothing but pride at stake on a sunny afternoon at Old Trafford, United produced another dreadful performance which stretched their poor run to just one win from their last seven Premier League games.

Mendez-Laing opened the scoring with a 23rd-minute penalty after he was fouled by Diogo Dalot, as United, fielding half a dozen academy graduates, missed a string of chances in an action-packed first half before Josh Murphy nearly grabbed a second for Cardiff.

Murphy set up the second in the 54th minute when he weaved his way into the penalty area and delivered an in-perfect cross to the unmarked Mendez-Laing, who tapped in from close range. Cardiff goalkeeper Neil Etheridge then pulled off a pair of superb saves to deny Marcus Rashford and Paul Pogba, either side of Bobby Reid's rasping volley which sailed inches wide at the other end.

The result, and United's bloodless display, left little doubt that their manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer faces a massive job to rebuild the squad during the summer, with several of the club's stalwarts set to leave Old Trafford.

Meanwhile, Crystal Palace ended their season in style yesterday with a thrilling 5-3 triumph over Bournemouth at Selhurst Park that ensured they completed their best campaign in the Premier League era.

Two goals midway through the first half from Michy Batshuayi set Palace on their way to a victory that saw them finish 12th on 49 points from their 38 games, equalling their best tally in a Premier League season, set in 1992-93 over a 42-game campaign.

The Belgian striker gave Palace a 24th-minute lead after



MANCHESTER: Cardiff City's English midfielder Josh Murphy (top) vies with Manchester United's English midfielder Scott McTominay during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Cardiff City at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. — AFP

Wilfried Zaha's deflected cross fell into his path and doubled the advantage eight minutes later with a first-time finish from Aaron Wan-Bissaka's low cross.

Woeful Bournemouth defending then saw Zaha's shot saved by teenage keeper Mark Travers only for the ball to rebound off the shin of Cherries' defender Jack Simpson and trickle apologetically into the net for an own goal.

A thunderous 30-metre strike from Jefferson Lerma just before the break and Jordan Ibe's deflected 56th-

minute effort gave Bournemouth hope before Patrick van Aanholt's neat finish to a fine team move saw Palace briefly repel the comeback.

Still, Bournemouth would not lie down as a Joshua King goal ensured a frenetic finish but Andros Townsend sealed the 100th victory of Palace manager Roy Hodgson's Premier League career in the 80th minute, consigning Bournemouth to a 14th-place finish on 45 points. — Reuters

Fulham end top flight campaign with 4-0 home loss to Newcastle

LONDON: Already-relegated Fulham's season in the Premier League came to an end with a whimper rather than a bang yesterday as they were hammered 4-0 at home by Newcastle United. Goals from Jonjo Shelvey, Ayoze Perez, Fabian Schar and Salomon Rondon meant Rafael Benitez's Newcastle ended the season in 13th place.

Scott Parker, now in charge at Fulham on a full-time basis, now faces the task of engineering his side's return from the second-tier Championship after ending the season in 19th place.

Shelvey smashed in his first goal of the season in the ninth minute, bringing down a high corner kick outside the area before unleashing a thunderbolt over the heads of the Fulham defenders and beyond the reach of keeper Sergio Rico.

Perez doubled the visitors' lead two minutes later when Rico parried a shot from Mohamed Diamé straight into the path of the Spaniard, who deftly flicked in his 12th goal of the campaign.

Newcastle's Schar headed in a Matt Ritchie corner in the 61st minute, and Rondon snuck in a fourth shortly before the final whistle, bursting into the area and firing straight into Rico's chest before directing the rebound into the far corner. — Reuters

West Ham beat Watford in their final league game of season

LONDON: West Ham captain Mark Noble netted a goal in each half as West Ham beat Watford 4-1 on the final day of the Premier League season, leap-frogging their opponents to claim 10th spot in the table with 52 points.

With next week's FA Cup Final against Manchester City still to come, Watford's defending was noticeably lacking in intensity and they ended the league season two points further back in 11th position.

Noble put the visitors ahead in the 15th minute and Manuel Lanzini made it two shortly before halftime, heading into an empty net with the defence caught flat-footed after Michael Antonio thumped a shot off the crossbar. The second half had barely gotten underway when Gerard Deulofeu pulled one back for the home side, snapping up an under-hit back pass by Pablo Zabaleta and poking the ball past the onrushing Lukasz Fabianski before firing it into the net.

Any hope of a Watford comeback was snuffed out when Greek full-back Jose Holebas was shown a straight red card for his last-ditch tackle on Antonio, which will see him suspended for the cup final next week. — Reuters



BURNLEY: Burnley's English striker Ashley Barnes (R) heads home their first goal during the English Premier League football match between Burnley and Arsenal at Turf Moor in Burnley, north west England yesterday. — AFP

Aubameyang fires Arsenal to battling win at Burnley

LONDON: Arsenal striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored a second-half brace to help the London club finish their Premier League campaign with a 3-1 victory at Burnley yesterday that left them fifth in the table.

