

6 Iran tensions overshadow Arab emergency summits



20 In Syria's Maalula, fear for survival of Christ language



27 Dubai group agree terms for Newcastle takeover



Ramadan
KAREEM

IMSAK	03:07
Fajr	03:17
Dhur	11:45
Asr	15:20
Magrib	18:41
Isha	20:11

Kuwait communication agency announces completion of 5G

Al-Kharafi thanks PM, Al-Othaina • Fifth generation to be launched commercially by mid-June

Zain first operator to offer 5G technology in Kuwait and GCC

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced that its network is fully ready for the commercial launch of fifth generation wireless technology (5G) to be the first operator to offer 5G technology in the GCC region via the Kuwaiti market with nationwide coverage of all areas.

Zain unveiled that it succeeded in designing an integrated network for 5G services built on a world-class infrastructure, fully launching the company's potential within the digital community and further reinforcing its leadership in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

Zain has always been one of the first companies to offer the latest generations of telecommunications technologies. As the telecom sector is currently directing towards digital transformation with significant pace, it is evident that current mobile telecom networks will not be capable of satisfying the future needs of the sector with what is currently available. (See Page 3)



Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, as well as Chairman of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Salem Al-Othaina. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Chairman and CEO of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Salem Al-Othaina has announced the completion of the pilot operation of the fifth-generation networks of telecommunication companies, in coordination with the authority and the readiness of the launching of fifth generation commercially by mid-June.

"This service comes in line with the Authority's efforts to develop the telecommuni-

cations sector in Kuwait to keep abreast of the modern technological development of telecommunications," Othaina said in a press statement yesterday.

"It also comes in line with the recommendations of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and international organizations specialized in the development of technical standards and recommendations for this technology, which have been adopted for more than two years, as well as in coordination with

telecommunications companies operating the mobile telecommunication service in the country," he added.

Othaina confirmed that the initiation and activation of this service comes in line with his previous announcement regarding the organization of radio frequency bands for the service (3.5 GHz band) in Kuwait - allowing the telecommunication companies to perform experiments on

Continue on Page 24

FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT
THE FUTURE IS ZAIN

Zain is ready to launch 5G.
Register now and be the first to experience 5G in Kuwait.
kw.zain.com/5G

kw.zain.com/5GA Wonderful World

Local

Amir holds iftar banquet for Minister Saleh, KFSD officials

Amir condoles with Japanese prime minister, Zimbabwean president

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Dasman Palace on Monday Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Director, Lt Gen Khaled Rakan Al-Mekrad. His Highness the Amir held an iftar banquet in honor of the guests.

In other news, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince have separately received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. Furthermore, His Highness the Crown Prince also received President of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

In the meantime, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a condolence cable to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe over the victims of a bus station attack in Kawasaki city, which

killed a man and a girl and left others injured. In the cable, His Highness the Amir affirmed Kuwait's strong condemnation of such a criminal act that targeted innocent lives and goes against all human values, and prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow mercy upon the victims and speedy recovery to all the injured. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables to the Japanese president.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to the President of Zimbabwe Emmerson Mnangagwa, expressing sincere grief over the victims of a recent gold mine disaster in west of capital Harare. In the cable, His Highness the Amir wished mercy for the victims and a swift recovery of those injured. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables to Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) officials. — Amiri Diwan photo

Alghanim Industries supports annual Red Crescent campaign

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately owned companies in the region, is participating in a major annual donation drive in collaboration with its strategic partner, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS). Alghanim will contribute by donating hundreds of major home appliances and electronics to support families in need.

Helping families brave the hot summer temperatures, Alghanim Industries is donating air conditioner units and refrigerators, in addition to other major household appliances such as cookers and washing machines, to the 5,000 families currently registered to receive aid from the KRCS.

In a statement about the company's participation in this campaign, Executive Chairman of Alghanim Industries Kutayba Y Alghanim said: "Collaborating with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society on this campaign is a powerful example of what can be achieved when private sector organizations join forces with noble charitable entities. Giving back to the community is an inherent and essential value that is not only part of our culture as Kuwaitis, but also instilled within our heritage as a Kuwaiti company. We are happy to join forces, yet again, with the KRCS and to be part of a campaign that testifies to this Kuwaiti tradition of supporting members of our community." He noted that through its participation in this campaign, Alghanim Industries hopes to have a lasting impact on the lives of those in need, contributing to providing a better future for the upcoming generation.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Dr Hilal Al Sayer said: "We are pleased to be working with Alghanim Industries again as part of our long-standing, enduring relationship across many charity campaigns and over many years. This important campaign contributes to our ongoing work in improving the day-to-day life and future of families in need across Kuwait. I would like to thank Alghanim Industries and its Chairman, Kutayba Y Alghanim, for their generous donations and support in making this a successful campaign, just as they have done with many of our campaigns in the past,



Chairman of Alghanim Industries
Kutayba Y Alghanim



Chairman of KRCS Dr Hilal Al-Sayer



KUWAIT: KRCS and Alghanim Industries volunteers seen during the campaign.

setting up a great example for a proactive private sector entity." Throughout its operations around the world, Alghanim Industries is committed to its belief in giving back to the community, especially by empowering underprivileged people, supporting education and

encouraging entrepreneurship as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility program. Alghanim Industries works extensively throughout the year with several regional and local reputable entities, such as the UNCHR, AMIDEAST, and INJAZ-Kuwait.

Kuwaiti ambassador commemorates Memorial Day



WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah delivers a speech during an event commemorating Memorial Day in Washington, DC. — KUNA

WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah underlined keenness to participate in Memorial as a sign of gratitude for the US' support in the war to liberate the country in 1991. Sheikh Salem made the remarks late Monday during an annual show in Washington, DC to commemorate soldiers who took part in all wars fought by the US around the world. "We always make sure to partake in this occasion to convey a 'thank you' message to what you have done for us 28 years ago... Liberating us from the brutal Iraqi invasion," Sheikh Salem noted. "On behalf of Kuwaitis and the Kuwaiti government, we thank the United States and its armed forces for their courage to stand by just caus-

es. We specially thank you for your friendship."

Sheikh Salem said that this is an "important day on the American agenda," in reference to Memorial Day. Meanwhile, President of the American Veterans Center (AVC) James Roberts, said that he appreciates Kuwait's great support for this annual event over the last 13 years. "We fought side by side during the war to liberate Kuwait. We are happy today that 450 veterans who participated in the liberation war attended," he noted. Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the US for remembering and honoring the men and women who died while serving in the Armed Forces. The holiday is observed on the last Monday of May. —KUNA



KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman poses for group photos with participants in an open dialogue organized by the Kuwaiti Journalists Association (KJA). — KUNA

High praise for Amir's Ramadan speech

KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman acclaimed the contents of the speech of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of the last 10 days of Ramadan. This was brought up during an open dialogue organized by the Kuwaiti Journalists Association (KJA) Monday night in the presence of many writers and media figures. Ambassador Silverman appreciated His Highness the Amir's speech on the importance of fruitful and constructive cooperation between the legislative and the executive powers to strengthen the state of institutions, rule of law, continuing the desired course of development and reform, completing the consideration of the submitted draft laws, implement the economic programs aiming at the diversification of national sources of income, creating productive job opportunities for the young people to participate in push-

ing forward the wheel of development, and enhancing the non-oil revenues.

Guarantee against risks

His Highness the Amir also said that the Gulf region and preserving achievements within the framework of the GCC is a guarantee against risks and challenges. In his speech, His Highness the Amir confronts the bitter reality of the region, its dangerous dimensions and consequences, and the developments taking place in the region that calls upon its people to realize the current situations and circumstances, be cautious and ready to confront them in order to protect the safety and security of Kuwait. In this context, Ambassador Silverman stressed that the US supports the GCC's unity as one of the most crucial elements of security and stability in the region and internationally.

Silverman stressed Kuwait's role in addressing local and regional challenges, pointing to the strategic and historical relations between both sides in various fields. The US and Kuwait continue to enhance the investment and trade environment between them in a way that serves their interests and strengthens bilateral relations, Silverman pointed out. The US has a long-term view of the region and is keen on its security and stability, he said adding that it is also working to fulfill and preserve obligations. During the



open dialogue, the US ambassador addressed a number of issues in the region, including terrorism, the Iranian topic and Middle Eastern issues.

Clear-cut mechanisms

Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem had said that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah set clear-cut mechanisms and guidelines for addressing the local and regional challenges. "His Highness the Amir underscored the crucial importance of cementing the national unity as a means of protection against the escalating turmoil in the region," he pointed out. Ghanem was commenting on the speech delivered by His Highness the Amir on Monday night on the occasion of the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan. "His Highness the Amir also highlighted the need of cooperation between the legislative and executive authorities, and the important role of national mass media. He cautioned against misuse of social media that could have adverse impacts on the society," the parliament speaker said. His Highness the Amir urged empowering the youth to play a central role in development and addressing all urgent national issues. The speech of His Highness the Amir charted a roadmap for national action that could assert Kuwait's role on the regional and international arenas,

Ghanem added. He expressed the best wishes for all sons of Kuwait under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Crucial importance

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Essa Al-Kandari echoed Ghanem's remarks. "His Highness the Amir underscored the crucial importance of cementing national unity as a means of protection against the escalating turmoil in the region," he pointed out. "His Highness the Amir also highlighted the need for cooperation between the legislative and executive branches, and the important role of local media." He cautioned against the misuse of social media, which could have adverse impacts on the society," the deputy parliament speaker said.

His Highness the Amir urged empowering the youth, so they can play a central role in development and addressing urgent national issues. The speech of His Highness the Amir charted a roadmap for national action that could assert Kuwait's role on the regional and international arenas, he added. He expressed the best wishes to the people of Kuwait under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Local

Zain first operator to offer 5G technology in Kuwait and GCC

Al-Kharafi: Company succeeds in building integrated 5G network on world-class infrastructure

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, announced that its network is fully ready for the commercial launch of fifth generation wireless technology (5G) to be the first operator to offer 5G technology in the GCC region via the Kuwaiti market with nationwide coverage of all areas.

Zain unveiled that it succeeded in designing an integrated network for 5G services built on a world-class infrastructure, fully launching the company's potential within the digital community and further reinforcing its leadership in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

Zain has always been one of the first companies to offer the latest generations of telecommunications technologies. As the telecom sector is currently directing towards digital transformation with significant pace, it is evident that current mobile telecom networks will not be capable of satisfying the future needs of the sector with what is currently available. For that, Zain's impending commercial launch of 5G services comes to keep up with the fast-paced and ever-evolving lifestyle patterns of the community on all levels.

The company announced the readiness of its network for the commercial launch of 5G services after the official announcement made by Kuwait's Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) to grant Zain the needed licenses for telecom operators to launch 5G services in the Kuwaiti market. In previous statements, Chairman and CEO of CITRA Salem Al-Othaina stressed the importance of 5G technology, describing it as being vital in benefiting consumers and operators alike, as well as being crucial to the further development of the telecom sector in the country.

CITRA has specified the 3.5 GHz C-BAND bandwidth for the operation of 5G technology in Kuwait, a step that will allow a great leap for the advancing of the Kuwaiti telecom sector, especially that it coincides with the country's preparations for the "regional corridor" telecom project. The project, which aims at highlighting Kuwait's leading role in information and communication technology, works to make the country a centralized hub for data and digital content by linking international maritime cables between the East and West regions. The project will ultimately contribute to enriching the investment ecosystem for global corporations, as well as enhance business environments.

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi expressed his gratitude and utmost appreciation to HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh for the state's support represented by CITRA. Al-Kharafi also valued the support of CITRA Chairman and CEO Salem Al-Othaina, as well as his vision in market outlook and telecom sector leadership by offering



Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi

- Al-Kharafi expresses gratitude to HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak and Minister Anas Al-Saleh
- Al-Kharafi values support of CITRA Chairman and CEO Salem Al-Othaina in market outlook for telecom sector leadership
- Zain active partner of public sector in contributing to the achievement of "New Kuwait 2035" vision
- Company keen on fostering a high-quality environment for digital innovation

the latest and most advanced technologies. Al-Kharafi commended the decisions that contribute to the continuous development of the telecom sector.

Commercial launch

Commenting on CITRA's decision to grant 5G technology licenses, Al-Kharafi said: "Zain's network is ready for the commercial launch of fifth generation wireless technology (5G). We are proud to be the first operator to offer 5G services in the GCC region and Kuwait, a crucial step that will allow us to offer the most innovative products and services to our customers

in consumer, business, IoT, and smart cities sectors," said Al-Kharafi.

He further noted: "Being a company that continuously seeks to adopt flexible tech solutions, we will work on meeting the growing demand for data services by exploring the new business environments this advanced technology will offer. We believe offering innovative solutions for the business sector will be an essential part of the strategic direction of our operations".

Al-Kharafi added: "We heavily invested in developing our network to keep up with the latest advances of the ever-changing telecom technologies worldwide. It

is true that such investments came at a high cost, but Kuwaiti people and all those who reside in Kuwait deserve the best services and the most advanced technologies out there. We have been preparing for this step throughout the past two years by developing the infrastructure of our 5G network, as well as implementing many expansion projects for fiber optic networks".

Al-Kharafi pointed out that 5G technologies will allow Zain to launch its full potential in its digital transformation journey, where this new technology will lead the next wave of change. In this regard, the company considers itself an active partner of the public sector in contributing to the achievement of the Kuwait National Development Plan (New Kuwait) that stems from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's conceptualized vision of a new Kuwait by 2035.

Al-Kharafi also noted: "as part of these efforts, we have achieved advancements in our initiatives that focus on quality, efficiency, and digital innovation, such as elevating customer experience, enhancing smart capital expenditures, working on innovating new business environments for safe and smart city projects, and more. Such practices have empowered and positioned us as leaders in digital innovation".

Smart lifestyles

With the widespread use of smart devices, the increasingly fast-paced direction towards smart lifestyles, as well as the lucrative opportunities presented by digital services particularly in the profitable business sector, mobile operators are encouraged to reinforce their investments in the telecom sector.

Reports and forecasts refer to the huge potentials that will be offered by 5G technology, as well as the many opportunities it will offer for the various industries, such as e-commerce, retail, government transactions, energy, public and safety facilities, healthcare, public transportation, media, entertainment, and financial services. Furthermore, 5G services will enhance essential services, and will further push the telecom sector to a new phase of growth.

5G technologies will offer ultimate access, where people and smart devices within the community will communicate with each other in entirely new fashions. The flow of information will be smooth and continuous, while the highest degrees of coverage and unlimited speeds will be possible with this generation of networks.

The real value of digital information lies not just within the information itself, but rather in the new innovative services that can be obtained from them. The nourishment of digital economy will be possible, as well as achieving positive change in manufacturing methods, current lifestyles, and more. All this will ultimately enhance the lives of people for the better.

Lawmakers file to grill Finance Minister over alleged violations



KUWAIT: MPs Bader Al-Mulla and Riyadh Al-Adasani are pictured after they filed to grill Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf over alleged financial violations and wrong doings yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MPs Riyadh Al-Adasani and Bader Al-Mulla yesterday filed to grill Finance Minister Nayef Al-Hajraf over alleged administrative and financial violations and wrong doings that cost state finances billions of dollars. Acting Speaker Issa Al-Kundari said he has received a copy of the grilling and informed the government, adding that it will be listed on the agenda of June 11 session for a possible debate if the minister does not request a delay.

Hajraf said he was informed of the grilling by the deputy Speaker, adding that the grilling is an essential constitutional right for lawmakers and that he does not have anything to be afraid of. The minister said the grilling is an opportunity to explain to the Kuwaiti people the efforts he has undertaken, adding that he will fully cooperate with the National Assembly.

The grilling is based on some major issues: lack of control over state budget which prevented reforms, harming the rights of pensioners through the mismanagement of the funds of the social security authority and incurring heavy losses in the Kuwaiti investments overseas because of adopting unwise investment policies.

The grilling detailed cases in which either the Finance Ministry or the Kuwait Investment Authority, the country's sovereign wealth fund, and other institutions under the ministry have lost billions of dollars either in bad investment decisions or through mismanagement and wrongdoing. The grilling claims that KIA

invested some 600 million euros in French nuclear company Areva and after a few years, the investment was sold for just 83 million euros, incurring a loss of 517 million euros.

It also showed a long list of losses incurred by investment funds, mostly overseas, which cost KIA massive losses that topped at least one billion dollars. The grilling also claimed that one of the companies under the Finance Ministry, Touristic Enterprises Co, has lost around KD 290 million through mysterious decisions and actions that the ministry has failed to discover.

It said that the KIA incurred some \$468 million in losses from the bankruptcy of several companies in which it held various stakes. The KIA and other establishments lost compensation claims worth hundreds of millions of dollars in legal disputes with several countries. The grilling said that the social security agency lost some \$190 million from a \$200 million investment in Everest Capital Global Fund while KIA lost some \$300 million from bad investments in several international investment funds.

It said that the ministry resorted to borrowing from international and domestic markets to the tune of \$8 billion while at the same time, government deposits at the central bank exceeded KD 9 billion and profits held by some government establishments like KPC were more than KD 20 billion. These should have been transferred to state coffers. In addition, the government has failed to collect more than KD. 1.34 billion in uncollected revenue and charges on public services.

- Read Kuwait Times now on your phone for **FREE**
- Send Subscribe to **+965 944 88888**
- Enjoy the first daily paper in Kuwait on your phone

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

Local

Police reservation ordered in light of 'regional circumstances'

Shooting during police fight in Hawally



KUWAIT: Firefighters battle a fire in a large quantity of tires at Mina Abdullah scrap area.



A car is seen following an accident on Fahaheel Road.

By A Saleh and Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Ministry of Interior's Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham ordered reservation of the general security force for a month starting from June 1. "This is a precautionary measure because of the regional circumstances and the beginning of the Eid break," Nahham said.

Meanwhile, a policeman and a police captain fought shortly before imsak in Hawally, where the officer fired shots in the air to frighten his opponent. Security sources noted a full report about the incident will be filed with Lt Gen Nahham upon his request.

In other news, the relations and security information department at the interior ministry said Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah issued a decision to form an investigation committee to look into repeated departures of wanted individuals through border outlets, which started its work yesterday.

Smuggling foiled

Airport custom inspectors arrested an

Asian man arriving from his home country with 590 pieces of hashish hidden in his luggage. An Arab was also arrested on arrival with two pieces of hashish in his luggage. Two cases were filed.

KD 300,000

The Environment Public Authority's Public Relations and Media Manager Sheikh Al-Ibrahim said total environment-related citations made since the environment law was issued in 2014 is more than 6,500 and total fines collected is over KD 300,000.

Falling goods

The interior ministry's relations and security information department commented on a video clip circulating on social media and showing goods falling from a truck on Fifth Ring Road. It said traffic officers moved quickly and the debris was removed, adding that the driver was issued several citations including failure to load the goods in a proper manner, negligent driving and endangering others' lives. The driver was detained and the truck impounded.

Driver freed

Firemen freed a driver who was trapped in his car following an accident on Fahaheel Road near Mishref. The driver, who sustained various injuries, was taken by paramedics to hospital. Meanwhile, firemen from Mina Abdallah, Um Al-Haiman, Nuwaiseeb and backup fire stations battled a huge fire in a large quantity of tires at Mina Abdullah scrap area. It took firemen three hours to put the fire out. No injuries were reported.

Smoking in public

Police arrested a Kuwaiti in his 20s who was smoking in public during the daytime in Ramadan, Al-Rai reported yesterday. Patrol noticed smoke emanating from the car, so they pulled over and arrested him. Meanwhile, an Indian man was arrested while wandering intoxicated in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh during the day. The laborer is being deported for being drunk in public.

Neighbors' fight

Two Egyptian families fought over children playing in front of an apartment, reported Al-Rai. The fight started

between two men, then their wives joined in. Police arrived at the scene and broke up the fight. An Egyptian and his wife sustained head injuries. Investigations are ongoing.

Domestic abuse

A woman called police to seek help to free her after her husband locked her in the house. Police went to the house and got the woman out. She then went to the police station and lodged a complaint. The husband is being questioning over the incident.

Collecting donations

A woman was sent to concerned authorities for collecting donations in a mosque in Oyoun. Several women said while they were praying, they were surprised by the woman collecting donations inside the mosque, which is a violation of the law.

Under guard

A Kuwaiti woman was taken to Sabah Hospital under guard upon arrival from medical treatment aboard. She was found wanted on a financial case.

30% diabetics in Kuwait suffer urology infections

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Head of the Urology Department at Jaber Armed Forces Hospital Dr Mohammad Al-Ghanim said diabetes is among the top diseases that lead to erectile dysfunction in men due to its effect on nerves and micro blood vessels in the reproductive system, adding

30 percent of diabetics suffer from urology infections in Kuwait. Ghanim was speaking during a lecture at Kuwait Diabetes Society on complications of diabetes and its relation to ED and urinary tract disease.

"We begin with the patients by regulating blood sugar levels, maintaining physical fitness, stopping smoking, maintaining ideal weight, and keeping good levels of blood sugar and cholesterol," he said. He said the second step is to conduct blood tests and prescribe medications. If this does not help, localized treatment is done, finally followed by surgical intervention, adding every patient has a method through which they can benefit depending on the case. Ghanim said Kuwait is among the countries that have a high rate of diabetes, and it is a disease that affects various body organs.



KUWAIT: Dr Mohammad Al-Ghanim speaks during a lecture at Kuwait Diabetes Society.



Huawei Technologies-Kuwait holds ghabqa for local media partners

KUWAIT Honoring the joyous occasion of Ramadan, Huawei Technologies-Kuwait recently held its annual ghabqa for the local media representatives. Themed under a traditional setting, the gala event that took place at Symphony Style hotel, thanked its long-standing partners for their support throughout the year.

Welcoming its guests, Mohamad Diab, Vice President of Sales and Public Affairs - Huawei Technologies-Kuwait reiterated the importance of the role of media in both Kuwait and the brands journey to longevity and success. He said, "It has been a wondrous year of achievements for Huawei, demonstrating our pioneering and commitment to investing in new opportunities for growth, beginning with the large-scale deployment of 5G around the world in 2019. Despite challenging and volatile times, our financial performances have reflected a stable brand equity throughout 2018 and 2019. Maintaining peoples trust in Huawei's products and services, we continue to hold our fortress strong in more than 170 countries and regions worldwide." Additionally, in light of the recent US trade ban, Huawei Technologies-Kuwait reassured its attendants that Huawei have never violated laws and always respected the cyber security standards with open and transparent verifiable mechanisms in the countries of operation. It reaffirmed its position as a strong facilitator of connectivity technologies with no disruption in supply and key sup-

porter of revolutionizing the world with its 5G deployment.

The guests enjoyed a special dinner and oriental band that entertained each to the tunes of the festive season. Highlighting Kuwait's 2035 vision and the integration of the country's smart city strategy, Diab added that Huawei Technologies-Kuwait remains committed to skills building, strengthening the role of the ICT sector, and driving digitization forward for a fully connected country. Since 2015, Huawei's contribution to boosting Kuwait's ICT ecosystem has involved the opening of one innovation center, which provided training to over 2,000 individuals, and supported the visit of 60 students to China from Kuwait as part of its annual signature CSR program 'Seeds for the Future.'

Huawei wished everyone and their families a blessed Ramadan and ended the night with its promise to fuel growth and push the country's digital transformation through its national outreach programs with the government and relevant entities.



Burgan Bank deepens ties during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, a leading contributor to society, recently concluded its annual visit to celebrate girgian with the residents of the Care Center of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as part of its corporate social responsibility Ramadan program.

As part of Kuwait's annual customs and rich traditions, Burgan Bank's Public Relations representatives in coordination with the bank's volunteering team organized the visit and distributed girgian gifts to the children, elderly and people with disabilities with the aim of spreading joy and happiness and celebrating the giving spirit of Ramadan.

The annual visit is part of Burgan Bank's long-established Ramadan program, which falls under the umbrella of the Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy aimed at benefiting different segments of the community. Additionally, Burgan Bank is always keen on involving its dynamic staff in the many humanitarian initiatives, specifically during the holy month of Ramadan, as it promotes a sense of community responsibility and instills values such as compassion and kindness for all.

Burgan Bank's full-fledged community program entitled is titled '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, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.



Legalese

Filing a complaint at the manpower authority



By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Many working expats in Kuwait want to know what to do when they are dealing with work violations. Speaking to a lawyer although is an option, but sometimes it is either not necessary or too expensive. I strongly believe that every single employee should clearly know what their rights and obligations are and should know exactly what to do when such rights are violated.

My advice initially is always to try and negotiate things amicably. With that said, many employees make the mistake of not going to the shuoon because they are still negotiating. You can always go to shuoon and continue to negotiate - in fact, shuoon is a place for negotiations and that is the point of having employment tribunals.

Needing a lawyer

Question: I want to go to shuoon for an employment issue - do I really need a lawyer? Should I get a lawyer? And what should I keep in mind?

Fajer: Before I answer the questions, I want to explain what shuoon is. 'Shuoon' is the word for an authority under the ministry of social affairs and labor. It is the first stop for any legal issue concerning employment. For a case to go to court, a complaint needs to be filed at the shuoon first, where an investigator will try to mediate the situation and attempt to resolve the matter amicably for both the employee and the employer. If this does not work, an investigation takes place. Then the issue is transferred to court, and another lengthy process happens, where the issue is transferred from court to an expert and then back to court. Then there is a verdict (which can be appealed), and assuming the verdict is final, it needs to be executed. That is also a lengthy process. There is a shuoon in every governorate in Kuwait.

Do you need a lawyer for all of this? Although many people figure things out at shuoon without a lawyer, I suggest that if you can afford to get one, then do so. Employment cases are lengthy as explained above and therefore costly. How much do they cost? It really depends on what documents you have, what you are asking for and many other important factors. A lawyer who gives you a price without sitting with you to discuss the case would be lying to you. I have so many potential clients that call the firm asking "how much will it cost me?" I respond "I do not know - come in first for an initial consultation." This bothers them, but I would be dishonest if I gave them a price, because I might not need to go to court. I would not suggest something to my clients unless it was necessary and although many call saying they want to go to court, it just might not be the best process for them.

For questions or queries, please email us at info@tl-legal.com.

Local

Police reservation ordered in light of 'regional circumstances'

Shooting during police fight in Hawally



KUWAIT: Firefighters battle a fire in a large quantity of tires at Mina Abdullah scrap area.



A car is seen following an accident on Fahaheel Road.

By A Saleh and Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Ministry of Interior's Undersecretary Lt Gen Essam Al-Nahham ordered reservation of the general security force for a month starting from June 1. "This is a precautionary measure because of the regional circumstances and the beginning of the Eid break," Nahham said.

Meanwhile, a policeman and a police captain fought shortly before imsak in Hawally, where the officer fired shots in the air to frighten his opponent. Security sources noted a full report about the incident will be filed with Lt Gen Nahham upon his request.

In other news, the relations and security information department at the interior ministry said Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah issued a decision to form an investigation committee to look into repeated departures of wanted individuals through border outlets, which started its work yesterday.

Smuggling foiled

Airport custom inspectors arrested an

Asian man arriving from his home country with 590 pieces of hashish hidden in his luggage. An Arab was also arrested on arrival with two pieces of hashish in his luggage. Two cases were filed.

KD 300,000

The Environment Public Authority's Public Relations and Media Manager Sheikh Al-Ibrahim said total environment-related citations made since the environment law was issued in 2014 is more than 6,500 and total fines collected is over KD 300,000.

Falling goods

The interior ministry's relations and security information department commented on a video clip circulating on social media and showing goods falling from a truck on Fifth Ring Road. It said traffic officers moved quickly and the debris was removed, adding that the driver was issued several citations including failure to load the goods in a proper manner, negligent driving and endangering others' lives. The driver was detained and the truck impounded.

Driver freed

Firemen freed a driver who was trapped in his car following an accident on Fahaheel Road near Mishref. The driver, who sustained various injuries, was taken by paramedics to hospital. Meanwhile, firemen from Mina Abdallah, Um Al-Haiman, Nuwaiseeb and backup fire stations battled a huge fire in a large quantity of tires at Mina Abdullah scrap area. It took firemen three hours to put the fire out. No injuries were reported.

