



2 Passenger traffic up by 8 percent this summer



9 Modi healthcare scheme won hearts - and votes



28 Nadal powers on in Paris; Tsitsipas battles through



Ramadan KAREEM

| | |
|--------|-------|
| IMSAK | 03:06 |
| Fajr | 03:16 |
| Dhur | 11:45 |
| Asr | 15:20 |
| Magrib | 18:42 |
| Isha | 20:12 |

Prominent activists and ex-MPs call for General Amnesty Law

Government urged to free jailed activists, lawmakers

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A group of senior activists, including former opposition MPs, yesterday called on authorities to cooperate to issue a General Amnesty Law for dozens of activists and ex-MPs who were handed jail terms for storming the National Assembly building in 2011. The group said in a statement that pardoning those activists, who have been staying abroad for the past sever-

al months, is essential to solidify the domestic front in the wake of soaring regional tensions and threats of war.

The statement said that the group of opposition activists who received jail terms had been convicted on criminal charges that they had never committed and they never had any intention to violate the law. The convicts, who include former prominent MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabai, Jamaan Al-Harbash, Mussallam Al-Barrak and Faisal Al-Muslim

were among hundreds of protesters who entered the National Assembly building following a protest against corruption that called for the resignation of the former prime minister.

The statement recalled that the protest took place in the wake of uncovering a major corruption case in which MPs in parliament were involved amid official reports about financial wrongdoings at the office of the then prime minister, with all the events con-

nected to a media campaign to fuel sectarian, factional and racist divisions in the society run by corrupt media.

It said that thousands of Kuwaitis reacted positively with such developments by staging massive protests and by electing a National Assembly dominated by the opposition that was scrapped by the court four months later. The statement said that a majority of reformists found themselves either in jail or were forced to leave the country or were

punished by revoking their citizenship which was used as a weapon by authorities.

The statement called for issuing a General Amnesty Law to pardon all those jailed in the storming of the Assembly case or those convicted in opinion cases to strengthen the country. Opposition MP Mohammad Al-Mutair said the statement represents the overwhelming majority of the Kuwaiti people and hoped that this message reached members of the National Assembly.

Eid holidays begin June 4

KUWAIT: The Civil Service Commission (CSC) announced yesterday that Eid Al-Fitr holidays will begin on Tuesday June 4, ending Thursday June 6. Official working hours shall resume on Sunday June 9, whether Eid fell on Tuesday or not. CSC said in a press statement. State authorities with special working hours should arrange their work timing in a manner that would serve the public interest. — KUNA

Ramadan Kareem

When God spoke

By Teresa Leshar

We often offer silent or audible prayers, asking for help from our Creator, for succor from our problems, for blessings on our loved ones, and for forgiveness for our mistakes. We also - unfortunately less often - thank Him for our sustenance and surroundings, our families and abilities.

We communicate with God, and we may perceive the conversation as one-sided since we receive no spoken or written response. But what if the Almighty Creator of the heavens and earth did answer you - did send you a spoken or written response? What would He say? Would it be one word? A 20-minute speech? A letter? Or an entire book?

In the month of Ramadan, 1450 years ago, God sent us a message. It is the Quran, the Speech of God, revealed through the angel Gabriel to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who dictated it so it could be transcribed for all of humanity. It is a direct message for you and me, and all humankind. In fact, many verses of the Quran are addressed to "O People!" or "O Mankind!" These are general verses for every living soul.

While some verses are addressed particularly to believers, in fact, the whole Quran is a message for each of us. The Quran is the only divinely revealed scripture that has remained intact in its original language throughout the centuries, being widely available until today. It has also been translated in virtually every language across the globe.

So what did God say in this book to us from Him? Following are a few key verses: "O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous. [He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling and sent down from the sky rain, and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]." (2:21-22)

"O People! Remember the favor of Allah upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the Heaven and the Earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are they turned away? If they deny you (O Muhammad) so were messengers denied before you. To God all affairs are returned (for decision)." (35:3-4) "O People! God's promise is true, so do not let the worldly life turn you away and do not let the devil deceive you. Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you: so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze." (35:5-6)

"This (Message) is a declaration to (all) people as well as a guidance and instruction for God-fearing people" (3:138). Say, [O Muhammad], "If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and

Continued on Page 24

UAE expatriates get a taste of Ramadan

DUBAI: Nida Mohammed drove for more than an hour from Fujairah to Sharjah in the UAE just to buy special Iraqi sweets and juices for the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. "Over there (in Fujairah) you can't find Iraqi stuff," Mohammed says, as she picks up her order of sharbet zbeeb, or raisin juice, a special Iraqi drink taken to break the day-long fast. The oil-rich United Arab Emirates is home to more than nine million expatriates who hail from well over 100 countries and form 90 percent of the population.