Aubameyang opened the scoring against the run of play in the 52nd minute, latching on to a poor backpass from Burnley's Jack Cork and slotting the ball past goalkeeper Tom Heaton. The Gabon inter-

national, who hit the post and forced a sharp save in the early stages of the feisty clash, doubled his tally 11 minutes later by meeting Alex Iwobi's searching cross with a superb volley at the back post.

Burnley were not ready to give up without a fight, however, and pulled a goal back two minutes later when Ashley Barnes nodded in Johan Gudmundsson's cross from the left. They pushed for an equalising goal and went close through substitute Peter Crouch, but it was Arsenal who scored again through teenager Eddie Nketiah in added time to secure the win and finish the season with 70 points.

Aubameyang, who wasted another clear opportunity to add to his impressive league tally, finished with 22 goals alongside Liverpool forwards Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane at the top of the scoring charts. — Reuters

How the drama unfolded on EPL final day

LONDON: Manchester City became the first team to retain the Premier League title for 10 years yesterday, but only after the final round of matches. At one point, when City trailed Brighton and Liverpool led Wolves, Jurgen Klopp's Reds held a two-point lead at the top.

But quickfire goals from Sergio Aguero and Aymeric Laporte saw Pep Guardiola's men turn the game at the Amex Stadium and the title race around, before cruising to a 4-1 victory in the second half.

Here, AFP Sport looks at the key moments of the last day (all times local):

3:00pm: The games at the Amex Stadium and Anfield kick off.

3:09pm: Brighton go close to taking a shock lead as Alireza Jahanbakhsh fires narrowly wide from 20 yards.

3:17pm: The top of the Premier League table changes hands on the final day of the season for only the second time ever, as Sadio Mane slots Liverpool into a 17th-minute lead from Trent Alexander-Arnold's low cross.

3:26pm: Glenn Murray climbs highest at the front post to power home Pascal Gross' corner and put Brighton ahead.

3:28pm: Brighton and Liverpool's hopes take a massive dent within 83 seconds as Aguero drills a low shot into the net to equalise for Man City.

3:30pm: City almost flip the game totally on its head, but Brighton goalkeeper Mat Ryan keeps out Bernardo Silva's header.

3:37pm: Guardiola's side do retake the title-race advantage as Laporte is given the freedom of the Brighton box to nod past goalkeeper Ryan.

3:44pm: Wolves almost put another dagger into Liverpool, but Matt Doherty's rasping strike bounces off the top of the bar.

3:47pm: Lewis Dunk's free-kick with the final play of the first half at Brighton sees City goalkeeper Ederson have to scramble the ball over his crossbar.

● Half-time on Merseyside marks the break for both games, with City, as before kick-off, leading the table by one point.

4:17pm: After slow starts to the second halves in both matches, Raul Jimenez ends a period of Wolves pressure by firing over the crossbar, while Raheem Sterling mis-kicks a low shot on the south coast for City.

4:19pm: Divock Origi goes close to a second for Liverpool, but his shot is deflected wide.

4:20pm: Mahrez cuts inside and ends the marathon title chase once and for all with a powerful right-footed strike into the top corner.

4:26pm: Liverpool start struggling to hang on to their three points, with goalkeeper Alisson standing tall to deny Diogo Jota.

4:29pm: City continue to put sorry Brighton to the sword, with Ilkay Gundogan curling a fine free-kick into the net.

4:38pm: Liverpool right-back Alexander-Arnold swings over a cross for Mane to head in his second, despite being in an offside position. But the only real significance is to draw the Senegalese level with teammate Mohamed Salah and Arsenal's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang in the race for the Golden Boot.

4:49pm: Final whistle blows at the Amex Stadium and Manchester City clinch a second straight title after 14 consecutive victories.

● Liverpool left on 97 points after a 2-0 success over Wolves at Anfield, one shy of City despite winning nine games in a row. — AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

| | |
|--|-------|
| Bologna FC v Parma Calcio 1913 | 20:00 |
| beIN SPORTS | |
| Internazionale Milano v AC Chievo Verona | 22:00 |
| beIN SPORTS | |

25 Wrestler Silver King dies after collapsing in the ring



26 American big-shots bruised but victorious at World Relays



27 Woeful Man United end season with 2-0 defeat by Cardiff



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola (c) lifts the Premier League trophy with staff members after their 4-1 victory in the English Premier League football match between Brighton and Hove Albion and Manchester City at the American Express Community Stadium in Brighton, southern England yesterday. —AFP

Man City retain Premier League title

Pep Guardiola's men pipped Liverpool by a solitary point

BRIGHTON: Manchester City held off a titanic challenge from Liverpool to become the first side in a decade to retain the Premier League title by coming from behind to beat Brighton 4-1 yesterday.