Smoking in public

Police arrested a Kuwaiti in his 20s who was smoking in public during the daytime in Ramadan. Al-Rai reported yesterday. Patrol noticed smoke emanating from the car, so they pulled over and arrested him. Meanwhile, an Indian man was arrested while wandering intoxicated in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh during the day. The laborer is being deported for being drunk in public.

Neighbors' fight

Two Egyptian families fought over children playing in front of an apartment, reported Al-Rai. The fight started

between two men, then their wives joined in. Police arrived at the scene and broke up the fight. An Egyptian and his wife sustained head injuries. Investigations are ongoing.

Domestic abuse

A woman called police to seek help to free her after her husband locked her in the house. Police went to the house and got the woman out. She then went to the police station and lodged a complaint. The husband is being questioning over the incident.

Collecting donations

A woman was sent to concerned authorities for collecting donations in a mosque in Oyoun. Several women said while they were praying, they were surprised by the woman collecting donations inside the mosque, which is a violation of the law.

Under guard

A Kuwaiti woman was taken to Sabah Hospital under guard upon arrival from medical treatment aboard. She was found wanted on a financial case.

30% diabetics in Kuwait suffer urology infections

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Head of the Urology Department at Jaber Armed Forces Hospital Dr Mohammad Al-Ghanim said diabetes is among the top diseases that lead to erectile dysfunction in men due to its effect on nerves and micro blood vessels in the reproductive system, adding

30 percent of diabetics suffer from urology infections in Kuwait. Ghanim was speaking during a lecture at Kuwait Diabetes Society on complications of diabetes and its relation to ED and urinary tract disease.

"We begin with the patients by regulating blood sugar levels, maintaining physical fitness, stopping smoking, maintaining ideal weight, and keeping good levels of blood sugar and cholesterol," he said. He said the second step is to conduct blood tests and prescribe medications. If this does not help, localized treatment is done, finally followed by surgical intervention, adding every patient has a method through which they can benefit depending on the case. Ghanim said Kuwait is among the countries that have a high rate of diabetes, and it is a disease that affects various body organs.



KUWAIT: Dr Mohammad Al-Ghanim speaks during a lecture at Kuwait Diabetes Society.



Huawei Technologies-Kuwait holds ghabqa for local media partners

KUWAIT Honoring the joyous occasion of Ramadan, Huawei Technologies-Kuwait recently held its annual ghabqa for the local media representatives. Themed under a traditional setting, the gala event that took place at Symphony Style hotel, thanked its long-standing partners for their support throughout the year.

Welcoming its guests, Mohamad Diab, Vice President of Sales and Public Affairs - Huawei Technologies-Kuwait reiterated the importance of the role of media in both Kuwait and the brands journey to longevity and success. He said, "It has been a wondrous year of achievements for Huawei, demonstrating our pioneering spirit and commitment to investing in new opportunities for growth, beginning with the large-scale deployment of 5G around the world in 2019. Despite challenging and volatile times, our financial performances have reflected a stable brand equity throughout 2018 and 2019. Maintaining peoples trust in Huawei's products and services, we continue to hold our fortress strong in more than 170 countries and regions worldwide." Additionally, in light of the recent US trade ban, Huawei Technologies-Kuwait reassured its attendants that Huawei have never violated laws and always respected the cyber security standards with open and transparent verifiable mechanisms in the countries of operation. It reaffirmed its position as a strong facilitator of connectivity technologies with no disruption in supply and key sup-

porter of revolutionizing the world with its 5G deployment.

The guests enjoyed a special dinner and oriental band that entertained each to the tunes of the festive season. Highlighting Kuwait's 2035 vision and the integration of the country's smart city strategy, Diab added that Huawei Technologies-Kuwait remains committed to skills building, strengthening the role of the ICT sector, and driving digitization forward for a fully connected country. Since 2015, Huawei's contribution to boosting Kuwait's ICT ecosystem has involved the opening of one innovation center, which provided training to over 2,000 individuals, and supported the visit of 60 students to China from Kuwait as part of its annual signature CSR program 'Seeds for the Future.'

Huawei wished everyone and their families a blessed Ramadan and ended the night with its promise to fuel growth and push the country's digital transformation through its national outreach programs with the government and relevant entities.



Burgan Bank deepens ties during Ramadan

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, a leading contributor to society, recently concluded its annual visit to celebrate girgian with the residents of the Care Center of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as part of its corporate social responsibility Ramadan program.

As part of Kuwait's annual customs and rich traditions, Burgan Bank's Public Relations representatives in coordination with the bank's volunteering team organized the visit and distributed girgian gifts to the children, elderly and people with disabilities with the aim of spreading joy and happiness and celebrating the giving spirit of Ramadan.

The annual visit is part of Burgan Bank's long-established Ramadan program, which falls under the umbrella of the Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy aimed at benefiting different segments of the community. Additionally, Burgan Bank is always keen on involving its dynamic staff in the many humanitarian initiatives, specifically during the holy month of Ramadan, as it promotes a sense of community responsibility and instills values such as compassion and kindness for all.

Burgan Bank's full-fledged community program entitled is titled '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, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.



Legalese

Filing a complaint at the manpower authority



By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Many working expats in Kuwait want to know what to do when they are dealing with work violations. Speaking to a lawyer although is an option, but sometimes it is either not necessary or too expensive. I strongly believe that every single employee should clearly know what their rights and obligations are and should know exactly what to do when such rights are violated.

My advice initially is always to try and negotiate things amicably. With that said, many employees make the mistake of not going to the shuoon because they are still negotiating. You can always go to shuoon and continue to negotiate - in fact, shuoon is a place for negotiations and that is the point of having employment tribunals.

Needing a lawyer

Question: I want to go to shuoon for an employment issue - do I really need a lawyer? Should I get a lawyer? And what should I keep in mind?

Fajer: Before I answer the questions, I want to explain what shuoon is. 'Shuoon' is the word for an authority under the ministry of social affairs and labor. It is the first stop for any legal issue concerning employment. For a case to go to court, a complaint needs to be filed at the shuoon first, where an investigator will try to mediate the situation and attempt to resolve the matter amicably for both the employee and the employer. If this does not work, an investigation takes place. Then the issue is transferred to court, and another lengthy process happens, where the issue is transferred from court to an expert and then back to court. Then there is a verdict (which can be appealed), and assuming the verdict is final, it needs to be executed. That is also a lengthy process. There is a shuoon in every governorate in Kuwait.

Do you need a lawyer for all of this? Although many people figure things out at shuoon without a lawyer, I suggest that if you can afford to get one, then do so. Employment cases are lengthy as explained above and therefore costly. How much do they cost? It really depends on what documents you have, what you are asking for and many other important factors. A lawyer who gives you a price without sitting with you to discuss the case would be lying to you. I have so many potential clients that call the firm asking "how much will it cost me?" I respond "I do not know - come in first for an initial consultation." This bothers them, but I would be dishonest if I gave them a price, because I might not need to go to court. I would not suggest something to my clients unless it was necessary and although many call saying they want to go to court, it just might not be the best process for them.

For questions or queries, please email us at info@tl-legal.com.

Local



Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa hosts VIP ghabqa



KUWAIT: Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa recently hosted its annual VIP ghabqa event at the exquisite Layali Al Messilah Tent. The VIP event saw the attendance of ambassadors, high-end dignitaries, businessmen as well as key clients and Kuwaitis from the local community. They enjoyed a captivating Ramadan evening filled with elegance and entertainment.

General Manager at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and

Spa, Savino Leone, extended his Ramadan wishes to the guests and welcomed them upon arrival. Leone expressed his sincere appreciation and personally thanked each guest for their continued support. He praised the long mutual relationship in contributing towards the success of the hotel and invited them to enjoy the distinctive true Ramadan hospitality of the special evening.

The evening was held in the family-friendly Layali Al

Messilah Ramadan Tent with its sophisticated and elegantly designed decor, offering a rich cultural and authentic experience along with a fantastic opportunity to engage and network in a unique surrounding. The evening was complemented by enlivening sounds of traditional live Arabic music and a sumptuous Ramadan buffet featuring a wide variety of Middle Eastern favorites as well as international delicacies.

The ghabqa lasted till after midnight and Jumeirah

Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa ensured that each guest had a truly memorable evening filled with warm hospitality and exceptional delights. The Layali Al Messilah Tent is designed in Arabian perfection and can accommodate private iftars and ghabqas for families and corporate bookings. Create unforgettable memories by celebrating traditional Ramadan festivities with loved ones at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa.



KIB honors winners of Ramadan Quran competition

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announces winners of the annual Ramadan Quran competition, which is organized during the holy month for children of the bank's customers, as well as employees and their children. Held at Al-Baraka Ballroom at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, this competition came as part of the bank's Ramadan program which comprises a diverse number of humanitarian and religious initiatives and activities. The competition winners were honored in the presence of the Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KIB, Raed Jawad Bukhamseen, as well as a number of other honorees and representatives from the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

Meanwhile, Senior Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia honored winners of the competition saying: "As our Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) once said, 'the best among you are those who learn the Quran and teach it.' And with that in mind, the Ramadan Quran Competition has become one of our most popular traditions at KIB

- and we make sure to uphold this tradition every year. We encourage learning and teaching others the Holy Quran, as well as encouraging proper traditions of Quran recitation and memorization amongst youth. By doing so, we aim at promoting Islamic values across various segments of the local community, particularly youth and children."

Najia lauded this year's impressive turnout with over 1,700 participants in the competition and a total 24 proctors who organized the competition in cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. This increase in the number of participants was a result of two important factors: first, the competition's success and its reputation amongst youth, and secondly, an increase in religious awareness amongst parents which enabled them to encourage their children to participate in the competition. At the end, Najia called for all participants to continue their religious education of the Holy Quran alongside their work, as knowledge drives success at work.



Jumeirah
MESSILAH BEACH
HOTEL & SPA
KUWAIT

Indulge in our various activities this holy month. From Iftar to Ghabqa, experience Layali Al Messilah and Badriah ballroom with live oriental music for entertainment. Designed in exquisite perfection for families, friends and corporate.

Cherish these illuminating moments with us.

DIAMOND SPONSOR

لينكون الغانم

MEDIA PARTNERS

الاراي

للقيس الشفاء

الجريدة

السياسة

Kuwait Times

+965 22269666 | jumeirah.com

@jumeirahmessilahbeach

/jumeirahMessilahBeach

@JumeirahMB

International

EU leaders launch hunt to fill Brussels’ top job

Procedure masks complex power struggles

BRUSSELS: European leaders descended on Brussels yesterday to begin the hunt for a new generation of top EU officials in the wake of elections that shook up traditional alliances. The key job to be filled is that of president of the European Commission, the union’s powerful chief executive, a five-year post currently held by Jean-Claude Juncker. Under EU treaty law, the European Council of 28 national leaders nominates a commission president, then the new 751-member parliament ratifies their choice. But the procedure, while seemingly straightforward, masks a complex power struggle between rival states and ideological blocs and between the leaders and parliament itself.

‘Game of Thrones’

Juncker’s deputy and the centre-left challenger for the top job, former Dutch minister Frans Timmermans, compares the ruthless intrigue to “Game of Thrones”. The tussle kicked off yesterday when European Council President Donald Tusk hosted the EU leaders for a summit dinner in Brussels to lay out the ground rules. Ahead of the summit, party and national leaders met in various smaller groups to scheme, and the heads of the main party blocs in the parliament held closed door talks. Many in Brussels argue that the European project is best served by a “political commission” headed by a president with a mandate from the parliament. But most national leaders think the union’s legitimacy derives from its member states and that the Council should be able to pick one of their own – someone with leadership experience.

‘Spitzenkandidat’

The results of the EU elections did not strengthen parliament’s hand – except perhaps for the boost of the larger than expected voter turnout. While a threatened surge of

euro-sceptic and far-right populist parties was largely contained, the pro-Europe centre was fragmented, with liberals and Greens gaining ground. In previous years, a coalition of the socialist S&D and the conservative EPP was able to wield a majority. Now they cannot govern without the liberal ALDE or the Greens. And this complicates their choice of a “spitzenkandidat” – or lead candidate – for the Commission. The EPP insists that as it is the biggest bloc, its candidate Manfred Weber must be Commission president, but it lost around 40 seats at the election, only narrowly remaining the largest group.

Anyone but Weber?

But Weber, who has spent the last 15 years in the European Parliament, is seen as short on charisma, has no executive experience – and is opposed by French President Emmanuel Macron. Eight of the 28 EU leaders hail from EPP parties, but Hungarian premier Viktor Orban’s Fidesz is suspended from the group and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz was ousted by parliament on Monday. Timmermans, a centre-left Dutchman with more executive experience, will have the S&D’s backing and ALDE, while dubious about the process, could back Margrethe Vestager.

The Danish competition commissioner might win Macron’s support while Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel backs Weber. Macron met Spain’s Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez for dinner on the eve of the summit. Afterwards, a Spanish government source said: “The new posts should reflect the new majority in parliament, which is not only the EPP, but includes social democrats and liberals.”

Udo Bullman, said there was “broad agreement” among the parties agreed to stand by the Spitzenkandidat process. But ALDE leader Guy Verhofstadt declared that the system

sits above Greece on the Adriatic. But a political crisis is not helping cast Albania as a stable neighbor or healthy addition to a bloc already reeling from populist movements and assorted turmoil.

In February, opposition politicians from the right to the centre-left walked out of parliament in a protest demanding the resignation of Socialist Prime Minister Edi Rama, who has led the country since 2013. They want a transitional government and early elections, and refuse to negotiate with Rama who they accuse of crime and corruption links. The fight has spilled onto the streets, with weekly protests shrouding Tirana in tear gas and smoke as protesters tussle with police and try to break into government buildings, lobbing bricks, firecrackers and petrol bombs.



MITROVICA, Kosovo: Members of Kosovo Police Special Unit secure the area near the village of Cabra near this town yesterday. — AFP

arrested but said they included ethnic Albanians, which comprise the majority of Kosovo’s population, as well as Serbs and Bosniaks.

Kosovo’s customs department said four of its officers were among those arrested. Since breaking away from Serbia in a 1998-99 war, Kosovo authorities have struggled to exercise clout in the northern ethnic Serb communities, who remain loyal to Belgrade.

The operation riles already rancorous relations between the former war foes. In Belgrade, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said he confirmed at least 23 Serbs and Bosniaks among those arrested. Vucic told parliament he “ordered all units of our army be put on alert”, a command the president routinely gives during bouts of tension with Kosovo. “I guarantee you if an escalation of the conflict occurs, if an attack against the Serbian people occurs, Serbia will win,” he added. —AFP



Frans Timmermans

Timmermans soon morphed into one of Juncker’s main enforcers, especially in the EU’s confrontation with Poland and Hungary over the rule of law. He visited Warsaw in a bid to talk around the right-wing government to stop its controversial reforms to the court system, which the EU said were undemocratic. When that failed, he was not afraid to push through the start of an EU disciplinary process against them. Timmermans notably grew a beard during this period.

“Next to Michel Barnier, the (Brexit) negotiator, we needed an attack dog in the EU to talk about the positives of the Union,” said political analyst Andre Krouwel. “That someone is Frans,” Krouwel told AFP. “I think he is a very skillful politician in every possible way. He’s got very good debating skills,” Amy Verdun, European politics professor at Leiden University told AFP.—AFP



BRUSSELS: Manfred Weber, top candidate of the European People’s Party (EPP), arrives to attend the EPP meeting yesterday. — AFP

died when the EPP refused to give it democratic legitimacy by backing the creation of transnational parties. “A Spitzenkandidat that you cannot vote for in the whole of Europe is simply not serious,” the former Belgian PM tweeted, confirming there was no joint parliamentary candidate. According to one senior European official, if the process comes down to a France-Germany clash, the leaders may choose to avoid a crisis and back a Timmermans or Vestager compromise. “I imagine that a certain number of leaders will try to torpedo a Spitzenkandidat, but not all the Spitzenkandidaten,” the official said on condition of anonymity. The big three groups are united in opposition to the far-right euro-sceptics, but there are signs the Greens, ALDE and the S&D might prefer a progressive candidate over the EPP.—AFP

The opposition, whose next protest is called for Sunday, has also vowed to boycott local elections at the end of June. During a recent rally, the leader of the main right-wing opposition party, Lulzim Basha, urged supporters “to join the insurrection to overthrow Rama”, chanting: “Freedom or death! Democracy or death! I call on you to resist.” The drama has alarmed Western diplomats, who have issued regular warnings to opposition leaders to curb the violence if they want to see progress with the EU.

“Violent demonstrations are damaging Albania’s democratic reform efforts and the country’s prospects for moving forward on the EU path,” the US embassy said in a statement. Paris also condemned “violence that undermines democratic reform efforts and Albania’s image”.—AFP

Merkel party’s battle escalates with YouTubers

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s favoured successor plunged into a new social media storm yesterday, with her apparent call for limits to free speech around elections stoking further anger rather than put down a raging youth-led YouTube revolt. The comment by Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer came after her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its centre-left coalition partner SPD suffered their worst scores in Sunday’s European election. The CDU, in particular, had been put on the back foot in the days leading up to the polls as 70 YouTube stars urged voters to punish the party for its failure to take adequate action to halt global warming.

Addressing the debacle on Monday night, Kramp-Karrenbauer called for checks on the online influencers, saying that if 70 newspaper editors had made a concerted call to boycott parties ahead of an election, that would be classed “clearly as propaganda”. “The question is... what are rules from the analogue realm and which rules should apply to the digital realm? I’ll tackle this discussion quite aggressively,” said Kramp-Karrenbauer, or AKK as she is dubbed in Germany.

Her comments immediately unleashed a storm on social media with #AKKRuecktritt (AKKresign), #annegate and #AKKgate making up the top three topics trending on Twitter in Germany. Kramp-Karrenbauer then took to Twitter to defend her comments, saying it was “ridiculous to insinuate that I want to regulate expressions of opinion”. “Freedom of opinion is a precious value in a democracy. What we have to talk about are rules that apply during elections,” she wrote on Twitter. But that only fanned the fires, with both leading media and political figures rounding in to remind her of article five in the German constitution guaranteeing freedom of opinion, speech and writing. “With her insulting musings on ‘propaganda’ and control of it, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer confirms the criticism of young YouTubers – and reveals her authoritarian thinking,” said Spiegel Online.—AFP

Kosovo police crackdown meets ‘armed resistance’

PRISTINA: Kosovo police forces met “armed resistance” in an early morning raid yesterday targeting fellow officers and others suspected of organized crime in the predominantly Serb north, authorities said, raising tensions with Belgrade. The operation took place in the region flanking the porous border with Serbia, a hotspot for smuggling goods. Kosovo special police said they detained “some police officers and some citizens” accused of participating in criminal gangs, smuggling goods, abusing official positions and bribes.

Health authorities told local media that four police officers had been treated for injuries so far, two of whom had been wounded by firearms. All four men are in stable conditions, the hospital said. In addition to “armed resistance in North Mitrovica”, the Serb-half of a northern city, police said they “also encountered blockades of some roads”. Officers “were forced to use the necessary means to open the roads in order to continue the police operation,” the police statement added.

There were also reports of a tense situation in the Serb town of Zubin Potok, where two citizens were slightly injured after police had to break through a barricade erected by locals. By mid-yesterday, the town appeared calm though there several shops had broken windows and scraps from the barricades, including burned tires, remained scattered on the ground, according to an AFP reporter. Police did not specify the number of suspects

Timmermans: Polyglot Dutchman aiming to be ‘face of Europe’

THE HAGUE: Frans Timmermans, a contender for Europe’s top job, is a polyglot former diplomat with a driving ambition to reach the top in Brussels in order to promote the continent on the world stage. Grandson to a Catholic family of southern Dutch miners and son to a minor diplomat, the 58-year-old Labour politician spent most of his life outside the Netherlands before becoming its foreign minister and then leaving for the EU in 2014.

Born in Maastricht, the southern city that in 1992 gave its name to the treaty creating the European Union, he went to an English school in Rome and later studied French literature and European law as a post-graduate at France’s Nancy University. He speaks at least six languages including English, French, German and Italian and reportedly Russian. European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker appointed the articulate Timmermans as his first-vice-president four years ago, saying: “I am the president, but I have delegated a large part of my prerogatives to the vice, Frans Timmermans.”

Initially described as being the one who would take on much of the day-to-day management of the Commission, Juncker’s tightly organized operation under powerful secretary-general Martin Selmayr kept Timmermans’ hands off the levers of power.

ON TIME
MAY 90%
FLIGHTS

الجزيرة
Jazeera.

Have you booked your summer flight?

See our low fares!

	Economy Return from	Business* Return from
Amman	KD 90	KD 215
Baku	KD 115	KD 204
Beirut	KD 120	KD 165
Bodrum	KD 120	KD 258
Istanbul	KD 120	KD 178
Tbilisi	KD 115	KD 217
Sharm	KD 130	KD 225

Book Now

jazeeraairways.com, via the Jazeera App or call 177

*New Business Class Lounge at T5

International

Malaysia to ship back plastic waste to countries of origin

Minister vows crackdown on illegal imports and recycling facilities

PORT KLANG, Malaysia: Thousands of tons of imported plastic waste will be shipped back to where it came from, Malaysia said yesterday, insisting the country did not want to be a global dumping ground. Around 300 million tons of plastic are produced every year, according to the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), with much of it ending up in landfill or polluting the seas, in what is becoming a growing international crisis. China had previously taken a large amount of waste for recycling, but abruptly stopped last year, saying it wanted to improve its own environment.

Now Southeast Asian countries that stepped in to plug this gap say they have had enough. “We urge developed countries to stop shipping garbage to our country,” said Yeo Bee Yin, Malaysia’s minister of energy, technology, science, environment and climate change, adding it was “unfair and uncivilized”. “We will return it back to the country of origin without any mercy,” she said, after an inspection of several waste-filled containers at Port Klang, the country’s busiest port.

Plastic imports to Malaysia have tripled since 2016, to 870,000 tons last year, official data showed. The influx has sparked a rapid increase in the number of recycling plants,

many of them operating without a license and with little regard for environmental standards. A recycling company based in Britain had exported as much as 50,000 tons of plastic waste to Malaysia in the past two years, Yeo said, without identifying the firm. Lee Chee Kwang, an activist with Environment Protection Agency Kuala Langat, said Malaysia has “failed miserably” to manage the rubbish coming into the country. “The government must ban entry of plastic waste and declare it as public enemy number one,” he said.

While Malaysia allows the import of homogenous and clean waste plastics for the recycling industry, there are growing public calls for the government to ban the import of used plastics altogether. The country’s move to ship the refuse back was “only a symbolic public stunt which does not solve the problem,” Lee said. “The solution is a total ban of imports of all kinds of plastic.” Minister Yeo vowed a crackdown on illegal imports and recycling facilities. The Malaysians involved in importing the waste are “traitors”, she said. “Malaysia will not be a dumping ground to the

world,” Yeo added. “We cannot be bullied by the developed countries.”

The ministry said 450 tonnes of contaminated plastic waste in 10 containers - from Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and the United States - will be shipped back. Port officials said their contents were misdeclared, but did not give a date for the shipment. “These containers are filled with contaminated, non-homogenous, low-quality, non-recyclable plastic waste, and are routed to processing facilities which do not have the technology to recycle in an environmentally sound manner,” the ministry said.

Malaysia last month sent back five containers filled with plastic waste to Spain. Inspections are being carried out on more than 50 other containers brought in illegally. Yeo said it will take until the end of the year to fully deal with the problem. She said 150 illegal waste recycling plants had been shut down. But the problem is widespread and citizens are taking action over the plastic influx.

Some 12,000 people in central Selangor state are protesting a recycling factory allowed to operate near their homes, community leader Joshua Tee told AFP. “Processing such materials produces toxic fumes. Villagers



PORT KLANG, Malaysia: Minister of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change (MESTEC) Yeo Bee Yin (center) shows samples of a plastics waste shipment from Australia yesterday. — AFP

say they are suffering from asthma and itchin-ness,” he said. As little as nine percent of plastic produced between 1950 and 2015 has been recycled. Pictures of coral reefs smoth-

ered in plastic bags and river systems choked with PET bottles have sparked a growing worldwide awareness of the need to deal with the problem. — AFP

News in brief

Barzani elected Kurdistan president

ARBIL, Iraq: The Iraqi Kurdish parliament yesterday elected Nechirvan Barzani, the nephew and son-in-law of veteran leader Massud Barzani, as president of the autonomous region. The deputy leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party won 68 votes from the 81 members present in the 111-seat chamber, an AFP correspondent reported. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan of late Iraqi president Jalal Talabani, bitter rival of the powerful Barzani clan, had called for a boycott of the vote. Nechirvan Barzani is the second person to hold the office of president, occupied by his uncle from its creation in 2005 until late 2017, when he quit following an independence referendum hotly opposed by Baghdad. The younger Barzani, who was born in northern Iraq in 1966 but spent part of his life in Iran, speaks fluent Kurdish, Farsi and English. — AFP

US climber 11th Everest fatality

NEW DELHI: A US climber has died after descending from Everest, officials said yester, taking this season’s toll to 11 including several deaths blamed on overcrowding on the world’s highest mountain. American Christopher John Kulish, 61, had already climbed the 8,848-m peak, and was safely back at a camp below the summit on Monday evening. “All of a sudden he had a heart problem and passed away at South Col, according to his expedition organizers,” said Mira Acharya from Nepal’s tourism department. An Australian climber meanwhile was recovering in hospital in Kathmandu, officials said, after reportedly being found lying unconscious above 7,000 m. The reports said that Gilian Lee from Canberra was attempting to climb the northern flank of Everest from Tibet without supplementary oxygen. — AFP

9 miners die in Zimbabwe blasts

HARARE: At least nine miners died in Zimbabwe following blasts in a shaft north of the capital Harare where they were illegally digging for gold, police said yesterday. “We confirm eight people died on Sunday night at Jumbo Mine in Mazowe while another person died later after another explosive went off while they were underground,” police spokesman Paul Nyathi told AFP. “Their bodies were retrieved and investigations are being undertaken to establish how they got into the mine which was guarded at the entrance.” The owners of the mine, Metallon Corporation, confirmed the incident and said none of the victims were company employees. “Illegal panners invaded the mine and took part in illegal explosive blasting,” the company said in a statement. “Tragically, nine panners lost their lives.” — AFP

Iraq condemns Frenchmen to death

BAGHDAD: A Baghdad court sentenced two more Frenchmen to death yesterday for joining the Islamic State jihadist group, raising the number of French IS members on death row in Iraq to six. Brahim Nejara and Karam El Harchaoui, both in their 30s, were among 12 French citizens transferred to Iraqi authorities in January by a US-backed force fighting the group in Syria. Nejara, 33, was involved in IS’ foreign fighter operations, according to the French Terrorism Analysis Center. He allegedly helped foreign fighters join IS in Syria, persuaded one of his brothers to commit an attack in France, and was associated with Foued Mohamed-Aggad, one of the suicide bombers at the Bataclan theatre during the 2015 Paris attacks. Harchaoui, 32, left for Syria in 2014 from Belgium. According to Belgian daily HLN, his younger brother and their Belgian wives were also IS members. — AFP

Magnate announces presidential bid

TUNIS: The controversial founder of a major private television channel in Tunisia has said he will run for presidency of the North African nation in November polls. Nabil Karoui, 50, announced his decision late Monday in a live interview with his broadcaster Nessma TV, playing up his highly-publicized charity work. Karoui is looking to take over from outgoing President Beji Caid Essesbi, 92, whom he backed during the last election in 2014. The media boss has been accused by regulators and some politicians of using Nessma to bolster his ambitions. Karoui has launched high-profile charity campaigns in recent years, handing out food and clothing in front of cameras from Nessma, which he launched in 2007. — AFP

Sudan protesters strike as deadlock with military persists

KHARTOUM: Thousands of Sudanese workers began a national strike yesterday, leaving air and bus passengers stranded as protesters piled pressure on the military to hand power to a civilian administration. The leaders of an umbrella protest movement remain at loggerheads with army generals who ousted president Omar Al-Bashir last month over whether a civilian or a soldier should head a new governing body.