A 14th straight league win ensured Pep Guardiola's men pipped Liverpool by a solitary point as the Reds' long wait to win the league continued despite a 2-0 victory over Wolves at Anfield that saw them post the third highest points tally in Premier League history.

City remain on course to complete the first ever domestic treble in English football in the FA Cup final next weekend as goals from Sergio Aguero, Aymeric Laporte, Riyad Mahrez and Ilkay Gundogan saw the visitors recover from Glenn Murray's shock opener.

For 83 seconds Liverpool fans were able to dream, but City showed why they are champions and have racked up a remarkable 98 points, just two shy of their record century of points last season.

Liverpool applied as much pressure as they could with their own nine-game winning run to end the season and went in front early against Wolves to raise the tension inside the Amex Stadium. City had not conceded in their previous four games, but Brighton were playing on their nerves as they sought revenge for defeat in their FA Cup semi-final last month.

Ali Jahanbakhsh flashed a shot just wide of Ederson's right-hand post before the moment that was celebrated as wildly 270 miles north at Anfield as it was on the south coast. Pascal Gross's dangerous in-swinging corner was powered home by veteran striker Murray at the near post on 27 minutes. This was the first time City had failed to score first in a league game since early December and the first time they had trailed at all in the 14-game winning run that has carried them to the title. However, Brighton's lead and Liverpool's hope lasted just over a minute.

AGUERO LEADS CITY RECOVERY

Aguero scored the sensational last-gasp goal that ended City's own 44-year wait for the title in 2011/12 and his goals have been a constant of their now four Premier League triumphs in eight seasons.

David Silva's wonderful flick freed the Argentine in behind the Brighton defence and Aguero made no mistake with a powerful low finish.

The brief shock of going behind sparked City into life as Mathew Ryan was then forced into saves at his near post from Bernardo Silva and Mahrez. However, Brighton were undone from a simple set-piece when Mahrez's corner found Laporte completely unmarked to head City in front seven minutes before half-time.

The champions still had nervy moments to see through as Ederson only just scrambled Lewis Dunk's dipping free-kick over the bar with the last action of the first half.

And the Brazilian goalkeeper was lucky not to concede a free-kick yards from the City goal line when he collected a back pass from Laporte. Yet, 27 minutes from time they had the breathing space they desired in a moment of magic and redemption for Mahrez.

The Algerian has failed to make a big impact in his first season since joining for a club record £60 million from Leicester. Until now his most noteworthy moment was a late missed penalty in a 0-0 draw at Anfield in October that could easily have cost City the title.

Instead, he scored the goal to ensure Liverpool were denied at the end of a remarkable title tussle by cutting inside Dunk before firing into the top corner on his weaker right foot.

Nine minutes later Gundogan added the icing on the champions' cake with a glorious free-kick from 25 yards. —AFP

Defiant Liverpool turn to Euro dreams as title bid ends in frustration

LIVERPOOL: As the clock ticked down on Liverpool's unsuccessful bid to win their first English title in 29 years, a defiant refrain echoed around Anfield as all four sides of the famous old stadium chanted "We shall not be moved, we're the team that's gonna win the European Cup".

Liverpool may have fallen just a point short in the title race after Manchester City retained the Premier League crown with their 4-1 victory at Brighton. But the Anfield faithful were determined to remind the world that Sunday's 2-0 win against Wolves in their last domestic game of the season wasn't the end of an incredible campaign for Liverpool.

Jurgen Klopp's side hope to turn the agony of their title near-miss into the ecstasy of a sixth European Cup when they face Tottenham in the Champions League final on June 1. Tuesday's incredible 4-0 win against Barcelona that erased

a 3-0 first leg deficit and sent Liverpool to their second successive Champions League final, ensuring their last shot at winning the title for this season didn't feel quite so painful.

City's incredible consistency meant Liverpool have to settle for second place—the fifth time they have been runners-up since they were last crowned kings of English football in 1990.

But Sadio Mane's double gave them 97 points—the third highest total in Premier League history behind only City's tallies this season and last. Liverpool, beaten only once all season in the league, also equalled the club's top-flight record of 30 wins, set over 42 matches in 1978-79, after recording a ninth consecutive league victory.

No wonder Liverpool were given a standing ovation when the final whistle sounded. Ninety minutes earlier, under picture-perfect blue skies, fans arrived at Anfield more in hope than expectation.

Many Liverpool supporters were decked in the hastily made replicas of the 'Never give up' t-shirt Mohamed Salah wore during the post-match celebrations against Barcelona on Tuesday, while the PA system blared out Journey's 'Don't stop believing' before kick-off.

But, with even the most diehard Kopite expecting City to win at Brighton, the mood around Anfield was one of pride in Liverpool's season rather than genuine belief the afternoon would end in a title party. —AFP



LIVERPOOL: Wolverhampton Wanderers' Portuguese midfielder Diogo Jota (2L) heads the ball but sees the effort saved during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Wolverhampton Wanderers at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. —AFP