The body is expected to install a transitional civilian government, which in turn would prepare for the first post-Bashir elections after a three-year interim period. In a bid to step up pressure on the ruling military council, the Alliance for Freedom and Change protest movement called for a two-day general strike starting yesterday. Thousands of employees of government offices, banks, private sector firms and at the Red Sea hub of Port Sudan joined the strike, insisting that only civilian rule can lift Sudan out of its political crisis.

“This strike is the first step. If our demands are not heard we will go for comprehensive civil disobedience,” warned banker Youssef Mohamed, as he chanted slogans along with his colleagues outside his bank in Khartoum. “We tried a military government but it didn’t work for us in Sudan.” AFP correspondents who toured parts of the capital saw groups of employees participating in the strike and protesting at several squares.

Traffic in Khartoum was normal but travellers in private vehicles whistled and clapped to express their solidarity

Clashes in four Brazil prisons leave 40 dead

RIO DE JANEIRO: At least 40 inmates were killed in four jails in northern Brazil on Monday over an apparent gang dispute, authorities said, in the latest wave of violence to rock the country’s severely overpopulated and deadly prison system. The victims appeared to have been killed by “asphyxiation,” the Amazonas state government said in a statement, a day after 15 people were killed in one of the prisons. Officials had initially put the number of dead at 42, but later revised the number to 40.

At least 25 of the victims were found in the Antonio Trindade Penal Institute near Manaus, the capital of Amazonas, where all four prisons are located. No guns or knives were used in the killings, which prison officials said appeared to have been sparked by a “rift between prisoners who belonged to the same criminal group and were involved in drug trafficking in the state”.

The federal government has dispatched reinforcements to boost security in the jails. “I just spoke with (Justice) Minister Sergio Moro, who is sending a prison intervention team to Amazonas so that he can help us in this moment of crisis,” state Governor Wilson Lima said. An investigation launched into Sunday’s mass killing at the Anisio Jobim Penal Complex, in which some of the prisoners were stabbed with sharpened toothbrushes during visiting hours, has been widened to include Monday’s deaths.

Four of those killed in the latest violence were found at the Anisio Jobim jail, which was also the scene of a prison rebellion that lasted almost 20 hours and left 56 people dead in Jan 2017. Another five were killed at the

BJP consolidates big vote win with opposition defections

NEW DELHI: Three Indian opposition state assembly members and more than 50 municipal leaders from West Bengal joined Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s party yesterday, days after he was re-elected with big gains in places like the populous eastern state. The defections came as opposition parties in states such as Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan scrambled to stop their regional legislators from switching to Modi’s powerful Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

With a near two-thirds majority secured in the 545-

with those participating in the strike. Hundreds of workers in Port Sudan - a vital economic hub - also joined the strike. “We want civilian rule to get rid of the corruption in Port Sudan,” said Osman Tahir, a worker at the dock. Hundreds of passengers were stranded at Khartoum airport as scores of employees at the facility went on strike, chanting “civilian rule, civilian rule,” an AFP correspondent there said.

Passengers stranded

Many employees carried banners or wore badges that read “We are on strike”. Sudanese airlines Badr, Tarco and Nova suspended flights on Tuesday. EgyptAir also cancelled its flights to Khartoum for the day, while flydubai said it was “monitoring” the situation in Sudan. Passengers were also stranded at Khartoum’s main bus terminal as hundreds of employees observed the strike. Many carried banners reading: “Today, tomorrow no buses as we are on strike”. “I have to travel to Gadaref to be with my family for Eid, but I’m not angry as I understand the reason for the strike,” traveller Fatima Omar said as she waited with her children at the bus terminal.

Protest leader Siddiq Farukh told AFP that the strike was a message to the world that Sudanese people “don’t want the power to be with the military”. Another prominent protester, Wajdi Saleh, told reporters late Monday that there was “still no breakthrough” in negotiations. “We hope that we reach an agreement with the military council and won’t have to go on an indefinite strike,” he said.

Protest leaders had said medics, lawyers, prosecutors, employees in the electricity and water sectors, public transport, railways, telecommunication and civil aviation were set to take part in the strike. Ahead of the walkout a key member of the protest movement, the National Umma Party, said it opposed the plan as there had been no unanimous decision for a strike.

Umma and its chief Sadiq Al-Mahdi have for



MANAUS, Brazil: Brazilian riot police prepare to invade the Puraquequara Prison facility at the Bela Vista community in the Puraquequara neighborhood on Monday. — AFP

Provisional Detention Center for Men and six died at the Puraquequara Prison Unit. “The fact that the killings were coordinated across four separate prisons... suggests that this was a settling of scores,” Robert Muggah, research director at the Igarape Institute think tank in Rio de Janeiro, told AFP. The latest violence in Amazonas, one of Brazil’s most violent states, was “almost guaranteed to inspire retribution inside and outside the prison walls.”

‘Appalling’ conditions

Outbreaks of deadly violence are a recurring problem in Brazil’s jails due to the lack of structural changes, experts said. “Prisons continue to be places of serious violations of human rights,” said Juliana Melo, a professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. “The conditions are appalling, with a majority of prisoners poor, black, badly schooled and marginalized.” Brazil has the world’s third largest prison population after the United States and China, with 726,712 inmates as of June 2016, according to official statistics. — AFP

member lower house of parliament, the BJP is now targeting state assemblies to consolidate its power. It is the state assemblies that elect members of the upper house of parliament, where Modi’s ruling coalition does not have the majority necessary to pass contentious legislation. “We don’t want to topple the state government, but their own people want come to us,” Kailash Vijayvargiya, a BJP national general secretary, said after the new members of the party were introduced to the media in New Delhi. “They don’t want to stay with their party. We won’t stop them.”

West Bengal sends the third-largest number of members to the lower house of parliament and was a battleground state in the recently concluded general election. The BJP won 18 of 42 seats there, compared with just two five years ago. Almost all the people joining the BJP yesterday were from the Trinamool Congress, led by the state’s chief minister, Mamata Banerjee, who is one of Modi’s biggest critics. — Reuters



KHARTOUM: Employees demonstrate outside Bank of Khartoum yesterday as they participate in a two-day national strike to step up pressure on the ruling military council yesterday. — AFP

decades been the main opponents of Bashir’s iron-fisted rule, and threw their weight behind the protest movement after nationwide demonstrations erupted in December.

Protester Hazar Mustafa said the generals could not be trusted. “We see the military council as part of the former regime. We don’t see it upholding any rights and building a just state,” she said. The army ousted Bashir in April after months of protests against his autocratic rule, including a sit-in by tens of thousands of protesters outside Khartoum’s military headquarters. But the generals, backed by key regional powers, have resisted calls from protesters and Western governments to hand over power to civilians. — AFP

Pak not invited to Modi swearing-in

NEW DELHI: India will not invite Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan to the swearing-in of his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, two Indian government sources said, suggesting any early warming in ties between the nuclear-armed neighbors is unlikely. Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan have fought three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947, and came close to a fourth in February after a suicide bomb attack by a Pakistan-based militant group killed at least 40 Indian police in the contested Kashmir region.

Modi begins his second term as prime minister tomorrow after a convincing election victory which political analysts say was helped by his handling of that tension with Pakistan. The Indian government said in a statement on Monday the leaders of Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, and Bhutan - all members, with India, of the little-known Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) - had been invited to the swearing-in.

“This is in line with government’s focus on its ‘Neighborhood First’ policy,” a government spokesman said. The leaders of Kyrgyzstan and Mauritius have also been invited. But two sources in India’s foreign ministry said Pakistan will not be on the list, without providing further information. Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi suggested the reason was India’s internal politics, after Modi had made “Pakistan bashing” the central theme of his election campaign.

“To expect that he will get rid of his narrative and invite the entire opposition to criticize him, it was not possible,” Qureshi told Pakistan’s Geo TV channel late on Monday. In 2014, when Modi was sworn in for his first term, leaders from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), that includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, were invited. Pakistan’s then-prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, attended then, to the anger of some of Modi’s Hindu-nationalist allies.

The February bombing in the Kashmir region led to the most serious clashes between the countries in years. India launched an air strike on a suspected militant camp on the Pakistani side of the border. Khan said Pakistan’s air force responded with strikes, to the alarm of world powers. An Indian aircraft was shot down and Pakistani forces captured the pilot but sent him home within days. Modi played up national security in his campaign for a seven-phase general election over April and May, which he won with an increased majority. — Reuters



File photo taken on March 27, 2019 Myanmar's soldiers march in a formation during a parade to mark the country's 74th Armed Forces Day in Naypyidaw. — AFP

Desperate Rohingya caught on cross-border narcotics runs: Police

DHAKA: Growing numbers of outcast Rohingya refugees are risking their lives by crossing the closed Myanmar-Bangladesh border with narcotics pills packed into their stomachs, police said yesterday. Scores of Rohingya Muslims, including many women, who fled to camps in Bangladesh after a Myanmar military clampdown in 2017, have been detained in recent months after returning to seek drugs and transport them, according to police. Narcotics control official Soman Mondol said an anti-drug squad had arrested 18 Rohingya near the border town of Teknaf on one day this month and 13 had 'yaba' methamphetamine pills in their stomach.

Myanmar has become a major producer of yaba - a Thai word meaning "crazy medicine" - which has become wildly popular in Bangladesh, as well as other southeast Asian nations. Refugees earn up to 20,000 taka (\$237) for each narcotics trip, Mondol said, adding "for a Rohingya, it's a lot of money". The drug is carried in the stomach where it is difficult to detect without x-ray machines that are rare at border posts, he said.

Drug gangs use Rohingya to get the yaba into southern Bangladesh, where almost a million impoverished refugees live in camps, and then send it all over

the country of 165 million people, anti-narcotics officials said. Mondol said each carrier swallows a plastic bag of between 500 and 2,000 yaba pills before transporting it across the border. "We are overwhelmed. It's an alarming trend," Faisal Hasan Khan, Bangladesh Border Guard chief in the border town of Teknaf, told AFP. He said about 70 Rohingya had been detained in recent months with hundreds of thousands of pills.

Azim Ahmed, head of the police Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in Teknaf, said the flow of yaba has increased despite a crackdown in the past year in which 400 suspected drug traffickers, including 20 Rohingya, have been shot dead. "Rohingya involvement has phenomenally increased in this trade," he said. According to Ahmed, only 10 percent of the traffickers are being caught. Emdadul Haq, a professor at the private North South University, said gangs take advantage of the poverty of the refugees who are not allowed to work outside their camps or pursue higher education. As part of the crackdown, the Bangladesh parliament made yaba a class-A banned substance in October and parliament passed a law allowing the death penalty for traffickers in the drug. — AFP

STAY CONNECTED

- Read Kuwait Times now on your phone for **FREE**
- Send Subscribe to **+965 944 88888**
- Enjoy the first daily paper in Kuwait on your phone

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

RENAULT
Passion for life

Renault Koleos

Whatever your quest

Starting from

5,999

KD

5 years service
or 100,000 km

1 year comprehensive
insurance

3rd party insurance
& traffic registration

10 years
warranty
or 50,000 km

Touch R-LINK 2 connected 8.7" screen
with navigation

Comfort leather seats

Auto park assist

Back door opens automatically

renaultkwt

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian GulfTHE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYANEditor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYANEDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24833199 Extn. 125
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.

Email: info@kuwaittimes.com

Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Lebanon budget seen 'a good first step', but numbers questioned

Heavily indebted Lebanon has unveiled an unprecedented plan to bring its public finances under control but faces an uphill struggle to restore investor confidence that is needed to stave off crisis. After years of backsliding on reform, fear of economic catastrophe has forced action on Lebanese leaders who have overseen the post-civil war policies that landed the country with one of the world's heaviest public debt burdens.

Minds in Beirut have been focused by years of low economic growth and a slowdown in deposit growth in the banking sector. This has been vital to meeting Lebanon's financing needs, helping an economy that produces very little and imports lots to "defy gravity" for years, economists say. The budget includes some politically difficult moves such as a three-year state hiring freeze, capping bonuses and a tax on state pensions. Others were sidestepped, notably proposals for a temporary public sector wage cut.

"The main test of this budget is whether it can bolster market confidence and usher fresh hard currency inflows that are urgently needed to cover Lebanon's substantial external financing gap," said Farouk Soussa, Middle East and North Africa economist at Goldman Sachs. "So far, there is little evidence of this." Credit ratings agency S&P Global said the announcement of the budget itself may not be enough to restore damaged confidence among non-resident depositors and investors.

News of the budget's approval helped Lebanon's dollar bonds to climb on Tuesday and the cost of insuring exposure to its sovereign debt fell. The budget aims to cut the deficit to 7.6% of GDP from 11.5% in 2018. It will now go to parliament for debate. Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri has called it the start of a "long road" towards steering the economy "to safety" and shows Lebanon is determined to tackle public sector waste.

'Lasting reforms'

Together with a plan for reforming the waste-ridden power sector, a major drain on the public purse, the budget could help Beirut tap into some \$11 billion in financing pledged at the CEDRE conference for Lebanon in Paris last year. "This budget is a good first step, and signals a genuine commitment by the Lebanese government to take some politically difficult but economically necessary steps," said a Western diplomat from a country that took part in CEDRE.

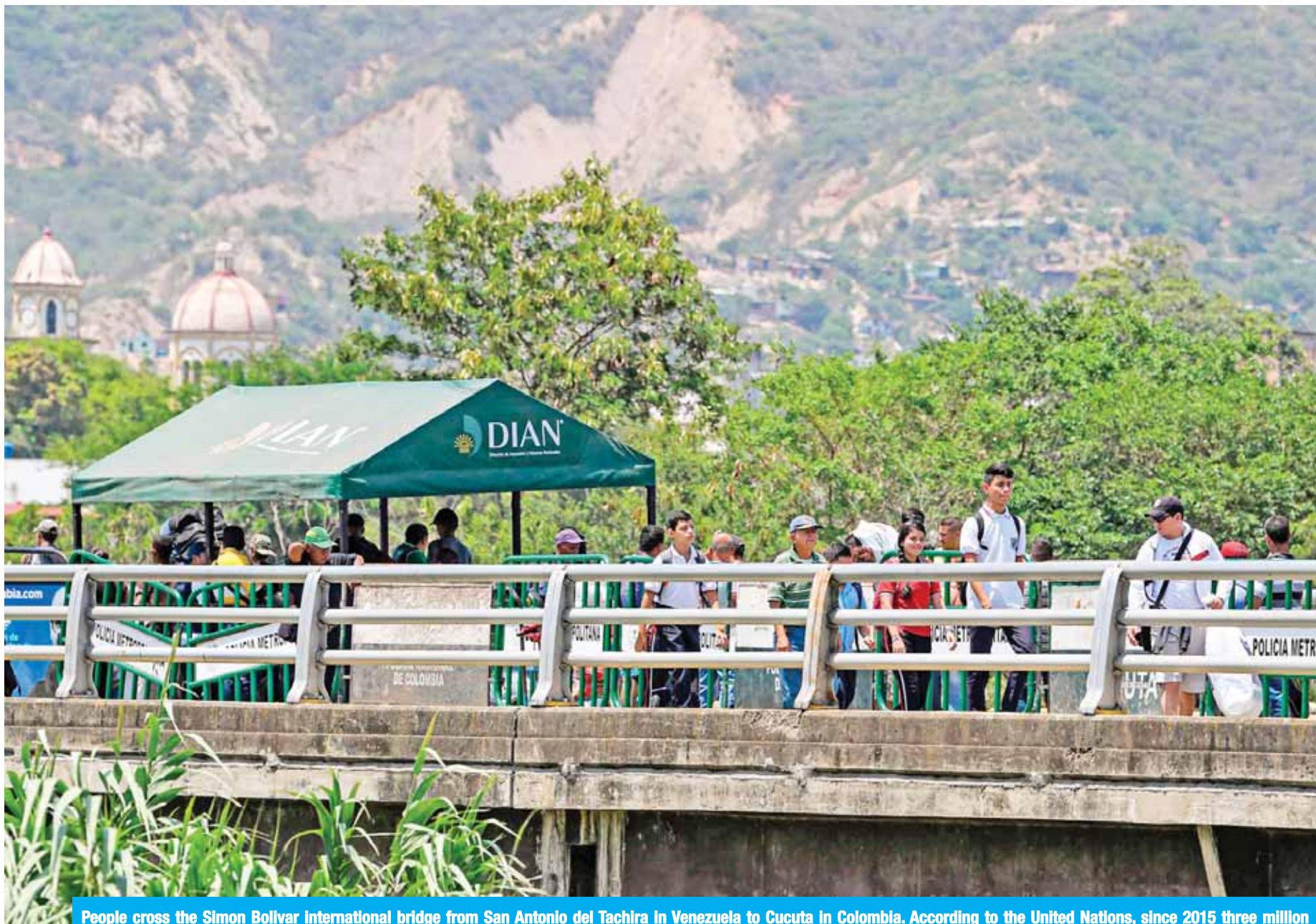
"But the key now is in delivering lasting reform, and providing a vision for the long term growth of Lebanon's economy," Wissam Harake, World Bank economist in Lebanon, said the deficit cut - if it materializes - would be a big adjustment. "I reserve judgment on the outcome of this, but I think it illustrates seriousness," he told Reuters. Some economists remain wary of Lebanese government numbers. Soussa noted that the government had targeted a 2018 budget deficit of 8.4% of GDP but it ended up at 11.5%.

Soussa said he was sticking by a forecast of a 9.4% deficit for 2019 "given the government's poor track record in meeting its targets ... and the fact that the budget is unlikely to be passed into law for another month, by which time almost half of the fiscal year will have passed". Alia Moubayed, managing director at Jefferies, said the budget targets lacked realism given optimistic revenue forecasts that ignored the recessionary impact of the proposed measures and cuts in capital spending. The government had failed to pursue critical structural reforms, she added.

"We think the total deficit is unlikely to fall below 9 to 9.5% of GDP," Moubayed said. Revenue generating measures include a 2% tax on imports and increasing the tax on interest to 10% from 7%. This will hit both depositors and the income banks earn on treasury bonds. The government also plans to slice some \$660 million from debt servicing costs by issuing low interest treasury bonds to the domestic banks, the finance minister has said.

As cabinet debated the budget, public sector workers staged multiple strikes and army veterans protested against any cuts. Since it was finalized on Friday, there has been no sign of new protests or strikes. Jason Tuvey of Capital Economics said the budget showed the difficulties of driving through public sector pay cuts. "They've struggled to push through austerity and ultimately some form of debt restructuring will be needed in the next couple of years," he said. — Reuters

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



People cross the Simon Bolivar international bridge from San Antonio del Tachira in Venezuela to Cucuta in Colombia. According to the United Nations, since 2015 three million Venezuelans have fled the worst economic and political crisis in the history of the country with the largest oil reserves in the world. — AFP

From Colombia, Venezuelan defectors arm themselves to liberate homeland

Wearing camouflage shirts and combat boots, a Venezuelan militia group stands in formation in the Colombian city of Cucuta as their commander, a former Venezuelan army sergeant, outlines plans to seize towns across the border before heading to Caracas to help oust President Nicolas Maduro. Eight men, who said they were defectors from Venezuelan police, army and intelligence services, had gathered near the two nations' tense frontier, from where they said they will lead an attack aimed at overthrowing Maduro and handing the reins of power to opposition leader Juan Guaido.

Dubbing their planned offensive "Operation Venezuela," the ex-army sergeant, Eddier Rodriguez, said there were around 150 men ready to take part with his group. Reuters was unable to independently confirm the status of the eight men or the size of the militia. "Our goal is to liberate the country," said Rodriguez, 37, who said he is currently working as a security guard in Bogota. "We're troops willing to give our lives if necessary, all 150 of us."

The Venezuelan defense ministry and the information ministry - which handles media enquiries for the government - did not respond to a request for comment about the formation of militias in Colombia. Victor Bautista, border director for Colombia's foreign ministry, said any groups who actually took up arms would be considered a paramilitary organization and would be detained by authorities if they were found.

"That would be totally rejected by our government and fully taken up by the appropriate authorities to apply corresponding legal measures," said Bautista. A Colombian intelligence official, who asked not to be identified, said the intelligence service had detected an unspecified number of Venezuelan militia groups in the country but could not act against them because they had not yet committed any

crimes. Separately, a high-level Colombian government official who asked not to be named said arrestable offences could include illegal possession of weapons and conspiracy to commit a crime. An estimated 1.2 million Venezuelans have crossed into Colombia in recent years, fleeing a painful recession and hyperinflation in their homeland that has left millions of people suffering from hunger and shortages of basic goods.

They include increasing numbers of defectors from the armed forces, some of whom are forming militias with the intention of pushing for the overthrow of Maduro. While such militias are vastly outnumbered in the face of Venezuela's 150,000-strong military, the men told Reuters they were willing to face any consequence if they can rid their country of Maduro's government, underscoring the frustration and desperation of many Venezuelan migrants.

Guaido cited the constitution in January to assume an interim presidency, saying Maduro rigged last year's election. He has appealed to Venezuela's armed forces to turn against Maduro. The United States and most Western nations have recognized Guaido as the South American country's rightful leader. Maduro accuses him of being a coup-monger and so far has retained the loyalty of the bulk of the armed forces.

Rodriguez said his group had been meeting different "resistance" groups in Colombia. He did not provide further details of those groups, or of how they planned to cross the border and launch an attack. He said they had acquired handguns, easily available along the border, and were seeking to raise funds to buy further weapons, explosives, bullet-proof vests, food and water.

'Minimal bloodshed'

Colombian President Ivan Duque has recognized Guaido as Venezuela's rightful ruler and branded

Maduro a dictator. Maduro severed diplomatic relations with Colombia after Duque backed opposition efforts to bring US aid into the country in February, although Duque has ruled out supporting any military intervention. More than 1,400 members of the national guard and other members of the armed forces have left Venezuela for Colombia since Maduro's troops violently drove back the aid convoys, according to Colombia's migration office.

As per an agreement with the Venezuelan opposition, Colombia provides dissident military officials with food and housing, and the right to work. In an interview in Caracas, Guaido said that if any decided to take up arms that would be due to Maduro's refusal to agree to free and fair presidential elections. "This reflects the discontent that there is in the armed forces: soldiers looking for alternatives and solutions because Maduro has shut off the electoral option," Guaido told Reuters.

He did not immediately reply to a request for comment on Bautista's assertion that groups who took up arms in Colombia would be detained. Maduro has said last year's presidential vote was fair and has branded defecting soldiers as "traitors." On April 30, Guaido attempted to rally Venezuela's armed forces to rise up, but only a few dozen soldiers and one top government official defected. The military top brass reaffirmed their loyalty to Maduro.

Over the years, Maduro - and former President Hugo Chavez - won the loyalty of the armed forces in part by promoting hundreds of officers to the rank of general and rewarding them with lucrative positions in state-run entities, like oil company PDVSA. Rodriguez's team said they have made contact with garrisons in Venezuela and many were ready to fight once the operation began. He did not provide details about specific garrisons and Reuters could not independently verify the information. — Reuters

Defying scientists, Hungary to overhaul academic network

BUDAPEST: Hungary is preparing legislation that would strip the Hungarian Academy of Sciences of its body of research institutions, giving the government more control over scientific activity, the news website index.hu reported yesterday. Hungary's oldest and largest academic institution, the Hungarian Academy (HAS) is solely funded by the government but self-managing, with a network of scientific research bodies employing about 5,000 people.

The planned measure, which has been resisted by academics and civil groups, would be the latest in a series of moves by the country's right-wing Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, to expand control, including steps concerning the courts, media, economy and education. Some of his measures have drawn criticism from the European Union.

A months-long tussle between Orban's government and academics over the changes is moving towards its final stages with the submission of a bill to parliament expected in coming weeks, index.hu said, citing the draft legislation. The government has said the changes are needed to help Hungary shift towards more innovative industries.

"The objective is that the additional resources devoted to domestic scientific research should be utilized in patents and inventions serving the Hungarian economy in earnest," the Innovation and Technology Ministry said in an emailed reply to questions about the report. "The current system is inefficient and Hungary has fallen behind," the ministry said, adding it believed the planned changes

did not harm independent research.

The European Commission said it supported the autonomy of academic institutions, both in terms of funding and self-government. "The Commission continues to closely monitor the developments in the Hungarian public research system while urging the authorities to refrain from any decision restricting scientific and academic freedom in the country," it said. A resolution passed by the Academy earlier this month said it disagreed with what it called the "political motivation for the arbitrary restructuring of the institutional network".

The academy, which carries out scientific research using a network of specialized research institutions, receives 40 billion forints (\$137.27 million) a year from the government. Index said the government proposal would move all the research units into a new public institution with a 13-member governing board comprising six government and six academy delegates. Orban would appoint the chairman based on a joint proposal by the board.

Scientists have called for only a third of board members to be picked by the government. Index also said a new National Scientific Policy Council chaired by Innovation and Technology Minister Laszlo Palkovics, the architect of the academic overhaul, would make the proposals for main areas of research to be funded. Under the legislation, the academy would hand over the buildings and assets of its research institutions to the new state-run organization, the report said. — Reuters

from congressional scrutiny. "They were hired to do an impossible job," said Paul Rosenzweig, a Washington lawyer who worked on the independent counsel investigation into President Bill Clinton in the 1990s.

Trump is defying congressional investigations into his administration, his family, his business interests and his finances, calling them "presidential harassment." His administration has ignored subpoenas, refused to let current and former aides testify and declined to hand over documents in the aftermath of the April release of a redacted version of Mueller's report that detailed Russian interference in the 2016 US election to boost Trump's candidacy.

The Trump Organization, the president's company, has its own lawyers in the subpoena fights. They include Mukasey, a criminal defense lawyer in Manhattan and former Giuliani law partner whose father Michael Mukasey served as US attorney general from 2007 to 2009 under Republican President George W. Bush, and Passantino, a former lawyer in Trump's White House who is now at a law firm.

Consovoy and Strawbridge both served as clerks in 2008 for Clarence Thomas, one of the most conservative US Supreme Court justices. The firm Consovoy McCarthy, with offices in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Virginia, and in Boston, is known for arguing against affirmative action policies that benefit racial minority groups that have faced discrimination and for battling women's healthcare and abortion provider Planned Parenthood. The firm also is defending Trump in a lawsuit by the Democratic attorneys general of Maryland and the District of Columbia accusing him of violating a US Constitution anti-corruption provision, called the emoluments clause, barring US officials from accepting gifts or payments from foreign governments. The suit cites Trump's refusal to disentangle himself from his businesses including a Washington hotel blocks from the White House. Consovoy, Strawbridge, Mukasey and Passantino declined to provide comment for this story. — Reuters

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2019

12 Kuwait's current account surplus rises in 2018 on higher oil prices



13 Taiba Hospital and Hict ink collaboration agreement



14 NBK partners with top car dealers to offer customers exclusive promotions



Huawei reviewing FedEx relationship

US package delivery firm apologizes for 'misrouting' Huawei parcels

HONG KONG: Chinese telecoms equipment maker Huawei is reviewing its relationship with FedEx Corp after it claimed the US package delivery company, without detailed explanation, diverted two parcels destined for Huawei addresses in Asia to the United States and attempted to reroute two others.

Huawei told Reuters on Friday that FedEx diverted two packages sent from Japan and addressed to Huawei in China to the United States, and attempted to divert two more packages sent from Vietnam to Huawei offices elsewhere in Asia, all without authorization, providing images of FedEx tracking records. Reuters could not verify the authenticity of the records. Shown the images of the tracking records, FedEx declined to make any comment, saying company policy prevented it from disclosing customer information.

Huawei said the four packages only contained documents and "no technology," which Reuters was unable to independently confirm. Huawei declined to elaborate on why it thought the packages were diverted. "The recent experiences where important commercial documents sent via FedEx were not delivered to their destination, and instead were either diverted to, or were requested to be diverted to, FedEx in the United States, undermines our confidence," Joe Kelly, a spokesman for Huawei, told Reuters.

"We will now have to review our logistics and document delivery support requirements as a direct result of these incidents," the spokesman said.

Huawei acknowledged to Reuters that one package originating in Vietnam was received by Friday, and the other was on its way, according to FedEx tracking records provided by Huawei.

FedEx spokeswoman Maury Donahue told Reuters the packages were "misrouted in error". She acknowledged in an earlier statement that the US Department of Commerce had recently added Chinese companies and affiliates to its "Entity List", but did not elaborate.

FedEx was not requested to divert the packages by any other party, she added. "This is an isolated issue limited to a very small number of packages," said FedEx, referring to the four parcels affected. "We are aware of all shipments at issue and are working directly with our customers to return the packages to their possession." FedEx China yesterday apologized on its Chinese social media account for the "mishandling" of Huawei packages and confirmed there was no "external pressure" to divert packages.

The US Department of Commerce did not reply to a request for comment on whether the incident might be related to its move on May 16 to add Huawei to the so-called "Entity List," preventing it buying certain items from US companies without US government approval.

Formal complaint

The United States believes Huawei, the world's largest telecom network gear maker leading the way in creating the next generation of wireless networks known as 5G, is

a potential espionage threat because of its close ties with the Chinese government. Huawei has repeatedly denied it is controlled by the Chinese government, military or intelligence services.

The issue has become a flashpoint in an escalating trade battle between the world's two biggest economies. The two packages sent on May 19 and May 20 from Tokyo, intended for Huawei in China, ended up in Memphis, Tennessee, the headquarters of the US company, by May 23, according to images of FedEx tracking records shown to Reuters by Huawei.

The two packages originating from Hanoi on May 17, destined for Huawei's Hong Kong and Singapore offices, were held up after arriving in local FedEx stations in Hong Kong and Singapore on May 21 for "delivery exception," according to other images Huawei showed Reuters.

According to FedEx's website, the status "exception" means an unexpected event is preventing delivery of a package, for example a customs delay, a holiday, or no one being available to accept delivery. FedEx declined to give details on what the exception was in this case.

According to Huawei, a FedEx customer service representative in Vietnam replied to their inquiry on May 22 when two expected packages did not arrive on time, saying: "Please be informed that FDX SG received notification from FDX US to hold and return the package to US. Hence, the shipment is not deliver to consignee and now being hold at FDX station and under process to RTS it



(return to sender)," the representative wrote in broken English, according to an email Huawei showed to Reuters.

Huawei told Reuters that both Vietnam packages were sent by its shipping agent, a contractor to Huawei whom it did not identify, and contained urgent documents. It said the shipping agent refused permission for FedEx to send the packages to the United States and instructed they be returned, Huawei told Reuters. Reuters could not confirm that, Huawei told Reuters it only learned that the Japan-originated packages, which were sent by suppliers that it did not identify, had been diverted to the United States after checking FedEx's tracking record.

The company said it has lodged a formal complaint with China's postal regulator, which it said is investigating the incident. China's State Postal Bureau did not return a request for comment. —Reuters

Pre-order now 5G router from VIVA



5G

with the fastest network

Call 102
viva.com.kw
@vivatelecom



Kuwait’s current account surplus rises on higher oil export revenues

Foreign investment income reaches KD 6.4bn

KUWAIT: Kuwait’s current account (CA) continued to strengthen in 2018, recording a surplus for the second consecutive year since 2016, when the country posted its first deficit (-4.6 percent of GDP) in more than twenty five years. The current account surplus in 2018 increased to KD 6.2 billion (4.8 percent of GDP), more than double 2017’s figure of KD 2.9 billion (8 percent of GDP). This was primarily due to higher oil export revenues (KD 19.7 billion; +31 percent y/y)-on the back of a 34 percent increase in the price of Kuwait Export Crude (KEC)-and record foreign investment income, of KD 6.4 billion (\$21.3 billion). The latter is mainly a reflection of higher returns on the overseas investments of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), the country’s sovereign wealth fund. Kuwait’s trade balance, the difference between exports and imports of goods, reached KD 12.4 billion (29.8 percent of GDP), the highest since 2014. Movements in the trade balance are largely a function of movements in the oil price, given that oil exports account for almost 91 percent of total exports.

The increase in oil export revenues last year mirrored the increase in oil prices, roughly around 30 percent. The combined volume of crude and refined product exports actually declined 0.3 percent on an annual average basis, from 2.65 mb/d in 2017 to 2.64 mb/d in 2018. This was mainly due to lower refined products exports rather than crude, and most likely a result of the decommissioning of the 200 kb/d Mina Shuaba refinery in 2017. Oil exports as a share of GDP reached 47.6 percent in 2018.

Non-oil export revenues increased in 2018 by 22 percent, albeit from a small base to KD2.1 billion. These exports are mainly chemicals and machinery equipment. But non-oil exports as a share of total exports have actually declined, falling over three consecutive years to 9 percent in 2018 from 10.2 percent in 2015. This is still quite high by historic standards though.

Imports, meanwhile, continued their steady increase, rising by 5.7 percent in 2018 to KD 9.4 billion. The last time that imports declined was at the height of the financial crisis in 2009; since then they have been rising at an annual average rate of 6.6 percent.

Foreign assets

The balance on the capital and financial accounts is the mir-



ror of the current account, reflecting movements of capital into and out of the country from overseas. Outflows (debit) from the capital and financial accounts increased for the second year in a row in 2018, reaching KD 7.4 billion from KD 5.4 billion in 2017 when Kuwait resumed its historical net creditor status. In contrast, in 2016, the combined capital and financial account recorded a net surplus (or inflow), of KD 1.9 billion, for the first time in over twenty years; the government, facing a current account (and fiscal account) deficit caused by low oil prices, liquidated some of its overseas assets to finance the budget and restore liquidity.

After peaking in 2011 at KD 899 million, foreign direct investment in Kuwait (FDI) has been declining. FDI inflows reached KD 104 million in 2018 (0.3 percent of GDP), which is the second lowest level in ten years. Kuwait’s FDI continues to lag its regional peers. However, net portfolio investment turned positive in 2018, reaching KD 726 million, as Kuwaiti residents sold their foreign bond holdings and as foreign investors bought Kuwaiti bonds and equities, the latter stimulated by the country’s inclusion in the FTSE Russell Emerging Markets Index.

Central bank reserves rise

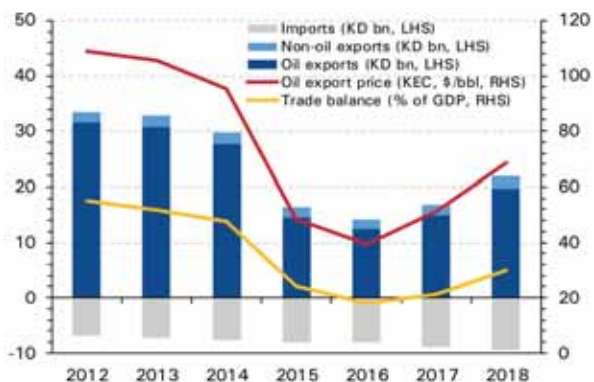
With Kuwait’s current account and broad balance of payments surplus increasing, the Central Bank of Kuwait’s gross international reserves continue to accumulate, reaching \$38.5 billion (KD 10.8 billion; 26.2 percent of GDP), or 6.8 months of imports at end-March 2019. Of course, these figures do not take into account the foreign investment assets of the KIA, which are estimated at around \$548 billion.

Chart 1: Current account balance



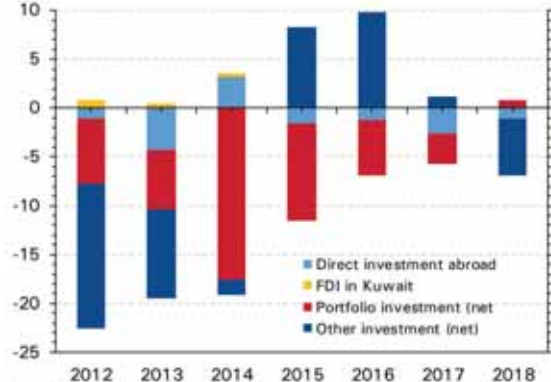
Source: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK), NBK estimates

Chart 2: Trade balance (goods)



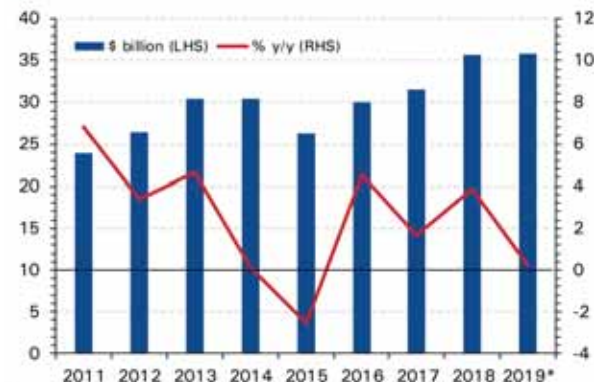
Source: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK), NBK estimates

Chart 3: Contributions to the Financial Account



Source: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK)

Chart 4: Central Bank of Kuwait foreign reserves (gross)



Source: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK)* *as of end-March 2019

Local plants must stay open in Renault-Fiat merger: France

PARIS: French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire yesterday demanded that local plants remain open as part of a proposed merger between Italian-US auto giant Fiat Chrysler and France’s Renault.

The French government, which owns a 15 percent stake in Renault, has so far backed the idea of a merger, which would reshape the industry by forging the world’s third-largest automaker. But Le Maire, speaking on RTL radio, asked Renault board chairman Jean-Dominique Senard for a guarantee “on the preservation of jobs and industrial sites in France” and a commitment that no factory be closed in the country. “This is the first guarantee that I requested from Mr Senard on the opening of these negotiations with Fiat,” Le Maire said. “Since I have agreed to the opening of negotiations, it is up to him to come back to me in the coming days on the guarantees he was able to obtain from Fiat.” When Fiat presented Renault with the 50-50 merger proposal on Monday, it said the deal would not result in any production sites closing. Renault said it would study Fiat’s proposal “with interest” and after a board meeting over what it termed a “friendly” offer, the French carmaker said it would enter talks on a merger.

Le Maire confirmed that the French state would not increase its 15-percent stake in Renault, so would hold around 7.5 percent in the new group after the 50-50 merger. The CGT union at Renault has been wary of the plan, urging the French government to maintain a blocking minority after any deal. The proposal comes as Renault’s years-long partnership with Japanese automaker Nissan comes into question after the arrest and subsequent ouster of Carlos Ghosn, who had been Renault chief executive as well as Nissan chairman. Renault holds 43 percent in Nissan, which in turn owns 15 percent of its French partner. Despite pledges on both sides to pursue the alliance, analysts say the tensions might be pushing Renault to explore alternatives. Le Maire said he was waiting for the deal “to be done as part of the alliance between Renault and Nissan”. —AFP

Blindsided by FCA-Renault talks, Nissan risks being left by the roadside

TOKYO/BEIJING: Nissan found out about Renault’s merger talks with Fiat Chrysler just days before they became public, four sources told Reuters, stoking fears at the Japanese carmaker that a deal could further weaken its position in a 20-year alliance with Renault.

Nissan Motor Co Chief Executive Hiroto Saikawa likely first caught wind of the merger plan through his own chief operating officer, Yasuhiro Yamauchi, who also serves on Renault’s board, one of the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

Saikawa’s actual notification from Renault most likely came a day ahead of a report over the weekend that the French company was in tie-up talks with Italian-American rival Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), the source said. The plan, which would create the world’s third-largest automaker, raises difficult questions about how Nissan would fit into a radically changed alliance. Renault Chairman Jean-Dominique Senard arrived in Japan yesterday to discuss the proposed tie-up - and presumably to try to smooth over ties.

But the deal poses an additional challenge for Saikawa, already grappling with poor financial performance and an uneasy relationship with Renault after Nissan led the ousting last year of long-standing alliance chairman Carlos Ghosn. “All this put Saikawa under massive pressure,” a second source said, referring to the fact that negotiations caught the CEO and senior management off guard.

Renault, which owns a 43.4 percent stake in Nissan, had previously angled for a merger with Nissan, but Saikawa has long opposed a full integration.

New vehicle and powertrain platforms developed by FCA-Renault could also pose a dilemma to Nissan, challenging its jealously guarded independence in some areas of engineering, research and development. Nissan could find itself forced to choose between technology developed elsewhere or going it alone - between scale without autonomy and autonomy without scale, a source close to the Renault board said.

FCA has said a deal would embrace Nissan and another alliance member, Mitsubishi Motors, as “valued and respected partners”.

“I have huge respect for Nissan and Mitsubishi, and their products and businesses,” FCA Chairman John Elkann told the Nikkei. Still, there is awareness of friction between Renault and Nissan, which is perhaps why the Japanese company was not involved in talks at an earlier stage.

“The relationship between Renault and its Japanese partners is not as constructive as probably anybody wishes,” said a source familiar with the FCA-Renault talks.

“The FCA view is that Nissan has a lot on its plate ... So the time is not right to consider anything other than enhanced cooperation.”

‘A strong signal’

The French government, which owns shares in Renault, said yesterday it wanted Nissan to be on board with the deal. But there have long been tensions between Paris and Tokyo over the imbalance of power in the carmaking alliance, with Nissan holding only a 15 percent non-voting stake in Renault.

The Japanese automaker’s clear advantage is in its technology, including vehicles that meet China’s tougher emissions regulations. Renault and FCA, therefore, would need Nissan to help them meet increasingly tough fuel economy, emissions and electric vehicle (EV) quotas around the world.

An FCA-Renault tie-up would also raise questions about how to extract synergies in some markets where Nissan and FCA compete, such as in North American trucks and SUVs. The Japanese firm’s line-up of Nissan and Infiniti brand SUVs competes with FCA’s Jeep models such as the



SUNDERLAND: In this file photo, Nissan cars are pictured, parked in a lot at its’ Sunderland plant in north east England. — AFP

Cherokee. Nissan’s Titan pickup is also competitor, albeit a weak one, to FCA’s Ram pickup line.

The fact Renault is prepared to consider creating such challenges may be a sign of its frustration with Nissan’s reluctance over a full merger. “It sends a strong signal that Renault does not necessarily have to tie its fate to Nissan,” said Chris Richter, senior research analyst at brokerage CLSA, about the proposed FCA-Renault tie-up.

Saikawa told reporters yesterday that “strengthening the alliance and constructive discussions are forward looking, and we are open to constructive discussions,” according to Japanese broadcasters.

But unless Nissan can regain the initiative, it risks being marginalized even more. “If the Renault-Fiat merger happens and the status quo continues at Nissan-Renault, Nissan’s position and influence within the alliance will fall behind Fiat,” said Takeshi Miyao, managing director of consultancy Carnorama.

Bernstein analyst Max Warburton said there were theoretically stronger synergies for Renault with FCA than with Nissan, and a better cultural fit too. “It may be inevitable that Renault eventually exits Nissan,” he said, adding the French company’s stake in its Japanese partner was currently worth about 11 billion euros - “plenty of capital to spend on EVs and new technology.” —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.750
Euro	344.6760
Sterling Pound	391.600
Canadian dollar	228.280
Turkish lira	50.880
Swiss Franc	307.360
US Dollar Buying	296.550
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.782
Indian Rupees	4.391
Pakistani Rupees	2.051
Srilankan Rupees	1.727
Nepali Rupees	2.730
Singapore Dollar	222.450
Hongkong Dollar	38.827
Bangladesh Taka	3.592
Philippine Peso	5.848
Thai Baht	9.623
Malaysian ringgit	77.916
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Rival	81.321
Qatari Rival	83.757
Omani Rival	792.073
Bahraini Dinar	809.750
UAE Dirham	83.027
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	18.210

Yemen Rival/for 1000	1.224
Tunisian Dinar	105.090
Jordanian Dinar	430.500
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.283

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.290
Canadian Dollar	227.140
Sterling Pound	388.330
Euro	342.520
Swiss Frank	306.445
Bahrain Dinar	809.220
UAE Dirhams	83.250
Qatari Riyals	84.490
Saudi Riyals	82.040
Jordanian Dinar	430.470
Egyptian Pound	18.055
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.724
Indian Rupees	4.383
Pakistani Rupees	2.016
Bangladesh Taka	3.604
Philippines Peso	5.807
Cyprus pound	18.105
Japanese Yen	3.780
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.741
Malaysian Ringgit	73.530
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.545
Thai Bhat	10.545

Turkish Lira	50.585
Singapore dollars	220.210

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.378853	0.392753
Czech Korune	0.005158	0.014458
Danish Krone	0.041539	0.046539
Euro	0.333050	0.346750
Georgian Lari	0.108822	0.108822
Hungarian 0.000954	0.001144	
Norwegian Krone	0.030007	0.036107
Romanian Leu	0.054561	0.071411
Russian ruble	0.004718	0.004718
Slovakia	0.009116	0.019116
Swedish Krona	0.027720	0.032720
Swiss Franc	0.296598	0.307598
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.202646	0.214646
New Zealand Dollar	0.193183	0.202683
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.221295	0.230295
US Dollars	0.300650	0.305950
US Dollars Mint	0.301150	0.305950
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003011	0.003812

Chinese Yuan	0.042661	0.046161
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036739	0.039489
Indian Rupee	0.003710	0.004482
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002696	0.002876
Korean Won	0.000246	0.000261
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069089	0.075089
Nepalese Rupee	0.002681	0.003021
Pakistani Rupee	0.001456	0.002226
Philippine Peso	0.005714	0.006014
Singapore Dollar	0.215758	0.225758
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001377	0.001957
Taiwan	0.009553	0.009733
Thai Baht	0.009254	0.009804
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.00013
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.793785	0.810285
Egyptian Pound	0.017506	0.020196
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000210	0.000270
Jordanian Dinar	0.424927	0.433927
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020519	0.044519
Omani Riyal	0.785240	0.790920
Qatar Riyal	0.079440	0.084380
Saudi Riyal	0.080180	0.081480
Syrian Pound	0.001292	0.001512
Tunisian Dinar	0.097720	0.105720
Turkish Lira	0.044101	0.053946
UAE Dirhams	0.081547	0.083247
Yemeni Riyal	0.000991	0.001071

Business

Taiba Hospital and Hict ink collaboration agreement

Agreement to digitize hospital's information system



KUWAIT: Taiba Hospital CEO Lama Al-Fadala (right) and Hict CEO Jan Demey shake hands after signing the agreement. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT: CEOs Lama Al-Fadala, Jan Demey, Belgian Ambassador Piet Heirbaut and other officials during the signing ceremony.

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Taiba Hospital signed a collaboration agreement with Hict, a Belgian consultancy company, at the Belgian Embassy in Kuwait. CEOs Lama Al-Fadala and Jan Demey signed the agreement in the presence of the Belgian Ambassador Piet Heirbaut.

"This signing ceremony of two companies from Belgium and Kuwait reflects our aspirations to improve the quality of healthcare in Kuwait," Heirbaut said in remarks before the signing. Hict, the leading healthcare consultancy company from Belgium and active around

the world, is gradually increasing its presence in the region. Recently, the company also signed a similar agreement in Saudi Arabia.

"Hict signed an agreement with Taiba Hospital in Kuwait, a reliable and leading private hospital in Kuwait with more than 120 beds. The two collaborated in the digitalization of the hospital's information system. I am proud to witness the signing ceremony. I am sure this will not be the last contact between the companies from Belgium and Kuwait. The health sector in Belgium has a long history of excellence. One of the oldest hospitals in Belgium, the Saint John Hospital and you can

visit that now as a tourist attraction," he opined. "The embassy of Belgium will continue to facilitate and contact with the Kuwaiti companies and Belgium companies. We will strive for more cooperation for the benefit of all," he added.

The emergence of this collaboration came after a series of studies and visits conducted by both parties in order to better visualize Taiba Hospital's future plans. "We are delighted to partner with hict...[to] determine the best way to maximize operational excellence through their performance measurement and comprehensive strategic assessment system for the hospital,"

said Al-Fadala.

Hict, which operates in Belgium, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, is specialized in optimizing healthcare services in the field through the diligent monitoring of efficiency and regulatory processes and providing solutions for them. In turn, Demey stated, "Our two companies have the same DNA structure and we feel the same heartbeat when it comes to making healthcare better for our citizens and for our customers."

The outcome of this project is the assurance to all patients that they will always be provided with the best medical and healthcare services.

In Houston, tech and health are cures for the oil 'curse'

HOUSTON: In the heart of Texas oil country, the city of Houston rode high on the oil boom, but then fell hard when the bottom dropped out of crude prices. But bit by bit America's fourth-largest city is weaning itself off its dependence on oil, betting instead on industries like healthcare and tech, even though black gold is never far from view in the birthplace of the American petroleum industry.

In the southern part of town, the Texas Medical Center covers two square miles (more than five square kilometers), with glass towers stacked between multiple medical schools, a children's hospital and a trauma center. About 10 million patients a year seek specialist treatment at the center, where 110,000 people work, making it Houston's biggest employer.

And TMC's rapid expansion has helped to make the health sector the biggest job creator in the state as well, employing more than 11 percent of workers in Texas, compared to only 8.6 percent in energy.

Patrick Jankowski, vice president of the Greater Houston Partnership, told AFP the city had "no choice" but to bank on other industries. "To provide jobs for people here, we had to grow healthcare, life sci-

ences, tech," he said, noting that just 30 years ago, eight in 10 jobs in the city depended on the hydrocarbon industry.

Blessing or curse

The state has always had an embarrassment of oil riches. With 30 million Texans, the state is the second most populous after California and home to the largest oil reserves of the world's biggest petroleum producer. But this underground blessing has at times been a "curse." As many developing countries have experienced, the abundance of one commodity often discourages investment in other industries and linking their fate to a single industry.

The last oil slump was in 2014, when prices for benchmark crude sunk from \$107 to \$44 in just six months, causing painful layoffs. The damage was widespread. "We had to shift. It was not lucrative to work in an industry where there were too many people looking for work," said AJ Mahmoud of the recruiting firm Michael Page.

Just a few years ago, the energy sector accounted for 95 percent of the positions the company filled in Texas, compared to just five percent globally.

The company now focuses on construction and real estate. At the same time, energy accounts for a shrinking share of the state economy, slipping to just 8.5 percent in the final quarter of last year from 13.4 percent in the second quarter of 2014. And while Silicon Valley is more than 1,500 miles away, greater Houston and its population of about seven million have made a striking foray into the tech sector.



HOUSTON: In the heart of Texas oil country, the city of Houston rode high on the oil boom, but then fell hard when the bottom dropped out of crude prices. —AFP

Going high tech

Station Houston, a 25,000-square-foot (2,300-square-meter) startup hub that opened downtown three years ago, has become a symbol of this renewal. Inside, the leaders of 180 budding enterprises gather and receive advice from mentors or talk to investors. The offices are draped in garish colors, feature open-plan workspaces and sit in the middle of the "innovation district," a neighborhood embodying local authorities' hopes for the new economy. "Our mission is to transform Houston into a world-leading technology and innovation capital," said Payal Patel, head of business development at Station Houston.

This is far from a done deal, however.

Houston, and the other two big cities in Texas—Austin and Dallas—are far behind major US metropolitan areas, such as San Francisco and New York, in attracting startup capital. And despite its shiny new electronics and modern image, Station Houston is still tied to the old ways: 40 percent of its startups linked to the energy business and oil titan Exxon Mobil supported the creation of the center.

Nevertheless, "Houston has moved away from the oil curse," said Andy Lipow of Lipow Oil Associates.

"We have diversified so much over the years. If oil hits \$30 again, the Houston economy will be impacted but not as it could have been in the '80s and '90s." —AFP

Salvini seizes on election win to demand new ECB debt role

ROME: Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini called yesterday for a new role for the European Central Bank, which should "guarantee" government debt in order to keep bond yields low.

Italy, whose debt is proportionally the highest in the

euro zone after Greece's, would have much to gain if the ECB were to buy states' debt directly, though Salvini did not spell out exactly what he wanted the Frankfurt-based central bank to do. Fresh from a victory in European parliamentary elections, the leader of the right-wing League said in a Facebook video that the EU's "failed" fiscal rules should be rewritten with the focus on cutting unemployment, not capping budget deficits.

Speaking from a Rome rooftop as though he were already prime minister, Salvini said he wanted a top-level European conference to discuss how to boost growth and investment and new powers for the ECB to halt "speculation". Since his party won 34 percent at Sunday's vote Salvini has stepped up promises to slash taxes and calls for new EU budget rules, unnerving financial markets which fear his plans will

drive up Italy's huge public debt.

Italian benchmark bond yields rose by 10 basis points yesterday, having already risen around 11 bps on Monday and marking the sharpest two-day rise in benchmark borrowing costs since the start of the year. At the election the League doubled the votes of its coalition partner, the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, potentially giving Salvini, who is interior minister, more clout in driving the policy agenda. If 5-Star bows to the League's demands it risks losing more support among its core voters. If it does not, that might trigger a government collapse and fresh elections which would be likely to reward Salvini. The League chief said he wanted to cut taxes for Italian households with income below 50,000 euros (\$56,000), at a cost of 30 billion euros for state coffers. —Reuters

Facebook use eroding in US as social media under pressure

SAN FRANCISCO: Facebook's efforts to crack down on misinformation and sensational content have reduced the time spent at the leading social network eroding, researchers said yesterday.

The average amount of time US adults spent at Facebook dropped by

three minutes per day last year and will likely decrease by another minute next year, to a total of 37 minutes daily, according to the research firm eMarketer. The report suggests that Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg's efforts to focus on safety and remove divisive and hateful content could be having an economic impact.

"Facebook's continued loss of younger adult users, along with its focus on down-ranking clickbait posts and videos in favor of those that create time well spent," resulted in less daily time spent on the platform in 2018 than we had previously expected," said eMarketer principal analyst Debra Aho Williamson. "Less time spent on

Facebook translates into fewer chances for marketers to reach the network's users." Money taken in from digital ads are the leading source of revenue at Facebook, which has 2.4 billion monthly active users around the world. A bright spot for Facebook is that daily US engagement is creeping up at its image and video focused social network Instagram, where eMarketer expected it to rise a minute this year to 27 minutes and then another minute per year through 2021. "Features like Stories, influencer content and video are all contributing to more engagement and a slow but steady uptick in time spent on Instagram," Williamson said.

Meanwhile, time people in the US

spend at Instagram rival Snapchat has seemingly plateaued at 26 minutes daily, with an application redesign failing to boost engagement, according to eMarketer. A broader trend seen last year was for Americans to spend less time at online social networks, and the overall engagement was expected by eMarketer to remain unchanged this year at almost one hour, 14 minutes per day. "Gains in digital video viewing are putting pressure on social time, and gaming is also creating new competition for user attention," Williamson said.

"Though we can't say there is a direct cause-effect relationship, these activities do at least threaten users' engagement with social media." —AFP

Pound pressured as hard Brexiters emboldened in race to succeed May

LONDON: Sterling languished just off four-month lows yesterday, with the outcome of last week's European election seen possibly emboldening proponents of a no-deal Brexit as the battle to succeed Prime Minister Theresa May got underway.

The prospect of a no-deal Brexit, which most economists say would severely damage the British economy, re-emerged as a key risk for sterling after May said last week she would step down as leader of the Conservative Party on June 7. With the Brexit Party handing the ruling Conservatives a drubbing in last week's European elections, many Conservative candidates vying for May's job are under pressure to deliver a more decisive break with the EU when Britain is scheduled to leave the bloc on Oct. 31. While foreign minister Jeremy Hunt said no-deal Brexit would amount to "political suicide", other candidates including front-runner Boris Johnson have signalled they are prepared for that if Brussels does not reopen negotiations over May's unpopular withdrawal agreement.

However, sterling's downside was limited by the fact that parties opposing Brexit also made sharp gains in the vote. The British currency slipped 0.13 percent to \$1.2657, having traded as low as \$1.2605 last week. It was down 0.2 percent versus the euro at 88.405 pence to stand just off four-month lows.

"For the Brexit Party to get so many votes is a sign to politicians that people are not as afraid of the no-deal scenario as most members of parliament. So the no-deal risk has increased a bit," said Morten Lund, FX strategist at Nordea. But no-deal Brexit probabilities remain around 15-20 percent, according to Lund, who expects lawmakers to call a no-confidence vote against any prime minister who chooses that route. "It's more or less priced in that Boris Johnson will become prime minister, so with the pricing now I don't see that much downside. I see sterling trading around these levels but with a downward bias," he said.

Brexit compromise

The pound has fallen for three consecutive weeks versus the dollar and euro. It has lost 3 percent this month as May failed in her effort to find a Brexit compromise with the opposition Labor Party and then announced she was stepping down. Many analysts noted, however, that the election had also rewarded the Liberal Democrat and Green parties, which have steadfastly opposed Brexit and want another referendum which could reverse the June 2016 vote to leave the EU.

The increased support for these groups as well as for the Brexit party came at the expense of the two main parties and could imply a rising probability of a second referendum if a deal cannot be reached by whoever succeeds May. Esty Dwek, Chief Market Strategist at Dynamic Solutions, the research arm of Natixis Investment Managers, noted that while UK voting levels had been low, "remainders did better from voters who actually showed up. This might increase chances of a second referendum, but this isn't our base case scenario for now". —Reuters

Business

NBK partners with top car dealers to offer customers exclusive promotions

Offers include purchasing a Toyota Land Cruiser and receiving it in 24 hours

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continued to launch exclusive offers and financing solutions to suit every segment of customers and in partnership with leading companies in Kuwait, partnering this Ramadan with leading car dealerships to offer attractive financing schemes and special offers.

The partnership will enable customers to take advantage of convenient banking solutions during the holy month of Ramadan, which include tailored financing facilities on the next car they purchase from participating dealerships.

Explaining the benefits of the new partnership, Hussam Soleimani, Auto Product Relationship Manager, Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait, said: "During the Holy Month of Ramadan, NBK is bringing exclusive offers and promotions, including discounts of up to KD 700 offered by the dealer and other great advantages when purchasing a car from one of over 30 participating car dealers."

Soleimani added that the new campaign comes as part of the bank's ongoing commitment to benefiting its customers through exclusive and unprecedented offers. The association also includes Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Automotive Company, allowing customers to purchase a Toyota Land Cruiser and have it delivered within



Hussam Soleimani

24 hours after the customer has signed the final contract and ensuring payment of all traffic violations. Delivery of the new car may vary should the customer request additional features to the car. Customers also receive a free subscription to one of the following packages: protection package or service package.

Soleimani added that NBK Customers can inquire about the offers and their terms and conditions directly from sales representatives at the car dealerships or from any NBK Sales Representative available at the showrooms. He also mentioned that the policy of obtaining financing for a new car from NBK is simple, flexible and fast. Customers can get financing up to KD 25,000 available without the need to transfer the end of service bonus or salary. The policy is valid for financing the purchase of new and approved cars, motorcycles and other types of vehicles. Customers can complete the repayment of the financing facility early and at

any time without enduring additional fees or interest. Soleimani also said that NBK has recently launched a new product offering customers unique financing solutions that enable customers to take a financing facility against a fixed or flexible deposit.

He said: "We always aim to provide financing solutions that meet the needs of customers and this type of financing facility not considered to be a consumer or housing finance, while the customer receives the full amount of the financing against a cash guarantee or fixed / flexible deposit. The financing facility can range from KD 5,000 to a maximum KD 500,000 and is granted after studying the customer's credit status."

Soleimani also revealed that customers can receive additional funding in return for booking an amount from their Al-Jawhara Account, which does not omit their chances from entering the prize draws of the account. He further added that the fixed or flexible deposit will not be affected in terms of monthly or annual interests if it used against a financing facility.

Soleimani added that NBK ensures providing the best banking services and solutions for those interested in obtaining this type of financing. These services are easily made available through either one of NBK Branches or through the Bank's website at nbk.com/loans where cus-



tomers will discover how fast the financing procedures are completed with flexible terms.

Honda Alghanim wins 'Gold Award' from Honda Motor

KUWAIT: On April 24th 2019, Honda Alghanim - Service Department received the 'Gold Award' for the Best in Service Dealer Development Performance for the year 2018. The award was given by Honda Motor Japan Ltd - Honda Africa and Middle East Region (HAMER) in (Jabal Ali, Free Trade Zone), Dubai.

The category was based on Dealer Development related KPI's from Outstanding CSI, service profitability,

and customer retention. In addition to this major award, Honda Alghanim received "2018 Excellence Award" on the "Highest Improvement in Service Advisor Certification Coverage", "Effective In-house Non-Technical Activities and Coverage Improvement", "Highest Improvement in CAP-Do Implementation", and "Highest Improvement in Dealer and Facility Clinic".



DUBAI: (From left to right) Dinkar Shetty - GM Market Quality (HAMER), Nishanth Bahab - Manager Market Quality (HAMER), Jun Habara - Sr General Manager - Service (HAMER), David Lawlor - General Manager for Aftersales (Honda Alghanim) and Elie Coussa - Service Manager (Honda Alghanim).

ASDA'A BCW named 'Middle East Consultancy of the Year'

DUBAI: ASDA'A BCW cemented its position as the Middle East's leading Public Relations firm after being named 'Middle East Consultancy of the Year' at the prestigious EMEA SABRE Awards 2019 ceremony in London hosted by The Holmes Report.

The SABRE Awards are the largest PR industry prizes in the world and are deemed the ultimate benchmark in PR performance. This year's SABRE Awards EMEA shortlist included 400 campaigns selected from over 600 entries. In recognizing ASDA'A BCW, The Holmes Report said: "ASDA'A BCW's maturity is reflected by an integrated offer that is perhaps best known for its ability to handle regional projects for government agencies, NGOs and corporations, and for its high-end corporate capabilities. But the firm also has strength in brand marketing, public affairs and tech."

Sunil John, Founder and CEO of ASDA'A BCW, said: "We are extremely grateful for this wonderful recognition from The Holmes Report which honors not just our breadth of expertise but the strength of our creative work that moves people and delivers measurable business results for our clients. Congratulations to everyone at ASDA'A BCW for their dedication and great work. We are grateful to our clients for their confidence in the Agency's competencies."



The Middle East PR Consultancy of the Year award is the result of a thorough research process by a number of The Holmes Report editors, who review the submissions and travel the region to undertake face-to-face meetings throughout the year.

Paul Holmes, Founder and Chair of The Holmes Group, said: "Now in its 15th year, the SABRE Awards EMEA are all about engagement, credibility and relationship building. The jury made up of over 60 peers choose to award those agencies, corporate teams and individuals they believe to excel in those credentials." Since its founding in 2000, ASDA'A BCW has been a pioneer of public relations in

the Middle East. With five dedicated practices - Consumer & Healthcare, Enterprise & Technology, Financial, Public Affairs and Corporate - it has grown to be the agency of record for regional businesses, governments and multinationals alike.

Proof IC, the digital and design firm, and PSB Middle East, the research arm, are fully-owned subsidiaries of ASDA'A BCW, together bringing cut-through solutions that encompass public relations, research and digital. Today, the Agency employs nearly 200 professionals across nine wholly-owned and eight affiliates - in 15 Middle East & North Africa (MENA) countries.

ABK announces lucky winners for salary transfer campaign

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) yesterday announced the two winners for the third monthly draw in its "Transfer your Salary and Find Reasons to Smile" campaign, which is open to both Kuwaiti and expatriate customers who hold Elite, Prestige or Al-Raed Salary Transfer Accounts.

The third monthly draw was held on 16th May under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Interior (MOCI) and the two winners were Prince Mathew Thevarote Varghese and Janet Joyce Pinto, from the Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh

and Farwaniya branch, respectively. The two lucky customers each receive the equivalent of their monthly salaries.

The next draw for this campaign takes place on 13th June 2019 with the last draw taking place on 31st December, leaving seven more draws to go. Customers must have their salaries transferred to the bank at least one month prior to the draw date to enter.

In addition to the draw, the "Transfer your Salary and Find Reasons to Smile" campaign offers ABK salary account customers a range of exceptional rewards. Kuwaiti salary account holders receive cash gifts of up to KD 1,000 provided that they transfer a salary equivalent to or higher than KD 500. Moreover, Kuwaiti customers are eligible for an interest-free loan of up to KD 10,000 and expatriates up to KD 5,000. These loans are subject to ABK's terms and conditions, as well as the Central Bank of Kuwait's regulations and policies.

Visa congratulates CBK on launch of Visa Signature card

KUWAIT: Following the successful launch of Visa Signature by Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK), which offers travel and cash-back benefits and is being issued by the Bank free of charge for the first 5 years, Ankush Devadason - Kuwait Country Manager for Visa, the world's leader in digital payments, said, "The positive results we've seen following the launch of the Visa Signature card by Commercial Bank of Kuwait shows the great opportunities for cashless solutions in Kuwait and Kuwaitis' enthusiasm for innovative digital payment products that are rewarding both at home and abroad. We continue to enjoy a strong partnership with Commercial Bank of Kuwait - one that goes back their first-to-the-Middle East launch of Visa Infinite - and we look forward to rolling out more innovative digital payment products with them in the future," he said.

Abdulaziz Malak - Assistant General Manager-Card Center / Retail Banking Division - said that Visa Signature Credit Card comes with exceptional and exclusive benefits and is issued free of charge for the first five years, noting that the card came to complement the state-of-the-art credit cards issued by Commercial Bank of Kuwait. Malak added that this card offers customers, among other exclusive benefits, cash back up to 3 percent on their monthly purchases made by using the Bank's Visa Signature, complimentary access to over 1000 Global Airport lounges, free multi-trip travel



insurance up to \$500,000 from Visa for customers and their families during all trips of up to 90 days when purchasing airline tickets by Visa Signature Credit Card in addition to 24 hours international and local Concierge Service which provides Visa Signature Cardholders with many different personal services that satisfy their needs.

Malak went on emphasizing that Visa Signature cardholders can also enjoy Visa Luxury Hotel Collection that comprises over 900 intriguing and luxurious hotels across the world including boutique hotels and the global renowned hotels and this, in turn, provides customers with a premium collection of benefits. Malak denoted that the Bank's Visa Signature Cardholders can get 50 percent dis-

count in VOX Cinema when purchasing tickets via VOX Cinema's website, discounts from Avis (Car Rental).

This was in addition to the Bank's special promotions and offers from a diverse range of renowned retailers and stores as well as Al-Tijari Offers Program which provides customers with discounts up to 25% at reputable restaurants and coffee shops in Kuwait.

Customers can apply for Visa Signature Credit Card by visiting any of the Bank's branches or via the Bank's website and enjoy several financial and banking packages through this card which is locally and globally acceptable at POS terminals, for online purchasing and for cash withdrawal from ATMs in addition to other numerous benefits this card offers.



GE to cut over 1,000 jobs in French power operations

PARIS: US industrial conglomerate General Electric said yesterday that it would cut more than 1,000 jobs mainly at its gas turbine operations in eastern France, part of a wave of European layoffs as it tries to stem losses in its

power generation business. The 1,044 job cuts, long feared by unions, could become a political challenge for President Emmanuel Macron, who assured local officials this month that the government was following the matter with "the utmost vigilance".

The cuts will be made mainly in Belfort, eastern France, the European headquarters for GE Energy, and in the Paris region, the company said in a statement. "More than half the number of employees in the gas activities... are going to lose their jobs," the mayor of Belfort, Damien Meslot, and other local officials said in a statement. They warned of "a new hardship" for the region, which has been hit hard by the decline of mining and heavy industry over the past

decades. Overall, GE employs nearly 4,000 people in Belfort, including 1,900 in its gas turbine operations.

The company has struggled for years with slumping demand for its gas turbines because of low oil and gas prices, and the power operations were a key factor in its massive annual loss of \$22.8 billion last year. In 2015 GE announced 6,500 job cuts across Europe, and two years later it revealed a further 12,000 cuts.

That prompted France to fine the company 50 million euros (\$56 million) earlier this year, since GE had promised to create at least 1,000 new jobs when it announced the purchase of the power businesses from France's Alstom in 2014. — AFP

What's On



Australian College of Kuwait renews Cooperation Agreement with NBK

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) has renewed a Cooperation Agreement with the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK). This significant agreement enhanced cooperation between the two parties and is in line with ACK's core value to enable human potential within a culture of care.

The agreement has been benefitting ACK students and giving them well-rounded internship programs

provided by NBK to not only gain valued workplace experience but also develop their personal skills. Both parties have been supporting the students and this mutual cooperation has been elevating the potential of ACK students and preparing them for the labor market.

Professor Isam Zabalawi, President of ACK, believes the relationship is having a positive impact on both ACK students and NBK. "The relationship between ACK and

NBK has been always special and we are so happy to collaborate closely with NBK and strengthen it while training and empowering our students in the banking industry," said Professor Zabalawi. Representing ACK, the agreement was signed by Eng Sager Al-Sharhan - Assistant to the President for Support Services and on NBK's behalf, Mohammed Al Othman, General Manager of Consumer Banking Group.

ACK delivers a unique mix of practical and theoretical learning, therefore the college strongly believes in providing internship opportunities to its students, such as this, to experience things taught in the classroom and how they are applied in a professional setting. In turn, this provides ACK graduates with invaluable skills and knowledge to further their development and prepare them for their professional careers.

ICSK Senior structures a psychology workshop

The Department of Psychology and Counseling of ICSK Senior School structured a workshop on the topic, "Addiction to Technological Gadgets and Its Impact on Health and Lifestyle of School Students" in the school auditorium on 6th May, 2019. The resource person to talk on the issue was Dr Susan Eileen Day, the Director of Education, Dar-Al-Athar-Al-Islamiyyah. Dr Susan founded the Gulf Museum Educators Network (GMEN), she has earned UNDP recognition for DAI Docent Program. She was awarded the AAPC Exceptional Campaign Fundraising prize and chosen as one of the Outstanding Women in America.

The Vice Principal of ICSK senior, Dr Sam T Kuruvilla addressed the gathering and greeted Dr Susan exuberantly. Dr Susan graced the occasion and apprised the students on the impact of technological gadgets on the lifestyle of school students. Dr Navjot Kaur from the Department of psychology made the gathering acquainted with the speaker Dr Susan.

The 2-hour long presentation was set in motion with the Islamic prayer by Summiya of class 12H. The workshop proceeded further with a very riveting interactive session which included many activities for the students. The speaker Dr Susan quizzed the students and gave them multifarious exercises in order to boost them up. The other ICSK branch counselors and Carmel School counselor also witnessed the workshop. The diversity in the workshop on such an intense issue rather proved beneficial to the students and further broadened their outlook towards life.



59th Grand Hyper outlet set to open on Tunis Street

Grand Hyper counted among the leading hypermarket chains in GCC is set to open their 59th outlet on Tunis Street, Hawally, near Hawally Park at 1 pm tomorrow. Grand Hyper with its 10 years of presence in Kuwait has become a trusted brand and preferred shopping destination for all residents. The huge popularity which the brand enjoys among customers has instigated the group for an aggressive expansion in Kuwait. Grand Hyper is already present in Hawally on Ibn Khaldoun Street which has enjoyed huge success over the years and the group saw an opportunity to cater to the large customer base present in Hawally itself, hence the 2nd store spanning 23,000sq feet was planned in Tunis street.

Parent company Regency group, a UAE-based multinational company established in 1994, has grown rapidly in a span of a decade-and-a-half to emerge as a highly reputed brand among consumers. It set its footprints in a wide-range of industries including trading, hospitality, F&B, health-care and steel manufacturing among others. The Regency Group has a strong presence in the UAE, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, China, Azerbaijan, India and other countries, and serves about 150,000 customers in the five GCC countries every day. Grand Hypermarket is the group's leading retail-shopping brand that focuses on delivering satisfaction to consumers by offering affordable high-quality products. About 5,600+ employees from different nationalities are working under the group.

Grand hyper started its Kuwait journey 10 years back with its first store in Fahaeel area. Now with stores spread across all major locations in Kuwait, Grand hyper is a preferred brand in Kuwait serving 72000 customers daily. The equal acceptance by both Kuwaiti nationals and



expats has inspired the Group to further expand its reach in Kuwait.

The success of Grand Hypermarket is testified by the continuous expansion of the retail chain in various parts of the GCC countries on a daily basis. The business group imports its high-quality stocks directly from countries like India, China, Bangladesh, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Europe. The benefit of price efficiency that the retailer gains through large-scale procurement of products is transferred onto the end-consumer. In addition to that Grand Hyper is also providing a host of prizes to the consumers as an inaugural offer.

Grand Hypermarket gives consumers the exclusive experience of celebrating all occasions under one roof, providing the customers with a wide range of products including food stuffs, world-class electronic appliances, home appliances, footwear, health and beauty items and fashion wears and accessories from leading European designers among others. Perishable goods, farm produces and meat are shipped by air on a daily basis to ensure they are available fresh to the end users. These are procured from internationally-recognized farms to ensure world-class standards. Making high quality products affordable for the everyday consumer is what sets Grand Hypermarket apart from the rest.

Indian Ambassador felicitates award winner



Ambassador of India Jeeva Sagar hosted a reception to felicitate Indian national Rajpal Tyagi on being conferred with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award by the government of India. The reception was attended by an exclusive gathering of friends and well-wishers who joined in the celebrations to congratulate Tyagi for his accomplishment. Addressing the guests, Ambassador Jeeva Sagar pointed out that the award was a great honor and recognition by the Indian government of Tyagi's contribution to the community. In his emotional address, Tyagi expressed his utmost thanks and appreciation for the great honor bestowed on him. He recalled the words of his parents who urged him to do his country proud when he had left his motherland almost 40 years ago.



KEA Kannur holds community iftar gathering at Wafra

The Indian Community, Kannur Expats Association (KEA), Kuwait has organized an iftar gathering at Wafra Farms near Saudi border. It was heartening to see, more than 400 people belonging to various nationalities, who work in the agricultural sector take part in it. The dedicated members of KEA said their sole aim was to bring happiness to the faces of their brethren and those who live so far away from the mainstream of society.

After the iftar, Sherin Mathew, KEA



President, addressed the gathering and in her speech she said that this small act clearly shows the commitment of the KEA members towards the downtrodden people in society. Many dignitaries spoke on the occasion and all gave praise to KEA. Naif

Chicken Farm Manager Madhu thanked the association for this charitable act. KEA Secretary Ajith Kumar, KEA members Madhu Mahi, Ramseena were the other office bearers who spoke about the work done by the association.

KCST and BIG BRAINS Company to establish innovation center



Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST) signed an agreement with the BIG BRAINS Company to establish the first university innovation center in Doha. The agreement was signed by the College President Professor Khalid Al-Begain and the company's CEO Khalifa Al-Sinan in the presence of Tareq Al-Zayyat supervisor of innovation students in college, Ahmed Al Saleh and Ibrahim Al-Mutawa. The President of the Kuwait College of Science and Technology, Professor Khalid Al-Begain, welcomed the representatives

of BIG BRAINS, who represent an important sector in Kuwait in support of technology and innovation technology.

Al-Begain noted that Kuwait College of Science and Technology (KCST) welcomed the cooperation with the private sector to develop education and provide our students with the best potential. Pointing out that the college was founded in 2015 to provide distinctive programs in technology to cover a gap in the work sector in Kuwait to graduate engineers capable of enriching the labor market with the skills required.

Health

Monkey experiments offer clues on origin of language

PARIS: Green and vervet monkeys live on either side of Africa and their evolutionary paths diverged 3.5 million years ago, and yet the two species share a hard-wired vocabulary when faced with danger, clever experiments have shown. The new research, published Monday, sheds light not only on how primates — including humans — respond to threats, but also on the building blocks of language itself.

Vervet monkeys in the savannah of east Africa utter three distinct cries depending on whether they spot a leopard, a snake or an eagle, their three main predators. Fellow monkeys who hear the cries but cannot see the peril react accordingly: the leopard call sends them scurrying up a tree, a snake call prompts them to stand motionless on two legs, and the eagle cry makes them scan the sky while seeking shelter.

It's as if a sentinel is shouting, "Freeze, it's a snake!", or "Get off the ground, it's a leopard!" The discovery thirty years ago of these unique warning cries sparked debate as to whether they were like primitive words, noted Julia Fisher, head of the cognitive ethology laboratory at the German Primate Center in Göttingen, Germany and senior author of a study in *Nature Ecology & Evolution*.

It also raised the question of where they came from. Did young vervets learn them through imitation, were the cries genetically imprinted? To deepen their

understanding, Fisher and colleagues set up an experiment with a community of green monkeys in Senegal which they have been observing for more than a decade. Like their distant cousins across the continent, green monkeys also emit specific danger calls for big cats and snakes, and react accordingly. But because the raptors in their neighborhood pose no threat, anything like the vervet "eagle call" is simply not in their repertoire. Even when the scientists tried to scare the green monkey with dummy birds, it didn't work. "Any attempt to get them to vocalize in response to model eagles failed utterly," said Fisher. But then she had an idea.

Innate repertoire

"We decided to bring in a drone and fly it over the green monkeys, to expose them to something potentially dangerous in the air that they had never seen before," she explained. The drone flew at an altitude of about 60 meters over the unsuspecting animals. Once the monkeys spotted it, the response was immediate: they gave alarm calls and scurried for cover.

Not only was the cry different from the response to leopards or snakes, it was "strikingly similar" to the eagle alarms of East African vervets. "Despite 3.5 million years of evolutionary divergence, the call structure stayed essentially the same," Fisher noted. In the vocabulary of evolutionary biologists, in other words,

the danger cry was "highly conserved." The fact that the green monkeys reacted to a drone and not other large birds native to the area suggests a subtle but important distinction. Kurt Hammerschmidt, also from the German Primate Center, told AFP. "The alarm call is not linked to eagles per se," he said by phone. "It seems to correspond to a broader category: 'things that fly'." To see what the monkeys might have learned from the drone fly-over, the scientists followed up a few days later with a second experiment.

They hid a loudspeaker near a lone monkey that was looking for food and played back the sound of the drone. "Upon hearing the sound, the animal looked up and scanned the sky," Fischer said. Subsequent tests showed that a single exposure to a new threat was enough for the monkeys to know what the sound means, showing a remarkable ability to adapt. The researchers speculate that the hard-wired monkey calls — and the meaning attached to them — are similar to noises that infant humans make.

"When a child is born, it has the same innate repertoire of pre-verbal sounds such as moaning, laughing and crying," said Hammerschmidt. Somehow, humans learned to move beyond this built-in vocabulary and produce new sounds associated with new meanings. But underneath all the layers of culture and learning, certain core responses that fall within the domain of evolutionary psychology remained. — AFP

World's rivers loaded with antibiotics waste

PARIS: Rivers worldwide are polluted with antibiotics that exceed environmental safety thresholds by up to 300 times, according to research unveiled at a conference Monday. Scientists found one or more common antibiotics in two-thirds of 711 samples taken from rivers in 72 countries, they told a meeting of environmental toxicologists in Helsinki.

In dozens of locations, concentrations of the drugs — used to fight off bacterial infection in people and livestock — exceeded safety levels set by the AMR Industry Alliance, a grouping of more than 100 biotech and pharmaceutical companies. Ciprofloxacin, a frontline treatment for intestinal and urinary tract infections, surpassed the industry threshold at 51 of the sites tested. At one location in Bangladesh,

concentrations of another widely used antibiotic, metronidazole, were 300 times above the limit, the researchers said. "The results are quite eye opening and worrying, demonstrating the widespread contamination of river systems around the world with antibiotic compounds," Alistair Boxall, a scientist at the York environmental Sustainability Institute, said in a statement.

The widespread presence of antibiotics not only impacts wildlife, but likely contributes to the problem of antimicrobial resistance. The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that the world is running out of antibiotics that still work, and has called on industry and governments to urgently develop a new generation of drugs. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

HADI CLINIC Ophthalmology Services

Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally
Senior Registrar

Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid
Consultant

Dr. Abeer Khattab
Specialist

Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally
Senior Registrar

Dr. Ahmed Hosni Abd Elhamid
Consultant

Dr. Abeer Khattab
Specialist

Cataract Surgery **Glaucoma** **Retina** **General Ophthalmology** **Follow-Up All Treatments**

Follow us on social media @hadiclinic

Tel: 1828282
Whatsapp Us +965-6000 2184

Dr Sahar Ghannam
Dermatology consultant, skin treatment and laser

Timing: Saturdays to Wednesdays from 9 am to 1 pm
and from 8 pm to 12 pm
Thursday from 9:30 am until 1 pm

Friday is a holiday.

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

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

saharpolyclinic **Dr.saharghannamsclinic** **Email: drsgderma@gmail.com**

WELCOME

Dr Tamam Abou Ali
Consultant ENT, Head & Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon

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

1 888 883
www.qmc-kuwait.com

qmcKuwait

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

Dr. Husain Alenezi

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

Expert in diagnosing and treating:

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

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088 94494452 Twitter: @DrHusain_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!

Dr. Kiran Turaka
Ophthalmologist

Dr. Zareena Zahir
Ophthalmologist

Dr. Hasan Khan
Senior Cardiologist

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

50721507
24551555
www.exircenterkw.com

EXIR MEDICAL SUBSPECIALITIES CENTER
Block No.4 Jahra - Kuwait

WE ACCEPT ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

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

CLINIC
PAGE

Kuwait Times

248 33 199

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

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

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

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

ACADAMIC CERTIFICATES:

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

SPECIALIZED IN:

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

SHARQ, Ahmad Aliaher st., Building b8, Floor 13.
Tel.: (+965) 22060777.
@Drbuhaimed, @Renovabb, @dardonaab
Email: drbuhaimed@beautybeyond.com.kw
www.beautybeyond.com.kw

BEAUTY & BEYOND

To advertise on this Page

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

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

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

مستشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

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

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

Specialized in:

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

alsalam.int.hospital

IC INTERNATIONAL CLINIC
INTERNATIONAL CLINIC
الكلينيكية الدولية
PHENACEE DR. HEALTH & CARE

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

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

Dr. Hani Haider
General Surgery Consultant

<http://www.international-clinic.com> **Tel: 1886677** **ic_kwt**

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

مستشفى دار الشفاء
Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

Academic Certificates – Training

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

Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

CROSSWORD 2220

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14
15				16									17		
18			19				20						21		
22							23			24		25			
		26				27				28					
29	30					31	32		33						
34				35	36					37		38	39	40	
41			42							43					
44		45								46					
47							48		49			50			
51				52			53					54			
		55	56		57		58	59							
60	61			62			63					64	65	66	67
68				69	70	71					72				
73				74					75			76			
77				78								79			

ACROSS

1. Cut off from a whole.
4. Extremely hungry.
12. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
15. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
16. A state of dishonor.
17. A watery solution of sugars, salts, and minerals that circulates through the vascular system of a plant.
18. A person who works at a specific job.
20. A genus of Siphonaptera.
21. An ester of adenosine that is converted to ATP for energy storage.
22. A narrow pass (especially one between mountains).
23. A public promotion of some product or service.
24. A landlocked republic in central Africa.
26. Combined or joined to increase in size or quantity or scope.
28. Attack someone physically or emotionally.
29. Of relatively small extent from one surface to the opposite or in cross section.
31. At right angles to the length of a ship or airplane.
34. The large yellow root of a rutabaga plant used as food.
41. The square of a body of any size of type.
42. (plate tectonic theory) A hypothetical continent including all the landmass of the earth prior to the Triassic period when it split into Laurasia and Gondwanaland.
43. An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
44. (genetics) Designating the generation of organisms from which hybrid offspring are produced.
46. Coffee with the caffeine removed.
47. Of or at or relating to an anode.
50. 30 to 300 gigahertz.
51. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
52. Being one more than fifty.
53. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
57. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
58. (folklore) A corpse that rises at night to drink the blood of the living.
60. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
64. Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
68. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
69. To or from every one of two or more (considered individually).
72. Excessively fat.
73. A flexible container with a single opening.
74. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
76. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
77. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
78. A member of the Siouan people formerly inhabiting the Black Hills of western South Dakota.
79. An inlaid furniture decoration.

DOWN

1. Suggestive of or tending to moral looseness.
2. A member of the Siouan people inhabiting the valleys of the Platte and Missouri rivers in Nebraska.
3. Layers of ice cream and syrup and whipped cream.
4. A piece of land cleared of trees and usually enclosed.
5. Be in accord.
6. A hard brittle gray polyvalent metallic element that resembles iron but is not magnetic.
7. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
8. A smoky fire to drive away insects.
9. Ancient Hebrew unit of liquid measure = 1.5 gallons.
10. A postulated biochemical change (presumably in neural tissue) that represents a memory.
11. God of the sky.
12. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
13. A cushion on a throne for a prince in India.
14. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
19. (of persons) Seized and detained unlawfully, often for ransom.
25. Towards the shore from the water.
27. Relatively nontoxic South African herb smoked like tobacco.
30. Pertaining to or concerned with the humanities.
32. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
33. Jordan's port.
35. Obvious and dull.
36. A faint constellation in the southern hemisphere near Hydra and Vela.
37. A quantity of no importance.
38. An official who carries a mace of office.
39. A genus of Indrididae.
40. A Chadic language spoken in northern Nigeria.
45. An artificial language for international use that rejects rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
48. Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
49. Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.
54. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
55. An ancient city in northern Portugal.
56. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
59. Of or relating to or involving an area.
61. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
62. The head of a branch of an organized crime syndicate.
63. A garment that covers the head and face.
65. A republic in western South America.
66. United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
67. Heal or recover.
70. A wooden pin pushed or driven into a surface.
71. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
75. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You're looking good to others but not so much to you. You're doing your own special psychoanalyzing and finding yourself wanting. That happens to everyone when they start to take logical looks at their mental, emotional and physical selves. No one is completely happy with self. You can be very critical of you. You're looking back over months of your life with a more than serious eye. Now is the time to put those thoughts you have for bettering your life into action. You seem to say what you think before you've had time to parse the information very well. In truth, you're turning over a new leaf. This may be here to stay.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Yesterday you didn't want to talk with coworkers. Today you don't care whether you spare their feelings or not. You seem to feel that you need to start your work life over, creating new habits and getting your work done in a new, improved manner without the whining nature some have shown. Though you don't care, it's best you stand clear of arguments today even if you want to set someone straight. Arguments don't clear up anything. They lend more to the side of continuous anxiety than for the good, especially at work. Be with those you love later. Have a nice evening and attempt to relax.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You seem to be under a lot of pressure now in the manner in which you come across to others. You'd rather be out with family and friends playing than at work today. Being at work and concerned may be why you appear pressured. Take heart though, being out with others may not be the best thing because they too could take your words wrong. So, you may as well be at work making a good living for yourself and those you love. Daydream some while at work. It may help to pass the time until you celebrate later. You could find yourself being a little more impulsive than you generally are too. Of course, that may be fun too. Enjoy more good times later.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a perfect time to assert yourself and move forward in your career decisions. The path to what you want is open and clear. Drive and energy are there for the taking to be used as you need. Emotional directness at work and at home is part of your demeanor but gets your point across without issue. People appreciate the way you operate now. New starts are brought on by your stars path and give you the extra help you need now. You find yourself making new habits which seem to be much better than your old ones and will be here for your use for time to come.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You feel as if you can do no wrong. Work and home life have everything going your way now. Accolades and material items flood into your life as if you haven't even worked towards them which you know you've done. But the feeling is one of success and getting things easily which is something you love. It just looks that way. Still you're psychic is showing along with this because you're being helped by the universe or God. While all this is going your way, you may also feel a sense of dissatisfaction and of loneliness. Nit-picking isn't a pretty site when you're being blessed as you are. Get your chin up!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You appear commanding and assertive. That's because you're entering a period of time where you're not going to take any type excuse or bad behavior from anyone. Not only that but this time will set habits for a long time to come. Make sure anything you change now is one of necessity or makes you feel good. It's okay that others disagree with you but it's all in the manner in which they do it. Plack, unless otherwise educated on the issue in a better manner and being able to prove the point, won't be tolerated at all. Get ready for some rough times where you'll stand your ground.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

People better watch what they say to you now because you're in the mood to let them know how you really feel. Emotional directness has you wondering what you just said that caused that look on the other's face. New habits have started. Make sure they're the kind you can take and be proud of taking into the future. After all, you're creating your future now. Your analytical side is showing and making great progress in your work community. People watch what you're doing and not because they think you're psychic anymore. Besides they may be scared to say anything about that. Long, intellectual, studying conversations make for a better environment which you enjoy now.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Practical application at work lends to you getting really nice kudos which will lead to more soon. Common sense, which can be better than a high IQ sometimes, guides you. Be grateful. You feel that a change of some kind is still in order. You're working towards that daily. Noticing that you're going inside much more than usual has you taking a look at that today and realizing that you are not as extroverted as you once were. Impulsiveness with powerful feelings drive you on the way to what you expect and want. Emotional directness has you telling your family and lover what you need.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Putting your creative thoughts into words and then communicating them to coworkers is your forte today. Being direct in your approach to others marks a new cycle in your life where you are forceful and aggressive too. Workmates are used to your being sweetly appealing when trying to get a task done. Not now. What's above board and straightforward is the method you're using now in all areas of your life, no holding back for you. Analytical abilities you exhibit, has you having long, engrossing conversations with someone you consider intelligent. This enlightening period will continue for some time to come. Enjoy.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

High diving and a few other death-defying thoughts may enter your head in a work way. At least that's what your coworkers think when you explain what and how you want a work project to run. Furthermore, you'll suffer no arguments. Even though you seem to be off your gourd with some of your adventurous ideas, you're really into being practical and traditional. It's just done in a different manner. Think about what and how your doing the things you want done. The making of new habits at work and home better be something to your liking because those behaviors will be here for a while.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Being assertive now gets you your way at work. You may think about what you've done to get that way after the fact and realize that you meant to take no objections to what you've put into effect. It's the stars having their way with you now or rather helping you. Inventiveness is part of this cycle along with not taking any crap. A fresh start is what you're after even with an old job. This could also mean you feel things around you need refreshing and start to amend that issue now. Be careful though because most don't like change.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Make sure that the habits you start today are good ones because you're going to live with them for a while. Hopefully, you like these behaviors especially when they're work related. A move to a fresh start happens today because something done right before now elicited an emotional reason for changing. You've decided, that you're going to tell it like it is now. No more namby-pamby will be tolerated. If people don't like it, they can be the ones to move on. This may get you in trouble at home but at work, you get more respect for your actions at this time.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Movie Musicals 2 - Word Search

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

ALL THAT JAZZ
BLUE HAWAII
BUGSY MALONE
CALAMITY JANE
CARMEN
CHICAGO
DREAMGIRLS
FAME

FUNNY FACE
GIGI
GREASE
HAIR
HIGH SOCIETY
JAILHOUSE ROCK
MARY POPPINS
MY FAIR LADY

OKLAHOMA
PAK JOEY
SILK STOCKINGS
STATE FAIR
SWING TIME
TOMMY
YENTL

Daily Sudoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

Movie Musicals 1 - Solution

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

A CHORUS LINE
ANNIE
BRIGADOON
CABARET
CAMELOT
CAROUSEL
EVITA
FANTASIA

FUNNY GIRL
GODSPELL
GYPSY
HELLO DOLLY
HOLIDAY INN
LA TRAVIATA
MAMMA MIA
MOULIN ROUGE

NEWSIES
OLIVER
SHOW BOAT
SOUTH PACIFIC
SWEET CHARITY
THE MUSIC MAN
TOP HAT

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2019



Wall paintings are seen on the residential buildings in Mumbai. — AFP photos

Falling prices rock coffee-growers in Colombia

High in the lush green mountains of western Colombia where they grow the soft beans from which the world's finest coffee is cultivated, growers are up in arms over the giveaway prices being fixed a world away on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Producers here say they are selling at a loss, blaming the crash devastating their industry on stock market speculators who have forced prices down to an all-time low. "We are paid a pittance," says Gustavo Echeverry, 50, expressing the frustration of many of the 15,000 or so inhabitants of this coffee-growing center nestled in the mountains. It's a far cry, they say, from the "Fair Trade" coffee globally certified to ensure it is grown under equitable conditions, so that farmers aren't exploited.



A man drinks coffee in Santuario municipality, Risaralda department, Colombia.

Some growers around the village of Santuario have been forced to rip up their crops to grow something-anything-else. The coffee growers' lot worsened with the last harvest, which produced beans pitted by a plague of beetles. Quality suffered, adding to an international price slump that has forced growers to sell below cost. Producing a 12.5-kilogram (27.5-pound) bag of coffee costs the equivalent of \$22. But wholesalers pay Echeverry an average \$21 a bag. "It's an unfair

trade," he quips bitterly. Ramon Jimenez has spent his life growing coffee on his San Antonio plantation nearby, but says the industry is on its last legs here. "We never stop thinking that soon we may no longer exist as coffee growers," says Jimenez.

The Jimenez family has been growing coffee here for three generations. Ramon's 19-year-old grandson Javier says he grew up among the coffee trees on the plantation. "I dream of taking over the farm, of succeeding my father and my grandfather, but if the crisis continues like this... I will have to look elsewhere, maybe even leave for the United States." Colombia is the third largest coffee producer in the world, after Brazil and Vietnam, and the number one producer of high-quality soft beans.

In Colombia, 540,000 families owe their livelihoods to the coffee sector. It's the country's top export, ahead of oil and minerals. But in Santuario, "Coffee plantation for sale" signs posted up at the local offices of the National Federation of Coffee Growers (NFC) have sent a chill through the local industry. Others, like Echeverry, have opened their farms up to tourism as a way to keep afloat.

Ready to leave

Tens of thousands of people have been displaced from these mountains over the tumultuous half century of Colombia's armed conflict. Santuario's mayor, Everardo Ochoa, says the exodus starts again every time coffee hits a crisis. The international reference price for coffee has dropped from a high of \$1.50 per pound in 2016 to less than a dollar—a historic low.

According to the International Coffee Organization (OIC), production-measured in 60-kilogram bags—in 2018/19 will hit 167 million bags, higher than global consumption of 165 million. The only reason coffee production still exists to any extent in Santuario is because many producers have "coffee in their veins," and can't do anything else, says Echeverry.



'Ripping it up'

Back in 1993, Diego Henao was forced into a life-changing decision in a bid to save his two plantations, totaling 400,000 trees. He emigrated. Entering the United States illegally, he stayed 13 years and earned a Green Card permanent residency before returning full-time to run his plantation. Since then, in lean times like now, he spends four months a year in the US working as a house painter, and then injects his savings back into his coffee trees so as not to borrow from banks. Now 53, he says: "I'm very close to being happy, if it weren't for the coffee prices." The "Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia" is recognized on the UNESCO world heritage list, but there are fewer and fewer coffee trees.

Gabriel Ochoa, 70, has finished struggling with his: "I ripped them up... I've put down sugar cane instead and I don't regret it." Fernando Morales-de La Cruz founded the Coffee for Change organization to campaign for more equitable distribution of

the industry's profits. He says a pound (half a kilogram) of green coffee equals 55 cups on the high street. But multinational corporations pay only 90 cents, which trickles down to just 0.02 cents per cup to the producer. That's "a quarter of what he received in 1983," says Morales-De la Cruz.

Fearing the social impact of falling prices, the Bogota government has announced \$80 million in aid and the NFC is seeking to extricate producers from the New York Stock Exchange, which has set prices for decades. But to do that, the NFC says it needs to join forces with soft bean producers in Central America and Africa whose quality would allow them to negotiate their own prices. Such a radical change will take time. Meanwhile, up in the hills of Santuario, the next harvest comes in October-November. If nothing changes by then, more farms will go on sale. — AFP

General view of coffee plantations in Santuario municipality, Risaralda department, Colombia. — AFP photos



A man holds coffee grains at a farm in Santuario municipality, Risaralda department, Colombia.



A man harvests coffee in Santuario municipality, Risaralda department, Colombia.



View of coffee grains in Santuario municipality, Risaralda department, Colombia.



Antoinette Makh, instructs her pupils in the Aramaic language at a school in the Syrian mountain village of Maalula, in the Damascus region. — AFP photos



George Zaarour, a specialist in the Aramaic language, uses a magnifying glass to decipher Aramaic script.



George Zaarour holding a notebook with Aramaic script written on it.

IN SYRIA'S MAALULA, FEAR FOR SURVIVAL OF LANGUAGE OF CHRIST

Hunched over a thick book, George Zaarour uses a magnifying glass to decipher Aramaic script—the biblical language of Jesus that is starting to disappear from everyday use in his village. The 62-year-old is one of the last in Syria to specialize in the ancient language, which has survived for 2,000 years in the village of Maalula—one of the world's oldest Christian settlements. In the mountain village, Aramaic was once widely used, but today few people still speak the tongue. "Aramaic is in danger," Zaarour said. "If things continue like this, the language will disappear within five to 10 years." Zaarour collects books and encyclopedias on Aramaic in his small shop, where he sells religious icons, crucifixes and even household products.

Pilgrims from the entire world once visited the village to see its religious buildings, and to hear Aramaic spoken on the streets. But the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011 changed everything. Rebels and jihadists linked to Al-Qaeda seized Maalula in late 2013, forcing most of its Christian inhabitants to flee. Regime forces recaptured it in April 2014, seven months after the insurgents first entered the village. But two-thirds of its inhabitants have yet to return.

'Last people on earth'

Many of Maalula's residents have found refuge in and around Damascus, which is about 55 kilometers (35 miles) away, or even abroad. "The war generation was born outside Maalula, in Damascus or in other areas, and they learned Arabic first," Zaarour said. An author of some 30 books on the Aramaic language and its history in Maalula, Zaarour is well-known in Syrian academic circles. He regularly supervises student dissertations in Damascus. In 2006, he helped set up a centre in Maalula to teach Aramaic, but it closed after war broke out. The village's mayor, Elias Thaalab, hailed Zaarour as a source of true local pride.

"I think George Zaarour must be the only teacher and specialist of the Aramaic language in Syria," said the 80-year-old, leaning on his cane. "Some young teachers are trying to learn the language, but Mr Zaarour is the only one who knows the language in depth," he added. Preserving the language is of utmost importance, he says. "For more than 2,000 years, we have kept the language of Christ in our hearts," he said. "We are among the last people on earth who have the honor of mastering it." But of the more than 6,000 people who lived in the village before the conflict, only 2,000 have returned, he said. Maalula, which means "entrance" in Aramaic, is the most famous of three villages around Damascus where the language is still used. In Syria's northeast, Syriac, which is derived from Aramaic, is also still spoken.

Other Aramaic dialects that have evolved from the original historic version of the language are also used across the Middle East today, especially in Turkey and northern Iraq, according to Jean-Baptiste Yon, an ancient language specialist.

'From father to son'

In Maalula today, the vast majority of houses remain empty, only chirping birds interrupting the calm. The village has fared better than other parts of Syria, but it has not been spared completely. Several churches and monas-

teries were looted or damaged by artillery fire, and religious icons destroyed or stolen. Al-Nusra jihadists kidnapped 13 nuns from the village in December 2013, only releasing them three months later. Today, in the monastery of Saint Sergius and Bacchus, gilded candles stand once again on the chapel's white marble altar.



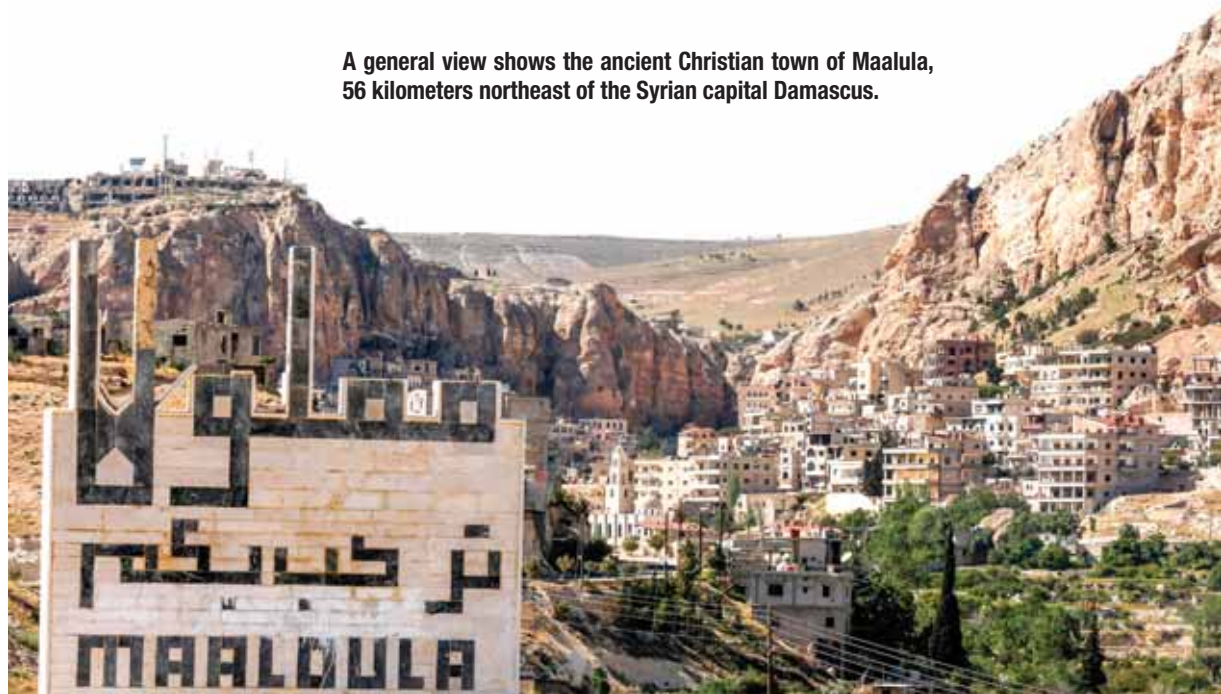
A statue of the Virgin Mary overlooks the ancient Christian town of Maalula.



Angel Allam, a nun and teacher surveys her pupils at the playground of a school in the mountain village of Maalula.

He spends his days studying and translating this ancient Semitic language, which was widespread in the Middle East at the beginning of the Christian era and whose origins date back to the 10th century BC. Today, "80 percent of Maalula's inhabitants don't speak Aramaic, and the remaining 20 percent are over 60 years old," said the expert. Etched out in the cliff face, and full of churches, convents and monasteries, Maalula is considered a symbol of Christian presence in the Damascus region.

A general view shows the ancient Christian town of Maalula, 56 kilometers northeast of the Syrian capital Damascus.



A picture shows a partial view of the mountain village of Maalula, in Syria's Damascus region.



George Zaarour reads a book written in the Aramaic, at his shop.

ENJOY NEVER SEEN BEFORE SYNCHRONIZED FIREWORKS AT FESTIVAL BAY THIS EID

This Eid Al-Fitr, shoppers at Dubai Festival City Mall will be amazed by the first-of-its-kind multi-media and fireworks spectacular shows featuring synchronized fireworks that will light up the sky choreographed to Arabic style music, colourful fountains, lights and lasers. The Eid Fireworks Spectacular shows will complement the record-breaking visual and sensory extravaganza IMAGINE shows.

The two Eid Fireworks Spectacular shows will run on June 5 and 6 at 8:00pm and 10:00pm. Whether you are dining with your family at one of the mall's waterfront restaurants or enjoying the scenic bay, you can enjoy this one-of-a-kind Eid IMAGINE show twice each day! If you are keen on getting a good spot to watch the fireworks spectacular, you can book a table and enjoy the show while dining at any of our 15 waterfront restaurants.

There's also plenty of exciting in-mall activities with colourful roaming entertainment on offer for families shopping or dining at the mall for the first three days of Eid.

In preparation for the season of gifting, Dubai Festival City Mall is launching the all-new Festival City Eid Gift Card packaging with beautiful Arabic calligraphy and packed with over 100 exclusive offers. The Festival City Gift Card is the perfect "Eidyah" gift for loved ones this Eid Al-Fitr.

If you are looking for a fun and vibrant destination this Eid Al-Fitr, Dubai Festival City Mall is the place to be. You can also park hassle free with the VIP valet services available at the main entrance of the mall for only AED40.





Traditional storyteller Abdel Wahed Ismail, entertains the audience in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan. — AFP photos



A man serves refreshments to the audience of a traditional storyteller.

STORYTELLING, GAMES MAKE IRAQ COMEBACK ON RAMADAN NIGHTS



A man serves coffee to the audience of a traditional storyteller in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

“Once upon a time” tales and folksy games from the pre-television days are making a comeback in Iraq during the long nights of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. Traditional storyteller Abdel Wahed Ismail, a red fez atop his head, yellow scarf draped over his shoulders, in a black gallabia gown, captivates audiences in the northern metropolis of Mosul.

As in other Muslim countries, the annual month of dawn-to-dusk fasting is a time for evening gatherings in restaurants, coffee shops or homes of family and friends across Iraq. While many spend the night in prayer at mosques between an evening feast and pre-dawn snacks, others take part in games that in Iraq are reserved for Ramadan-time.

Up until one or two generations ago, Ramadan nights were the preserve of the hakawati, or Arab storytellers, regaling audiences with fables as well as local news and historical stories. Mosul, now a city of almost two million people, has for centuries been a commercial and intellectual hub of the Middle East. With the arrival of television and radio in the 1960s, the hakawati vanished from the coffee shops and restaurants where families and friends gathered.

Two years after Mosul—a city gripped by violence following the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein—was freed from the stranglehold of the Islamic State jihadist group, Ismail has been leading a revival. The 70-year-old actor and local celebrity takes his seat each night on a white wooden bench on a platform to tell tales in the unmistakable Moslawi dialect. “I’ve lived through so many different times, so I try to pass on stories of good things to young people,” said Ismail, who witnessed the bloody overthrow of Iraq’s monarchy as well as a succession of coups and wars. While tales such as the chivalrous epic “Antar and Abba” put smiles on the faces of older members of the audience as they reminisce, Ismail slips in references to hip online games such as PUBG for the younger ones.

Tray and ring games

In the oil city of Kirkuk, half-way between Baghdad and Mosul in northern Iraq, the game of “Sini wa Zarf” (the tray and the envelope, in Kurdish) has hundreds of Ramadan-time aficionados among its rival Kurdish, Turkmen and Arab communities. “It’s also known as the game of the communities because it really brings together all the communities,” said Shano Askar, a Kurd in his 30s, absorbed in an encounter. Around the city’s citadel and across its historic districts, outdoor coffee and tea shops are packed with enthusiasts, their eyes glued on the metal trays and 11 upturned small gold cups used for the game.

A die is hidden under one of the cups and the players have to work out which one. Another competition in which players must find a hidden object—“mheibess” (rings) — is



extremely popular in Baghdad. A player discreetly slips a ring to a member of his team, and their adversaries have to figure out who, reading their body language and facial expressions. Such games form part of a wider social phenomenon as Ramadan nights turn once again, often for the first time since the 2013 invasion, into social events rather than a time to be hunkered down at home. They also serve to show that “technological progress has not got the better of the good things of the past”, said Iraqi sociologist Saad Ahmed. — AFP

Traditional storyteller Abdel Wahed Ismail (center), entertains the audience in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan.



The audience of a traditional storyteller, gathers in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.



The audience of a traditional storyteller, gathers in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.



Traditional storyteller Abdel Wahed Ismail (on stage), entertains the audience in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.



A young girl poses for a photograph with traditional storyteller Abdel Wahed Ismail.



The audience of a traditional storyteller, gathers in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

Lifestyle | Features

Sun-kissed and shaggy-haired, Nguyen Thai Binh swaps his flip flops for bulky boots ahead of snowboarding practice on the sand dunes of southern Vietnam—the unlikely training ground for the country’s fledgling winter athletes with mountain-sized ambitions. Binh is one of Vietnam’s top snowboarders, pioneering a push to boost winter sports in Southeast Asia where snowfall is virtually unheard of. But it’s been an uphill battle for athletes like him facing funding shortfalls, lack of public interest and few training facilities, namely snowy mountains.

“This sport is so new for Vietnamese, and we don’t have any snow to practice on,” said 29-year-old Binh, looking California cool in a Quicksilver cap and bright boardshorts. Though Vietnam’s northern Sapa mountains see the occasional dusting in winter months, there are no snow slopes for aspiring skiers and snowboarders in the tropical country. Instead, Binh boards on the undulating sand dunes of Mui Ne, better known for picture-perfect vistas and breakneck ATV rides on offer for tourists in the sunny southern province of Binh Thuan.

Binh made his international debut at the Asian Winter Games in Sapporo, Japan in 2017, joining Vietnam’s first-ever team to compete in the tournament long-dominated by Japan, South Korea and China. It was a lifelong dream for Binh who fell in love with sports as a scrawny kid, so skinny that he was taunted by classmates for looking like a drug addict. Committed to bulking up, he tried his hand at martial arts, then kitesurfing and longboarding before he started sandsurfing in 2007.

Like most of his teammates, the Asian Winter Games in Sapporo was his first time seeing snow. The skiers too had only ever trained on sand using tree branches as slalom poles on the sandy slopes of Mui Ne. “I was hesitant, I’d been practising on the sand dunes for a while so I had the technique, but the snow was so slippery,” Binh told AFP.

Broken limbs, frozen toes

It was an eventful week for the seven athletes who competed for Vietnam. Many didn’t have proper winter gear and froze if they stayed outside for too long. Skier Pham Tien Dat tumbled during slalom training, broke his shoulder and couldn’t compete. The Vietnamese journalists covering the games got sick and were hospitalized. As for sports junkie Binh, his other hobbies served him well in Sapporo.

“Binh was a fast learner because of his longboarding and surfing skills,” said Le Quan, the Vietnam team coach. Vietnam walked away with no medals, but plenty of pride. “We went to Sapporo not aiming for a high ranking but to challenge ourselves,” Quan told AFP. There were eight Southeast Asian teams at the 2017 games, the highest number since 1986 when the Philippines became the first country from the region to compete.

The director general of the Olympic Council of Asia Husain Al Musallam said winter sports have developed among Southeast Asian athletes “in a very good way” and expects the number of participants to jump for the next games in 2021. Many athletes so far have been skaters, thanks to an increasing number of ice rinks in malls and sports centers across the region, including Vietnam. Further afield, countries with warm climates from Ghana to Mexico to Nigeria have broken into winter sports.



Nguyen Thai Binh riding down sand dunes on his snowboard in the southern Vietnamese town of Mui Ne. — AFP photos

Perhaps the most famous tropical team is Jamaica’s bobsled troupe whose story is chronicled in the popular 90s comedy “Cool Runnings”. The main hurdle for winter sports in warm weather countries is money. Vietnam’s communist government has put some money into skating and ice hockey, but Binh says snowboarding remains a neglected sport. “Snowboarding is struggling to develop here because there’s no snow, and Vietnam doesn’t have much money to send athletes abroad to train,” he said.

Binh is hoping to compete at the next Asian Winter Games in 2021 — if he can find a sponsor. Until then his main focus is on longboarding, with sights set on the Southeast Asian Games in Philippines later this year. Skateboarding made its debut at the competition last year and will premiere at the Olympics in Japan in 2020. But Binh says snowboarding is still his first passion, and he’s proud to have helped it grow in Vietnam. “Before we competed (in Sapporo) no one knew about winter sports, no one could have even imagined we could have a team.” — AFP



Snowboarder Nguyen Thai Binh walking atop a sand dune in the southern Vietnamese town of Mui Ne.



Snowboarder Nguyen Thai Binh walking atop a sand dunes in the southern Vietnamese town of Mui Ne.



Nguyen Thai Binh riding down sand dunes on his snowboard in the southern Vietnamese town of Mui Ne.



Nguyen Thai Binh preparing to ride down a sand dune on his snowboard.

Thunberg joins Schwarzenegger in call for climate action

Climate activist Greta Thunberg called on citizens to “change everything” to avert climate crisis, at the start of a conference in Vienna yesterday organized by former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. “We young people are waking up and we promise, we won’t let you get away with it anymore,” 16-year-old Thunberg told delegates. She was speaking after green parties emerged as one of the big winners in the European parliamentary elections. Climate change was “the biggest crisis that humanity has ever faced,” said Thunberg. “It is not something you can ‘like’ on Facebook.”

Technological developments in fields such as electric cars and solar energy should not leave people with the impression that they could “solve the crisis without making any efforts”, she said. “Once we realize, we act, we change. Humans are very adaptable,” she added. Thunberg has become a figurehead for young climate activists internationally, inspiring hundreds of thousands of other youths to strike from school in “Fridays For Future” protests. She was speaking at the Austrian World Summit, an initiative launched by Schwarzenegger, which brings together some

1,200 figures from the worlds of science, politics and business to discuss ways to tackle climate change.

In a speech at the event, Schwarzenegger called on world leaders to “stop lying to the people about pollution and about the climate change” and to “invest in the green energy of the future”. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres regretted that “many of the countries that in Paris promised to do a number of things are not even catching up with their own promises”. The 2015 Paris agreement, negotiated under the auspices of the UN, enjoins nations to cap global warming at “well below” two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit). But US President Donald Trump pulled out of the accord in 2017.

“Climate disruption is upon us, and it is progressing faster than our efforts to address it,” Guterres said. In Sunday’s European parliament elections green parties managed double-digit scores in some of Europe’s biggest countries, including 20 percent in Germany. Polling data indicates younger voters in particular turned towards environmentalist parties in order to put climate action more firmly on the agenda. — AFP



(From left) UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and Austrian-US actor, filmmaker, politician and activist Arnold Schwarzenegger pose for photographers prior to the opening ceremony of the R20 Regions of Climate Action Austrian World Summit in Vienna, Austria. — AFP

Rapper Chris Brown skips Paris hearing over rape accusation

American rap star Chris Brown failed to appear at a hearing yesterday in Paris where he had been summoned to a face-to-face meeting with a Frenchwoman who has accused him of rape, her lawyer said. The woman, 24, says Brown along with his bodyguard and a friend of assaulted her in the luxury Mandarin Oriental hotel on the night of January 15. Brown and his associates were released without charge in January after being held for questioning after the allegations of aggravated rape and a drug offence. But the woman has stood by the accusations and police summoned Brown to a “confrontation” with his accuser.

Gloria Allred, the high-profile American women’s rights lawyer representing the accuser, said that Brown’s failure to show up was a “scandal”. “Why did he fail to come today? Does he think that he is above the law in France? Does he think that the French criminal justice system is a joke?” she told reporters outside the court. The woman, who has not been identified by name, told police she met Brown in a nightclub near the Champs-Elysees avenue with a group of other party-goers.

She then agreed to go back to the hotel, which is on the glitzy Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honore. Lawyers for the Grammy Award-winning singer have said he is innocent and they are considering a libel lawsuit. Allred has taken on a string of high-profile cases representing women, including some who claim they were abused by R&B star R. Kelly. She has also represented a woman who alleged she was sexually assaulted at Brown’s home during a drug- and alcohol-fuelled party in 2017. “Did he learn that I was coming to Paris to support my client?” Allred said outside the court. “Was he afraid of me? And is that the reason that he chose not to show up?”



US lawyer Gloria Allred addresses the press yesterday outside a French crime Police headquarters in Paris where her client, a woman who filed a complaint against US singer Chris Brown for rape, is being heard by investigators. — AFP

The singer, who according to Billboard has sold more than 100 million records, has been in the news more for his legal troubles than hit releases in recent years. In 2009 he was convicted of beating fellow singer Rihanna, his girlfriend at the time, who missed the Grammy Awards because of her injuries. Contacted by AFP, Brown’s French lawyer Raphael Chiche was not immediately available for comment. — AFP

Classifieds

Wednesday, May 29, 2019



Now you can browse

www.kuwaittimes.net

e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net



Hospitals	
Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9
Clinics	
Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

I, George Vishnu, holder of Indian Passport No. S5764774 issued at Kuwait on 28-5-2019 permanent resident of George Vishnu Stanmore Estate OC. Valparai, Coimbatore Dist. Pin 642127, Tamil Nadu, India, and presently residing Salmiya block 10, my change name from George Vishnu to Viju George with immediate effect. (C 5542)

I, Vaseem Mohammed Khan, holder of Indian Passport No. R5459717, issued at Kuwait on 07/05/2017, permanent resident of Borli Panchatan Raigad Ms. Given name: Wasim Mohammed, surname: Khan. (C 5543) 29-5-2019

I, Mr. Omprakash Ramchandra Sasane changed my old surname Omprakas & given name Ramchandra Sasane to new Surname Sansane & given

name Omprakash Ramchandra adhar No. 960505763436 (C 5540)

I, Bishar Mohammed Kutty S/o Andipatil Eusoof Mohammed Kutty, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3830803 hereby change my name to Bisher Mohammed Kutty for all official purposes. (C 5541) 28-5-2019

I, HUSAIN KAKUMAMA HUZA-IFA SHABBIR, holder of Indian Passport No. Z2814333, Permanent R/O Najampura Sagwara, Rajasthan 314025, have changed my Given Name to HUZAIFA SHABBIR HUSAIN Surname to KAKUMAMA. (C 5538)

I, CANDELINA FERNANDES Residing at H.No: 192/3, Near Ganapati Temple Central Horta Aquem-Baixo, Salcete Goa, has changed my name from MARIA CONCEICAO FERNANDES to CANDELINA FERNANDES. Hereafter, in all my dealings

and documents, I will be known by the name CANDELINA FERNANDES. (5537)

MATRIMONIAL

Proposals are invited for a Keralite boy, RCSC, 32/172, B.Sc very fair, working in Kuwait, upper middle class, from parents of suitable girls, preferably working in Kuwait. Interested please contact email: joekarintholi36@hotmail.com (C 5539) 27-5-2019

LOST

It is notified for the information that my original (qualifying certificate/mark statement and migration certificate) senior secondary examination of year 2015 and Rollno. 9103562 issued by CBSE had been actually lost. Name of the candidate - Jawaheer Junaid. Tel: 67799330. (C 5535) 23-5-2019

Airlines			
			
Kuwait Airways	171	Air India	22456700
Jazeera Airways	177	Air India EXPRESS	22438185/4
Wataniya Airways	22 066 536	Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Turkish Airlines	1884918	Egypt Air	22421578
American Airlines	22087425	Swiss Air	22421516
	22087426	Saudia	22426306
Jet Airways	22924455	Middle East Airlines`	22423073
FlyDubai	22414400	Lufthansa	22422493
Qatar Airways	22423888	PIA	22421044
KLM	22425747	Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6	Indian Airlines	22456700
British Airways	22425635	Oman Air	22958787
Air France	22430224	Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Emirates	22921555	Aeroflot	22404838/9

Lead Mechanical Engineer

Reputed FM company in Qatar looking for Lead Mechanical Engineer (Engineering graduate) with minimum 15 years of experience in Rotary & Static equipment's maintenance, Piping maintenance and familiar with NFPA standards.

E-mail CVs to:
mechengr.2019@gmail.com

URGENT HIRING

Reputed Security Company in Doha is looking for the following category;

- Ops/ Control room Manager - Any National, High School Diploma or Bachelor, 3 years Security companies experience preferred.
- Sectors/Branch Manager - Any National, must have Kuwait Driving License, Associate Degree or business management course. 3 years Security companies experience preferred.

Only shortlisted candidate will be notified.

recruitmentcareer.qa@gmail.com

Flight Schedule			Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)												
			DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION												
Arrival Flights on Wednesday 29/5/2019								Departure Flights on Wednesday 29/5/2019							
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	RBG	554	Alexandria	14:35
FEG	441	Asyut	00:05	KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	RBG	218	Asyut	14:35
IGO	1757	Kochi	00:10	KAC	672	Dubai	14:10	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	JZR	1223	Jeddah	14:35
THY	772	Istanbul	00:20	FDB	5059	Dubai	14:15	JZR	713	Sohag	00:10	QTR	8595	Beirut	14:45
KAC	102	London	00:50	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	MSC	412	Asyut	00:15	KNE	536	Jeddah	14:55
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	KAC	364	Colombo	14:35	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:45	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40	FDB	5060	Dubai	15:05
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	618	Doha	14:50	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	KAC	562	Amman	14:50	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55	JZR	409	Delhi	01:10	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KAC	512	Mashhad	14:55	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50	KAC	563	Amman	16:00
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:55	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	118	New York	15:00	JZR	101	Bahrain	01:50	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
RJA	648	Amman	03:05	KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05	KAC	285	Dhaka	02:00	KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:10	KAC	363	Colombo	02:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	KAC	417	Manila	02:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	JZR	111	Doha	02:10	ETD	304	Dhabi	16:20
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35	OMA	646	Muscat	16:20
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	JZR	707	Luxor	02:50	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	KAC	546	Cairo	15:50	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	SVA	505	Madinah	17:00
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	SVA	504	Madinah	16:00	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:25	JZR	222	Riyadh	16:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	796	Madinah	04:25	FDB	051	Dubai	16:10	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15	KAC	155	Istanbul	17:35
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04:50	JZR	732	Cairo	16:10	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
JZR	102	Bahrain	04:50	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:10	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:40
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	KAC	502	Beirut	16:15	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:15	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	SAW	705	Damascus	17:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:15	KAC	503	Beirut	17:40
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	JZR	116	Doha	17:05	KAC	103	London	05:20	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:10	JZR	1219	Jeddah	05:25	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55
KAC	552	Cairo	05:45	JZR	124	Dubai	17:15	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00
JZR	112	Doha	05:50	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	JZR	253	Amman	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:10	JZR	214	Jeddah	17:35	RJA	649	Amman	07:00	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10	KAC	167	Paris	07:15	KAC	615	Bahrain	18:10
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	165	Rome	08:00	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	BAW	156	London	08:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	RJA	640	Amman	19:05	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:00	JZR	403	Hyderabad	18:25
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
IGO	1755	CNN	07:10	KAC	744	Dammam	19:25	IGO	1756	CNN	08:10	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:45	JZR	151	Mashhad	08:15	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	354	Bengaluru	08:00	JZR	1224	Jeddah	19:55	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	104	London	20:00	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	19:55
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	KAC	166	Rome	20:00	KAC	561	Amman	08:55	KAC	124	Sharjah	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KNE	381	Taif	20:00	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
JZR	708	Luxor	08:45	FDB	057	Dubai	20:05	KAC	117	New York	09:05	RJA	641	Amman	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05	KAC	511	Mashhad	09:05	KAC	351	Kochi	20:30
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:10	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:15	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
FDB	5055	Dubai	09:20	KAC	620	Doha	20:30	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	FDB	058	Dubai	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:50
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	RBG	217	Asyut	20:55	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45	DLH	624	Dammam	20:55
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10	KAC	101	London	10:05	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	JZR	1234	Taif	21:15	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:15	RBG	214	Sohag	21:35
JZR	1220	Jeddah	10:55	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	FDB	5056	Dubai	10:15	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	QTR	1071	Doha	10:40	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	410	Delhi	11:50	KAC	168	Paris	21:20	IGO	1754	Ahmedabad	10:40	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	THY	764	Istanbul	21:30	KAC	617	Doha	10:40	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:30	KAC	616	Bahrain	21:40	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	RBG	1551	Alexandria	21:40	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:20	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	12:30	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	RBG	1552	Alexandria	22:30
THY	766	Istanbul	12:30	KAC	564	Amman	21:55	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
CLX	7912	Luxembourg	12:45	JAV	621	Amman	22:15	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10	JZR	407	Ahmedabad	22:40
MSR	610	Cairo	12:45	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15	JZR	221	Riyadh	12:40	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
QTR	8594	Doha	13:15	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:20	JZR	123	Dubai	12:45	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
KAC	774	Riyadh	13:35	SVA	514	Riyadh	22:25	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
JZR	212	Jeddah	13:45	AIC	975	Chennai	22:25	JZR	115	Doha	13:25	KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
RBG	213	Sohag	13:55	SVA	502	Jeddah	22:45	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
JZR	152	Mashhad	14:05	JZR	254	Amman	23:10	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45	JAV	622	Amman	23:15
KNE	535	Jeddah	14:05	MSC	411	Asyut	23:15	THY	767	Istanbul	14:00	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				MSR	614	Cairo	23:30	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15	SVA	515	Riyadh	23:25
				FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	CLX	7912	Hanoi	14:20	SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45



MAKKAH: Flags from different countries are pictured in the Saudi holy city of Makkah ahead of the upcoming twin summits of the Arab League and of the Gulf Cooperation Council. — AFP

Timeline of escalation in the Gulf

DUBAI: From US military deployments, to alleged “threats” from Iran, and attacks on oil tankers and instal-lations, here is a timeline of escalating tensions in the Gulf:

‘Credible threat’

On May 5, White House national security adviser John Bolton announces the Pentagon is sending the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier group and a bomber task force to the Middle East. A day later Patrick Shanahan, acting defense secretary, says the deployment is “in response to a number of troubling and escalatory indications and warnings” related to Iran. On May 7, the US says it is deploying B-52 bombers to the Gulf, followed by the Pentagon saying it will position a Patriot missile battery and an amphibious assault ship in the region.

Sanctions against Iran

On May 8, Iran says it is preparing to increase enriched uranium and heavy water production as part of its decision to stop some commitments made under the 2015 nuclear deal with major world powers. A year to the

day after Washington unilaterally withdrew from the deal, reimposing sanctions on Tehran, US President Donald Trump announces new measures against Iran’s steel and mining sectors.

Acts of ‘sabotage’

On May 12, two Saudi oil tankers and two other ships are damaged in mysterious “sabotage attacks” off the emirate of Fujairah, part of the United Arab Emirates. Fujairah port is the only Emirati terminal located on the Arabian Sea coast, bypassing the Strait of Hormuz, through which most Gulf oil exports pass. Iran, which has repeatedly threatened to close the strait in case of a mili-tary confrontation with the United States, calls the inci-dents “alarming and regrettable”.

No ‘war’

On May 13, European signatories to the nuclear deal meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Britain warns of the risk of conflict erupting “by accident” in the Gulf. The day after, Pompeo says: “We fundamentally do

not see a war with Iran”. Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei says “there is not going to be any war” with the United States.

Drone attacks near Riyadh

On May 14, Yemen’s pro-Iranian Houthis rebels carry out drone attacks near Riyadh, shutting down a key Saudi oil pipeline which stretches from oil-rich Eastern Province to the Red Sea. Two days later Saudi-led coalition air strikes hit the rebel-held Yemeni capital Sanaa.

US diplomats leave Iraq

On May 15, the US orders all non-emergency staff to leave its embassy in Baghdad and consulate in Arbil, due to an “imminent” threat from Iranian-linked Iraqi militias. Germany and the Netherlands say they are halting their training of soldiers in Iraq.

‘Deterrence’

Trump issues an ominous warning to Iran on May 19,

suggesting that if the Islamic republic attacks American interests, it will be destroyed. “If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran. Never threaten the United States again,” Trump says in a tweet. On May 21 Pompeo says it is “quite possible” Iran was responsible for mysterious sabotage incidents of oil tankers off the UAE or drone strikes on a Saudi crude pipeline. “This is about deterrence, not about war. We are not about going to war,” says Shanahan the same day. On May 24 the US announces it is deploying 1,500 additional troops to the Middle East to counter “credible threats” from Iran, a move Tehran denounces as “a threat to international peace”.

On May 27 during a visit to Tokyo to meet the new Japanese Emperor, Trump says the US is not seeking “regime change” in Iran. The Islamic republic “has a chance to be a great country, with the same leadership. We’re not looking for regime change. I want to make that clear. We’re looking for no nuclear weapons,” says Trump — AFP

N Koreans survive by paying bribes

GENEVA: North Koreans are forced to pay bribes to officials to survive in their isolated country, where corruption is “endemic” and repression rife, the United Nations human rights office said yesterday. Officials across North Korea extort money from a population struggling to make ends meet, threatening them with detention and prosecution - particularly those working in the informal economy, it said in a report. There was no immediate comment by Pyongyang, which was sent the UN report hours before publication.

North Korea blames the dire humanitarian situation on UN sanctions imposed for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs since 2006. But the report said that the military receives priority funding amid “economic mismanagement”. “I am concerned that the constant focus on the nuclear issue continues to divert attention from the terrible state of human rights for many millions of North Koreans,”

Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said in a statement.

“The rights to food, health, shelter, work, freedom of movement and liberty are universal and inalienable, but in North Korea they depend primarily on the ability of individuals to bribe State officials,” she said. Four in 10 North Koreans, or 10.1 million people, are chronically short of food and further cuts to already minimal rations are expected after the worst harvest in a decade, a UN assessment said earlier this month.

“The threat of arrest, detention and prosecution provide State officials with a powerful means of extorting money from a population struggling to survive,” the U.N. rights office report said. Bribery is “an everyday feature of people’s struggle to make ends meet”, said the report, entitled “The price is rights”. It denounced what it called a “vicious cycle of deprivation, corruption and repression”.

It is based on 214 interviews with North Korean “escapees”, mainly from the northeastern provinces of Ryanggang and North Hamgyong, bordering China. They were the first to be cut from the public distribution system that collapsed in 1994, leading to a famine estimated to have killed up to 1 million, it said. — Reuters

being amongst the first in the region to provide the 5G (the fifth generation cellular network technology for broadband access). His Highness’s remarks came during his reception of Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh at Bayan Palace yesterday.

Minister Al-Saleh was escorting Othaina along with CITRA board members. Lauding CITRA’s keeping pace with latest telecommunication technologies, His Highness underlined Kuwait’s advanced position in this regard, pointing out that cooperation between CITRA and telecommunication companies operating in Kuwait contributed to such achievement. His Highness urged government bodies to benefit from these developments; utilizing it to improve infrastructure and support the e-government.

Future vision

The completion of Fifth Generation (5G) technology operation in Kuwait is set to contribute to the digital transformation and prosperity of the oil-rich country, backing the leadership’s future development vision. The move is part of Kuwait’s fervent efforts to become a regional financial and commercial hub, and comes in line with the instructions of the Kuwait’s political leadership.

5G is generally seen as the fifth generation cellular network technology that provides broadband access. The industry association 3GPP defines any system using ‘5G NR’ (5G New Radio) software as ‘5G,’ a definition that came into general use by late 2018. 5G networks are digital cellular networks, in which the service area covered by providers is divided into a mosaic of small geographical areas called cells. Analog signals representing sounds and images are digitized in the phone, converted by an analog to digital converter and transmitted as a stream of bits. — KUNA

Kuwait’s communication...

Continued from Page 1

their networks for the launch of the fifth-generation service.

“This will make Kuwait one of the first countries in the world to organize and operate this new technology. The application of this service will be a great leap for the telecommunications world where speed of internet connection will reach great lengths, enabling a large range of data to be unlimitedly grasped to support the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial intelligence (AI) and smart cities, which will be an added value to the industrial, commercial and financial sectors as well as individuals,” the CITRA chief noted.

Al-Kharafi thanks PM

Zain Vice-Chairman and Group CEO Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi yesterday expressed his appreciation to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister, State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh for their immense support. Al-Kharafi also praised the Chairman and CEO of the Communication and Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA) Salem Al-Othaina for making Kuwait one of the first countries in the world to operate this new technology.

Amongst first in region

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah voiced pride over Kuwait

Ramadan Kareem

By Mariam Santos

Growing into Islam

My conversion to Islam was a long journey. I must confess I didn’t have a sudden revelation that made me want to become a Muslim, rather I spent years observing, listening, and learning about Islam. Islam is a matter of faith and a complete way of life, so I took my time growing into it. Sixteen years after I came to live in Kuwait, I converted to Islam.

When I came here I was not a lost person without a religion. I had been brought up as a Christian and I felt fine practicing this religion. I also didn’t want to change my religion just to make people like or accept me as this would be very hypocritical. I remember when my husband and I got married in Kuwait the judge told me, “You are a Christian and Christians are people of the book. So don’t ever let anyone tell you that you have to change your religion.”

I really respected him for telling me this. As time went on I started reading about Islam and my husband told me a lot about Islam. He often asked me if I would like to convert to Islam but I told him I had to really feel ready and committed to do this. I learned more about Islam with my children and I liked what I learned. Islam makes sense to me as the last and final religion.

I like the emphasis on mercy, justice, equality, charity, and helping others. Of course these concepts are also in Christianity and other religions, but the structure of Islam encourages one to practice these things regularly. Within the five pillars of Islam are so much wisdom and goodness for the world. Paying zakat, for example, solves the injustice and imbalance between rich and poor, if widely practiced.

Fasting promotes empathy, discipline, and faith. Nothing can teach people the lesson of how fortunate they are to have enough to eat and drink better than fasting. It also encourages honesty and commitment to God. You can fool people and pretend to be fasting, but no one can fool God. Having five set prayer times a day means we put everything into perspective, we temporarily take ourselves away from earthly matters, we reinforce our faith, and we show our thankfulness to God.

We can also unburden ourselves from all our worries and our problems by praying to God and asking for help and guidance. Knowing that the ultimate outcome of everything is in God’s hands is a huge

comfort. I was growing closer to Islam but I still had some reservations about abandoning the religion I grew up with. I spoke to my husband about this and he mentioned it to the sheikh at the local mosque.

The sheikh said, “Tell your wife she’s not abandoning her original religion, she is developing it and bringing it to its natural conclusion. Islam builds upon the teachings of Christianity. It’s the final message of the religions of the book. So it’s as if she had obtained a Bachelor’s degree practicing Christianity, but by accepting Islam she will complete her spiritual studies and go on to get a Master’s and a PhD.”

This analogy made sense and gave me a lot of comfort. It made finalizing my decision to convert to Islam an easy one. Soon after I became a Muslim, my husband decided we would go to Makkah for Umra with our children. When my mother-in-law heard this she immediately decided to come along. “You won’t know what to do so I need to be with you,” she said.

A close Kuwaiti friend also offered her support and joined us with her husband. “Don’t worry, everything will be easy,” she said. She was right. In Makkah I felt a great sense of peace and contentment being part of such a huge community of worshippers from all corners of the earth. Since then I have been learning about Islam and I still have a lot to learn. Each verse of the holy Quran teaches us many important lessons.

All issues of life are addressed, all questions answered. It is extremely beneficial to have a capable teacher to help interpret the rich language and historical context of the Quran. There are many places in Kuwait (like IPC, TIES & AWARE) that offer free lectures and courses about culture & Islam in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Most importantly, these are places where Muslims and non-Muslims are welcome, tolerance is emphasized, and discussions are frank and open.

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 interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, you can contact TIES at Tel: 25231015/6; Hotline: 94079777; e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

Sports

Athletics bash 3 homers, beat Angels for 10th straight ‘W’

Mariners go deep to beat Rangers, end losing streak

OAKLAND: The Oakland Athletics rode three home runs and stellar relief pitching to a 10th consecutive victory Monday afternoon, 8-5 over the visiting Los Angeles Angels. Jurickson Profar rallied the A's from an early deficit with a two-run homer, Josh Phegley broke a tie with a solo shot, and Matt Chapman gave his bullpen some breathing room with another solo homer, allowing Oakland to win its fourth straight game to open its nine-game homestand. Albert Pujols hit his ninth home run of the season for the Angels. Oakland's Chris Bassitt (3-1) got the win despite giving up five runs and six hits in five-plus innings. He walked two and struck out three. Blake Treinen worked a one-hit ninth for his 11th save.

ROCKIES 4, DIAMONDBACKS 3 (11 INNINGS)
Raimel Tapia's single drove in Ian Desmond from second base in the bottom of the 11th inning, and Colorado beat Arizona in Denver. Desmond hit a shot to the top of the fence in right for a double off Matt Andriese (3-3). A crew chief review confirmed the ball didn't go out. One pitch later, Tapia singled up the middle to score Desmond to win it. It was the third walk-off win in the last four games for Colorado. Seunghwan Oh (2-1) pitched one inning for the win. David Dahl homered, and Nolan Arenado had two hits for the Rockies. Nick Ahmed went deep for the Diamondbacks.

RED SOX 12, INDIANS 5
Sandy Leon belted a three-run homer to highlight a six-run fifth inning as host Boston posted a victory over Cleveland. J.D. Martinez launched two solo homers, Jackie Bradley Jr. ripped two RBI doubles, and Mookie Betts joined Xander Bogaerts with two hits and two runs apiece as Boston recorded its sixth win in nine games. A moment of silence was observed prior to the game to honor the memory of former Red Sox first baseman Bill Buckner, who died after a battle with dementia on Monday. He was 69.

TOYOTA GAZOO racing earns world championship

TOKYO: HYBRID extended their lead in the drivers' standings to 31 points with one race and 39 points remaining after their fourth win of a season which began with victory at Spa 12 months ago.
The #7 TS050 HYBRID crew of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez had controlled the race until just before half distance, setting the fastest lap as well, but then lost 11 minutes due to a sensor issue which dropped them to sixth at the end.

History was made in the opening laps when heavy snow hit Spa just a few minutes after the start; the first time that snow has affected a WEC race. Remarkably, racing continued for almost 30 minutes until conditions forced a safety car with Mike leading having started from pole position in the #7.
After 25 minutes, and now in bright sunshine, the race resumed with Mike leading from the #3 Rebellion. Sebastian, who had lost time in his pit stop, immediately took second place for the #8 and then moved into the lead at the end of lap 19.

Another safety car due to an accident a few moments later triggered drama for both cars. Sebastian was forced to make a fuel stop while the pit lane was closed and WEC regulations meant the team could add only five seconds of fuel. Mike, who had used less fuel in the opening stint, was able to refuel normally and switch to slick tyres when the pit lane opened, while Sebastian made his regular fuel stop soon after, costing him around a minute and dropping him to 10th.
But an exciting race saw further action, with Sebastian using his slick tyres to great effect and battling up to second place by the time both cars pitted under a full course yellow around the two-hour mark, with Kamui taking over the #7 and Fernando the #8.

With almost three hours completed, the race took another dramatic turn when Kamui, who had been leading by around 50secs, experienced a sensor issue on the #7. He brought the car back to the pits where the pit crew worked quickly to rectify the issue and allow Jose to resume, now four laps behind and in 19th position.
Kazuki inherited the lead in the #8 but another snow flurry soon after saw both cars switch to wet tyres, which were ideally suited to conditions when a heavy hail storm struck with just under two hours remaining, bringing out the safety car again for around 25 minutes.

Khawaja stakes WCup claim as Australia win S Lanka warm-up

LONDON: Usman Khawaja did his World Cup prospects no harm as Australia overpowered Sri Lanka by five wickets in a warm-up match at Southampton on Monday. Khawaja, who appears to be vying for a place at number three with Shaun Marsh, made 89 in a total of 241 for five.
The world champions rested opener David Warner (leg soreness) while former Australia skipper Steve Smith, also returning to the international scene following a year-long ban for his part in a ball-tampering scandal, batted in the nets.

ASTROS 6, CUBS 5
Gerrit Cole notched his sixth double-digit strikeout start, and Houston turned a five-run third inning into an interleague victory over visiting Chicago. Cole (5-5) matched his season high of 12 strikeouts while working six strong innings. He allowed three hits and one walk while surrendering two runs, both on a long home run by Anthony Rizzo with one out in the first inning. The Astros tagged Cole Hamels (4-1) for six runs and seven hits over four innings. Yuli Gurriel had three hits, including an RBI single.

MARINERS 6, RANGERS 2
Daniel Vogelbach slugged a two-run homer into the upper deck to help Seattle post a win over visiting Texas to halt a six-game losing streak. Vogelbach's 15th homer of the season was just the third in the ballpark's history to reach the upper deck in right field, and it helped Seattle earn just its 11th win in the past 41 games following a 13-2 start. Mallex Smith had two hits, two runs and four stolen bases as the Mariners opened an 11-game homestand. Smith stole second, third and home in the eighth inning. Ronald Guzman homered for Texas, which has lost three straight after winning its previous five games.

DODGERS 9, METS 5
Enrique Hernandez hit a tiebreaking three-run home run in a six-run sixth inning, and Clayton Kershaw remained unbeaten as Los Angeles defeated visiting New York. Kershaw (5-0) gave up three runs on 10 hits over six innings for the Dodgers, who have won all eight of his starts and 16 consecutive going back to August. Cody Bellinger hit his 19th home run of the season and made a highlight play on defense to snuff out the Mets' eighth-inning rally when he threw out Carlos Gomez at third base from deep right field. J.D. Davis and Adeiny Hechavarria hit home runs for the Mets, who were coming off a 6-1 homestand but have now lost six consecutive road games.



OAKLAND: David Fletcher #6 of the Los Angeles Angels slides into home to score before the tag by Josh Phegley #19 of the Oakland Athletics during the sixth inning at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum in Oakland, California. —AFP

BREWERS 5, TWINS 4
Orlando Arcia hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning as Milwaukee rallied from an early four-run deficit to edge Minnesota in Minneapolis.
Milwaukee trailed 4-3 heading into the eighth when pinch hitter Hernan Perez led off with a double to the wall in left-center against reliever Taylor Rogers (1-1). Arcia followed with his sixth home run of the season. He finished 2-for-3 with three RBIs and two runs. Corbin Burnes (1-3) picked up the win with a scoreless inning of relief, and Josh Hader tossed two scoreless innings to earn his 13th save. Byron Buxton hit a three-run homer for Minnesota, which had its season-best

six-game winning streak snapped.

PIRATES 8, REDS 5 (GAME 1)
Bryan Reynolds hit a tiebreaking two-run triple in the eighth inning, and Starling Marte followed with a two-run homer to lift visiting Pittsburgh to a win at Cincinnati in the first game of a doubleheader. Adam Frazier and Colin Moran had two hits each for the Pirates, Josh Bell also homered, and Melky Cabrera had two hits and scored two runs. Pittsburgh had lost three in a row and five of six. Eugenio Suarez and Joey Votto had three hits each, and Nick Senzel and Jesse Winker also had two hits apiece for the Reds. — Reuters



Entering the last hour, Jose had fought his way into the top six while Fernando stretched the #8 car's advantage to over a lap at the front as more bad weather and another safety car arrived. The race finished a few minutes early when the red flags were waved due to the treacherous conditions. Fernando was at the wheel of the #8 at the end to win by one lap from the #3 Rebellion and #11 SMP Racing, with Kamui bringing the #7 home in sixth, four laps behind after a valiant fight back. The team now heads to France for the season-ending Le Mans 24 Hours on 15-16 June.
Hisatake Murata, Team President: "Congratulations to

everyone in the team on winning the World Championship; it is the reward for a lot of hard work over the past year. We faced a challenging race today. I am sorry for the #7 drivers; they all drove well and it's a pity they lost the chance to fight for the win due to the sensor issue. The #8 drivers also performed well despite misfortune: congratulations to them. Although such a dramatic race is not easy for the team, I hope the many fans as well as our colleagues from Cologne enjoyed the race despite the weather. Now we look forward to the climax of the season and a race we have been preparing for ever since June last year: Le Mans."

that before, but we might have found that again heading into the World Cup. "This time last year there was a lot of talk about our batting, everyone has their different plans-it's just about winning games and we're managing to do that," he explained. Australia, who begin the defence of their title against outsiders Afghanistan in Bristol on Saturday, saw fast bowlers Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins get in the groove as they restricted Sri Lanka to a meagre 239 for eight.
For Sri Lanka, only Lahiru Thirimanne went past fifty. "We did not bat very well," said Sri Lanka's Kusal Mendis. "There was a chance to get to 300 out there on that wicket but we struggled in the middle overs and lost any momentum.
"It was a battle and it ruined the plan we had as a team. We did our best from there but we did not score enough runs and they were able to knock them off." But Mendis forecast Sri Lanka would find their form in time for their opening match against New Zealand. "We are confident we can turn this around," he said.
"Angelo Mathews and Lasith Malinga will step it up at the weekend and that will give everyone a lift with bat and ball," Mendis insisted. — AFP

Australia's Pocock clings to World Cup dream as injury ends Super Rugby career

CANBERRA: Injury-plagued Australian great David Pocock said he was racing to be fit for the World Cup as he announced his retirement from Super Rugby yesterday, three games before the end of the season.
The 31-year-old flanker has failed to shake off the calf injury that has dogged his season with the ACT Brumbies, for whom he has played only 138 minutes this year. The former Australia captain, who took a sabbatical in 2017 in a bid to extend his career, has also suffered neck and concussion problems since returning to rugby last year.
Pocock, considered a master of the breakdown and vital to Australia's World Cup hopes, is also known for his outspoken activism in areas such as gay rights, conservation and global warming.

"Personally, disappointed... I wasn't expecting it. It's just one of those things that you've got to deal with," Pocock told reporters in Canberra of the abrupt end to his 13 years of professional rugby in Australia.
"I think the best thing now is to take the pressure off to get it (the recovery process) right. "To pull on the Wallabies jersey again is obviously my goal. It's a huge honour and something that I love doing, I'll be doing everything that I can to get myself right and get into the best shape I can."

Pocock, who will take up a contract in Japanese rugby after the World Cup, did not say whether he wants to continue with the Wallabies after the tournament in Japan. The Canberra-based Brumbies said his injury is a "rare calf strain that is unfortunately not progressing as hoped".
"No exact timeframe for a return to playing can be provided at this stage," the club added. The uncertainty over Pocock has cast a further shadow over Australia's World Cup preparations after the loss of star fullback Israel Folau, who was sacked last week for posting homophobic comments on social media.

Pocock and Folau, Super Rugby's all-time top try-scorer, were both viewed as key for the Wallabies, who have dropped to sixth in the rankings after suffering their worst season in decades last year.
Pocock, who has twice won Australia's top rugby award, the John Eales Medal, will play for Japan's Panasonic Wild Knights after the World Cup. The 77-Test veteran will not seek a new contract with Australian Rugby after it runs out this year, but will remain eligible to play for the Wallabies.

Although Pocock has yet to call time on his international career, he told the Canberra Times earlier: "I haven't put anything in stone, but I think that's it. "I feel like I've put a lot into my rugby, I've got a huge amount out of it and I'm very grateful for the opportunities I've had. — AFP

Klopp says Liverpool is best team he has taken to a final

Liverpool preparing for their second successive Champions League final

LIVERPOOL: Jurgen Klopp says his current Liverpool team are the strongest side he has taken to a final as he plots Champions League glory against Premier League rivals Tottenham on Saturday.

Liverpool are preparing for their second successive Champions League final after a run that included an incredible comeback to overturn a three-goal first-leg deficit against Barcelona in the semi-final by winning 4-0 at Anfield.

It will be Klopp's fourth European final as a manager, having been a Champions League runner-up with Borussia Dortmund in 2013, before losing the Europa League final with Liverpool in 2016.

Their run to Madrid this year has been marked by a never-say-die spirit, with Klopp suggesting that his team of 2019 is better than those that have lost his three previous European finals.

"I don't like to blame my other teams (for the European final defeats)," said Klopp, whose side lost out to Real Madrid in the final last year. "I love them all. They all gave everything but I have never been part of a final with a better team than this.

"I am not so surprised by this because our boys mix our potential with attitude in the best way I have witnessed. That is brilliant." However Klopp, speaking at Liverpool's training ground Tuesday, made clear that he has yet to surpass his first major achievement as a manager, leading minnows Mainz into the Bundesliga for the first time in their history 15 years ago, on a minimal budget.

Asked if Saturday's final marked the pinnacle of his

Ramos asked to leave Madrid for free to go to China: Perez

MADRID: Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos asked to leave to join a team in China on a free transfer, club president Florentino Perez has said, adding that he turned down the defender's request.

"They (Ramos and his agent) came to see me in my office and told me they had a very good offer from China but the league rules over there wouldn't permit them to pay the transfer fee," Perez told radio station Onda Cero on Monday.

"What was I going to tell him? We said this couldn't happen but we'd speak to the club to satisfy him but that Real Madrid could not afford to let its captain leave for free as that would set a terrible precedent for other players." The Spain defender, 33, is Madrid's longest serving player and one of club's most beloved players for his role in winning four Champions League titles, but he shouldered a lot of criticism for the team's harrowing last campaign.

Ramos was found by UEFA to have intentionally got suspended for the second leg of Madrid's Champions League last-16 tie with Ajax Amsterdam, which they lost 4-1 to exit the competition at the earliest stage since 2010. —Reuters

career, the manager, whose side finished a single point behind champions Manchester City in the Premier League, said: "If I win it, yes. It would be different to the last finals.

"Is bringing the team to the Champions League final (in itself) the biggest moment in my career? No, that was 2004, getting promoted with Mainz. If you had known the money we had, the circumstances we had... and the fact was that nobody needed us in the first league. "If I win the Champions League, though, I will have to think about this question again." Klopp is hopeful that forward Roberto Firmino will be fit to play a part in Saturday's final, having missed the final three matches of the season with a muscle issue.

Midfielder Naby Keita, however, will not recover from his adductor injury in time to face Tottenham. "No chance for Naby," Klopp said. "Naby is really progressing well. We will see how it will work out for him for the Africa Cup of Nations.

"Bobby was part of training last week, really good, everything looked fine. He will be fine, I am pretty sure," Klopp expects a close contest against a Tottenham side that Liverpool beat home and away in the Premier League during the season, winning 2-1 on both occasions.

He said: "It will be very tight. The quality of Tottenham and us is pretty similar. The distance between us is consistency. "Emotions will be completely different. You have to use the emotions but in the right circumstances. Bringing ourselves in the right mood is the job we have to do.



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's German manager Jurgen Klopp takes part in a training session at the Melwood Training ground in Liverpool, northwest England yesterday. — AFP

"We know about Tottenham a lot but after three weeks (without a game to prepare), I would have known the name of the groundsman of Barcelona if they had been the opponent. "We know it is difficult, Tottenham know it is difficult, so let's play a difficult game and let's win it." — AFP

Kane in England squad for Nations League finals

LONDON: Harry Kane was included in England's 23-man squad for next month's Nations League finals on Monday but Tottenham Hotspur team-mates Harry Winks and Kieran Trippier were both left out.

Gareth Southgate, the England manager, has reduced his group from the list of 27 he named earlier this month, with Southampton's James Ward-Prowse and Nathan Redmond also sidelined. England captain Kane, who has not played since suffering ankle ligament damage in April, was retained by the Southgate on the day he insisted he was "ready" for Spurs' clash with Liverpool in Saturday's Champions League final.

Kane has not played since suffering the injury in the first leg of Tottenham's quarter-final against Manchester City on April 9, which was also when Winks made his last appearance. Spurs subsequently announced Winks had undergone groin surgery, although the midfielder said he hoped it was not the end of his season.

Trippier, a full-back, was a member of the England squad that made it to the semi-finals of last year's World Cup and was an unused substitute in the Euro 2020 qualifiers against the Czech Republic and Montenegro in March.

Redmond was a surprise inclusion in Southgate's 27-man squad, having been overlooked since winning his only England cap in March 2017, with Ward-Prowse making just his second appearance against Montenegro.

England face the Netherlands in their Nations League semi-final in Guimaraes, northern Portugal, a week tomorrow. Seven players in Southgate's 23 could potentially be involved in both the Champions League final in Madrid five days earlier and the Netherlands match.

"There have been some difficult decisions to make and we are obviously a little bit complicated with so many players involved in the Champions League as well but we are really excited by the squad and the players



LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur's English striker Harry Kane (L) and Tottenham Hotspur's English midfielder Dele Alli (2nd R) take part in a team training session at Tottenham Hotspur's Enfield Training Centre, north London, yesterday ahead of their UEFA Champions League Final football match. — AFP

that are around it," said Southgate in a statement issued by the Football Association.

"Some players who have had really good finishes to the season like James Ward-Prowse and Nathan Redmond are staying with us for this period to train because although we have cut the squad to 23, we have still got two weeks to get through and two really big finals ahead.

"Harry Winks is a player we really like and that's a tough one because he has not played for a couple of months and we don't get to see him in training," added Southgate. Meanwhile the former England international said right-back was "as hard a decision as we have had to make".

"Of course, Kieran Trippier has had such a big impact, he had such a brilliant World Cup. He has been a really valuable member of our squad and has a great attitude with us, real passion in playing for England but Trent (Alexander-Arnold) and Kyle (Walker) have finished the season so strongly.

"So it (right-back) is a position where we have got

real competition for places." Portugal face Switzerland in the other semi-final the day before England's game, with both the final and third-place playoff taking place on Sunday, June 9.

ENGLAND SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Jack Butland (Stoke), Tom Heaton (Burnley), Jordan Pickford (Everton).

Defenders: Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool), Ben Chilwell (Leicester City), Joe Gomez (Liverpool), Michael Keane (Everton), Harry Maguire (Leicester), Danny Rose (Tottenham), John Stones (Manchester City), Kyle Walker (Manchester City).

Midfielders: Dele Alli (Tottenham), Ross Barkley (Chelsea), Fabian Delph (Manchester City), Eric Dier (Tottenham), Jordan Henderson (Liverpool), Jesse Lingard (Manchester United), Declan Rice (West Ham).

Forwards: Harry Kane (Tottenham), Marcus Rashford (Manchester United), Jadon Sancho (Borussia Dortmund/GER), Raheem Sterling (Manchester City), Callum Wilson (Bournemouth). — AFP

Neymar loses Brazil captaincy to Alves

PARIS: Neymar has been replaced as captain of the Brazil national team for next month's Copa America by Paris St Germain team mate Dani Alves, the country's football federation (CBF) has said.

The Copa America will be played from June 14 to July 7, with hosts Brazil, who have not won the title since 2007, taking on Bolivia in the opening match in Sao Paulo before facing Venezuela and Peru.

"Daniel Alves will be captain of the Brazilian national team in the friendly matches against Qatar and Honduras and in Copa America Brazil 2019," the CBF said in a statement <https://www.cbf.com.br/selecao-brasileira/noticias/selecao-masculina/dani-alves-sera-o-capitao-da-selecao-nos-amistosos-e-copa-america>.

Right back Alves, who has 138 caps for Brazil, was informed of his new role on Sunday. The 36-year-



Neymar

old has captained his country on four previous occasions, the last of which was a 1-0 friendly victory over Germany in 2018.

Brazil coach Tite had named Neymar permanent captain a few months after Brazil's World Cup quarter-final exit at the hands of Belgium last year, but has been under pressure to replace the 27-year-old due to

his disciplinary issues.

Neymar was banned for three matches by the French football authorities earlier this month for hitting a fan after PSG's French Cup final loss to Stade Rennes, and was also reportedly involved in a dressing fracas with his PSG team mates. Tite informed him on Saturday that he would not captain Brazil at the Copa America, the CBF said. — Reuters

Players detained in Spanish football match-fixing swoop

MADRID: An operation against several footballers, ex-players including former Spain international Raul Bravo and club executives accused of fixing matches in the first and second divisions was underway in Spain yesterday, police and sources said.

In a statement, police said they were in the process of conducting raids in several, unnamed areas and planned to detain 11 people—"retired and active footballers in the first division, active players in the second division and executives of a club."

A source close to the probe, who refused to be named, said that matches were allegedly fixed during this season and the 2017-2018 campaign. Among them were several games played by Real Valladolid, a club majority-owned by former Brazil striker Ronaldo since September.

The source named several players involved to AFP. They include Bravo, a 38-year-old former Real Madrid player who once played for Spain, Borja Fernandez who played for first division Real Valladolid, and Carlos Aranda, a retired player who appeared for a string of Spanish clubs.

Samuel Saiz, a Leeds player loaned to Getafe this season, is also allegedly involved as is Inigo Lopez Montana, who played for Extremadura and Deportivo La Coruna in the second division this season.

The president of SD Huesca, another football club that climbed into first division this season before being relegated again, was also targeted. It was as yet unclear whether they had all been detained. Those at Huesca "are suspected of having taken part in match-fixing when they were in the second division," the source said.

The suspects are accused of match-fixing, belonging to a criminal gang and money laundering, police said. They added their months-long investigation had "confirmed that the suspects reached agreements with various players to 'fix' at least three matches in the first, second and third division."

"The match-fixing related to the third division was unsuccessful, forcing the players involved to compensate the loss by doing another in the future," they added.

Police said that during one of the suspect matches in second division, "betting houses registered a cash volume that was up to 14 times higher than normal for this division." A statement from La Liga, meanwhile, said it had made an initial complaint in May 2018 after a match between Huesca and Gimnastic de Tarragona (0-1).

It was unclear whether they were talking about the same match. Javier Tebas, La Liga's president, told sports daily Marca that La Liga had been investigating this for over a year.

"It really hurts, because it affects a club I love, but the most important thing is to end corruption in football," Tebas, who was president of Huesca in the 1990s, said. In a statement, Valladolid said it maintained "its commitment and fight against corruption or any type of illegal act that diminishes the integrity of sporting competitions."

Match-fixing has been a constant issue in Spanish football. In February 2018, at least 24 people were arrested nationwide in an operation into alleged match-fixing in Spain's lower leagues. The ring was accused of using players to force situations such as corners or penalties in games in the third and fourth tiers of Spanish football. They would then make bets on these situations. — AFP

Bruins rally past Blues to win opening game of Stanley Cup final

Blues are seeking to claim their first-ever championship

LOS ANGELES: Sean Kuraly scored the game winner early in the third as the Boston Bruins rallied with four unanswered goals to beat the St Louis Blues 4-2 in the opening game of the Stanley Cup finals.

After a slow start Monday, the Bruins picked up where they left off, shaking off the rust of a 10-day break to win their eighth consecutive game in the post-season. Kuraly's third tally of the playoffs came 5:21 into the final period to break the deadlock and cap a four-goal scoring burst by the Bruins, who fell behind 2-0 early in the second.

Boston forward Noel Acciari made a spinning pass across the crease that Kuraly managed to kick from his skate to his stick before slamming it home. "I am just trying to play hard. I am happy it went in," said Kuraly. "We are going to have to keep getting better. This team is not going anywhere."

Game two is today in Boston. The Blues are seeking to claim their first-ever championship, while the Bruins are gunning for their first title since 2011. Defenceman Connor Clifton, Charlie McAvoy on the powerplay and Brad Marchand, with an empty netter, also scored for the Bruins, who are playing in the finals for the third time this decade.

The Bruins got scoring from unlikely places with their fourth line leading the offensive charge and the defence chipping in with two helpers. Kuraly, who plays on the fourth line, also had goal and an assist in game seven of the first round of the playoffs.

"This is what they do. They can skate and they play simple hockey," said Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy of

Kuraly and the fourth line.

"For us, being off as long as we were we can't get drawn into fancy plays. They are always going to play same way-a straight line game-and they got rewarded."

Finnish veteran Tuukka Rask easily won the goal-tending battle with Blues rookie netminder Jordan Binnington by making 18 saves in front of a crowd of 17,500 at the Boston Garden.

"We've been real disciplined all playoffs. We weren't tonight with five penalties. We got to be much better," said Blues coach Craig Berube. Kuraly also assisted on the first Bruins goal of the game by Clifton to cut the Blues lead to 2-1.

Brayden Schenn led the Blues with a goal and an assist, while Vladimir Tarasenko scored once and Binnington stopped 34 shots in the first game of the best-of-seven series.

Clifton got the Bruins onto the board by scoring just 76 seconds after Tarasenko's goal. Clifton snuck in behind the Blues' defence and tipped a pass from Kuraly in from the side of the St Louis net.

Schenn had his best game of the playoffs, opening the scoring with his third goal of the postseason. "We had a 2-0 lead we just didn't play our game after that," said Schenn. Schenn got the puck in the high slot, made a nifty little stickhandle and fired it into upper half of the net.

The stickhandle move did its job by freezing Binnington and it's something that was lacking from Schenn's game earlier in the playoffs when he was mired in a scoring slump. — AFP



BOSTON: Jordan Binnington #50 of the St. Louis Blues stops a shot against Patrice Bergeron #37 of the Boston Bruins in Game One of the 2019 NHL Stanley Cup Final at TD Garden in Boston, Massachusetts. — AFP

Zverev survives four-hour marathon, Del Potro battles on

PARIS: Alexander Zverev survived a bruising four-hour battle to reach the French Open second round yesterday while danagerman Juan Martin del Potro also progressed. German fifth seed Zverev, a quarter-finalist in Paris in 2018, battled past Australia's John Millman 7-6 (7/4), 6-3, 2-6, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3.

The champion in Geneva last weekend fired 57 winners past world number 56 Millman who stunned Roger Federer at the US Open last year. However, he also committed 73 unforced errors on a blustery day in the French capital.

"John is a tough player who beat Federer so I knew it would be difficult today," said Zverev, bidding to become the first German man to win the Roland Garros title since Henner Henkel in 1937.

"It was very windy today so that made the conditions very difficult. It was a first match against a great opponent. "I got through and that's all that matters."

Next up for Zverev is Swedish qualifier Mikael Ymer, the world number 148 of Ethiopian origin, who marked his Grand Slam debut with a 6-0, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) win over Slovenia's Blaz Rola.

"He (Zverev) has very proven that he belongs up there," said Ymer, the younger brother of fellow tour player Elias. "He is definitely one of the best in the game at the moment, so it's a tough challenge."

Argentine eighth seed Del Potro, a semi-finalist in 2009 and 2018, made the second round with a 3-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 win over Chilean world number 58 Nicolas Jarry. "I think I'm playing well at the moment, but my main goal is still the knee, my health," said Del Potro who is still feeling his way back after knee surgery.

Next up for the giant Argentine is a clash against Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka. Jarry lived and died by the sword on Court Suzanne Lenglen, his 47 winners almost cancelled out by his 41 unforced errors.

Two-time Grand Slam winner and former world number one Victoria Azarenka defeated 2017 champion Jelena Ostapenko 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) in a match which featured 13 breaks of serve.

Ostapenko has now lost in the first round in her last two visits to Paris with her wretched performance high-



PARIS: Germany's Alexander Zverev returns the ball to Australia's John Millman during their men's singles first round match on day three of The Roland Garros 2019 French Open tennis tournament in Paris yesterday. —AFP

lighted by an ugly 60 unforced errors. Azarenka, ranked 43 in the world, will face top seed Naomi Osaka if the Japanese star gets past Slovakia's Anna Karolina Schmiedlova in her tournament opener.

Canada's Bianca Andreescu, the surprise champion at Indian Wells, marked her Roland Garros debut by beating Marie Bouzkova of the Czech Republic 5-7, 6-4, 6-4. The 18-year-old, playing for the first time since Miami after suffering a shoulder injury, hit 58 winners and 60 unforced errors in the tie suspended due to darkness on Monday night.

There were also 17 breaks of serve in the match which stretched to over three hours.

Other early winners yesterday included Monte Carlo champion Fabio Fognini, seeded nine, who defeated Andreas Seppi in an all-Italian clash, 6-3, 6-0, 3-6, 6-3. Later, defending champion Simona Halep faces Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic, the world number 47, in her first round tie.

Tomljanovic reached the fourth round in Paris in 2014, beating former champion Francesca Schiavone in the first round. — AFP

Live		Matches on TV
		(Local Timings)
UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE		
Chelsea FC v Arsenal FC	22:00	
beIN SPORTS HD 1		



Kieran Trippier

Champions League final on June 2 for Spurs against Liverpool in Madrid.

Although not part of the formal 23-man group, Ward-Prowse and Redmond will remain in training with the rest of the England squad and could possibly come into contention if there are injuries. "Some players who have had really good finishes to the season like James Ward-Prowse and Nathan Redmond are staying with us for this period to train because although we have cut the squad to 23, we have still got two weeks to get through and two really big finals ahead. So some of those calls are even more difficult," he said. — Reuters

Dubai group 'agree terms' for Newcastle takeover

LONDON: Representatives of Dubai-based Sheikh Khaled Bin Zayed Al Nahyan said Monday they had "agreed terms" with Newcastle United owner Mike Ashley, moving closer to completing a deal to buy the Premier League club.

A statement from billionaire Sheikh Khaled's Bin Zayed Group said: "We can confirm that representatives of His Highness Sheikh Khaled Bin Zayed Al Nahyan are in discussions with Mike Ashley and his team, about the proposed acquisition of Newcastle United Football Club.

"We have agreed terms and are working hard to complete the transaction at the earliest opportunity." The statement said Sheikh Khaled considered it "an honour to have the opportunity to build on the strong support, history and tradition of the club". Reports at the weekend said Sheikh Khaled, a relative of Manchester City owner Sheikh Mansour, was close to sealing a £350 million (\$443 million) takeover.

A spokesman for the club "politely declined" to comment, but sources close to the club have indicated there was interest but many ends still needed to be tied up before a deal could go ahead. Ashley, the founder of the Sports Direct retail chain, bought the club for £134.4 million in 2007 but has faced a string of protests from supporters disgruntled at what they see as a lack of investment in players. He has put Newcastle up for sale three times but every bid has failed to produce a deal. — AFP

Trippier left out of England squad for Nations League

MANCHESTER: Tottenham Hotspur pair Kieran Trippier and Harry Winks and Southampton duo James Ward-Prowse and Nathan Redmond have been left out of England's final 23-man squad for the Nations League finals.

England face the Netherlands in Guimaraes on June 6 in the semi-finals of the competition and should they win they will face Switzerland or Portugal three days later in Porto.

The decision to leave out right back Trippier comes a year after he was one England's leading players in their run to the semi-finals of the World Cup in Russia.

"Kieran Trippier has had such a big impact, he had such a brilliant World Cup. He has been a really valuable member of our squad and has a great attitude with us, real passion in playing for England but Trent (Alexander-Arnold) and Kyle (Walker) have finished the season so strongly," said England manager Gareth Southgate.

"So it is a position where we have got real competition for places. That is as hard a decision as we have had to make," he added.

Winks has only recently returned from injury and like Trippier could be involved in the

Half a century and counting? Strike duo hold key to Arsenal hopes

BAKU: Arsenal are aiming to win a first European trophy in a quarter of a century in distant Baku yesterday and their hopes of doing so appear to rest at the feet of Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Alexandre Lacazette.

After missing out on a top-four place in the Premier League, the assessment of Unai Emery's first season in charge of the Gunners will be far kinder if they can end the campaign with victory in the Europa League final.

It all comes down to this London derby in an unlikely setting by the Caspian Sea-if Arsenal win, they will have a first piece of European silverware since raising the Cup Winners' Cup in 1994 and with it the additional prize of a return to the Champions League.

And while the Gunners have frequently toiled defensively this season, conceding 51 goals in the Premier League, Emery knows he is the envy of almost every coach in Europe with Lacazette and Aubameyang in his ranks.

They have scored 50 times between them this season, with Lacazette getting 19 goals and being named the club's player of the year by Arsenal supporters.

His goal tally has been put in the shade by Aubameyang, who has netted 31 times, including a hat-trick in the second leg of their semi-final against Valencia and 22 goals in the Premier League to share the Golden Boot with Liverpool duo Sadio Mane and Mohamed Salah in his first full campaign in England.

"I gave everything to try to be in the top four with the team and to get a trophy," Aubameyang said recently. "I am happy with my season, not the best but I am happy." The Gabon star was not able to feature in the Europa League last season after his arrival from Borussia Dortmund in January 2018 and watched as Arsenal lost to Atletico Madrid in the semi-finals, denying Arsene Wenger a European final for his swansong.

Lacazette, meanwhile, may have played second fiddle to Aubameyang in terms of pure numbers but the former Lyon star insists he has produced the best football of his career this season. "Being able to contribute without scoring is important for the team," he told Arsenal Player.

Their importance to Emery is summed up by the fact the next highest scorers in his squad all have six goals-including the injured Aaron Ramsey and Henrikh Mkhitaryan, who will not play in Baku due to well-publicised security concerns. Their figures in front of goal are all the more impressive given they have often had to fight it out for just one starting spot. Yet despite their pedigree, the pair are entirely reliant on success with their clubs as they continue to be frustrated at international level.

Aubameyang-born in France to a Gabonese father-will not be able to measure himself against Mane and Salah at the Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt next month after Gabon failed to qualify. Lacazette, meanwhile, has been unable to force his way back into the France set-up, such is the strength in depth available to coach Didier Deschamps with the world champions.

He has won 16 caps, but none since late 2017. Once again he was ignored when Deschamps named his squad last week for the upcoming Euro 2020 qualifiers in Turkey and Andorra, with Sevilla's Wissam Ben Yedder getting the call instead. —AFP



FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT
THE FUTURE IS ZAIN

5G

Zain is ready to launch 5G.
Register now and be the first to experience 5G in Kuwait.

kw.zain.com/5G