During Ramadan, immigrants in the Gulf state reconnect with traditions from their homeland, especially the rituals of breaking the fast and taking lots of traditional desserts and juices. Shops like this help "me remember the country we came from," says Mohammed, who made the journey with family members and stocked large quantities of Iraqi sweets. Muslims around the world refrain from eating and drinking, as well as from sex, between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan. — AFP (See Page 19)



SHARJAH: The Al-Rabat Sweets and Bakery, founded by Iraqi immigrants in the UAE, is pictured during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. — AFP

'Case is closed,' says Trump on Mueller probe

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said yesterday that Robert Mueller's first public statement on his high-stakes probe into Russian election meddling contained nothing new-declaring the case "closed." "Nothing changes from the Mueller Report. There was insufficient evidence and therefore, in our

Country, a person is innocent," Trump tweeted, moments after the special counsel's appearance. "The case is closed! Thank you."

Mueller stressed that his report did not exonerate Trump of the crime of obstruction of justice, but explained that charging him was not an option because of Justice Department policy not to indict a sitting president. "Under longstanding department policy, a president cannot be charged with a federal crime while he is in office," Mueller said in his first public comments in two years.

"That is unconstitutional. A Special Counsel's Office is part of the Department of Justice, and by regulation, it was bound by that department policy," Mueller said.

Continued on Page 24



US President Donald Trump



BYBLOS: A Lebanese woman smokes waterpipe at a restaurant in the coastal city of Byblos north of Beirut. — AFP

Lebanese bubble with anger over hookah tax

BEIRUT: Flipping the hot coals on his green hookah in a crowded Beirut cafe, Abbas Nasreddine says Lebanon's new austerity budget has spoiled his daily treat of smoking a water pipe. "It's how we deflate stress," says the 26-year-old university student, a long drag of mint-scented smoke rising overhead. "But now our tool for coping with our worries has become a worry itself," he said, fiddling with the hookah's long hose.

Nasreddine is among many regular

smokers who are displeased with a government decision to impose a new tax on water pipes as part of a larger austerity package. They will soon have to pay an additional 1,000 Lebanese pounds (\$0.66) for every water pipe they order in a cafe or restaurant, at a time when job opportunities are scarce and the economy is in decline.

"For politicians, 1,000 LBP may be of no value," Nasreddine says. "But, for me, 1,000 LBP has a value — I get to

Continued on Page 24

Iranian mines 'likely caused' tanker blasts

ABU DHABI: US National Security Advisor John Bolton said yesterday that Iran was almost certainly behind oil tanker attacks that sent Gulf tensions soaring - an accusation Tehran dismissed as "laughable." The new war of words came on the eve of emergency Arab and Gulf summits called by Iran's regional rival Saudi Arabia to discuss the standoff and ways to isolate Tehran.

It follows a US military buildup that includes the deployment of an aircraft carrier, B-52 bombers and 1,500 more troops to the region. Speaking during a visit to the UAE capital Abu Dhabi, Bolton said that additional US forces were sent to the Middle East as a "deterrent" and that Washington's response will be prudent. The four ships, including two Saudi tankers, sabotaged off the Emirati coast on May 12 were attacked using "naval mines almost certainly from Iran", Bolton told a press conference.

"There's no doubt in anybody's mind in Washington who's responsible for this," he said in a clear reference to Iran. Bolton however declined to provide specific evidence for Iran's hand in the attacks. "Not going to get into the specifics. That's something the ship



US National Security Advisor Bolton

owners and the countries involved will release at their discretion. But I think it's important for the leadership in Iran to know that we know," he said.

Iran strongly rejected the accusation. "Making such laughable claims... is not strange" coming from the US, foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said. "Mr Bolton and other warmongers and chaos seekers should know that the strategic patience, high vigilance and complete defensive readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran... will prevent the fulfillment of their evil desires for chaos in the region," Mousavi added.

US experts are part of a five-nation team that is investigating the attacks off the UAE emirate of Fujairah. Two days after they took place Yemen's Houthi rebels - accused by Abu Dhabi and Riyadh of being proxies of Tehran - hit a strategic diversionary pipeline in Saudi Arabia with two drones.

The east-west pipeline, which has the capacity to carry some five million barrels per day from the oilfields of

Continued on Page 24

Local

Ranked officers suspended pending probe in possible border security breach

Wanted citizen left and reentered Kuwait repeatedly

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah ordered the suspension of several officers of various ranks, the highest of which is a major general, as a precautionary measure to investigate a tender for the border sector. Cameras were installed, but when they were operated, it was discovered they do not meet the required security and technical specifications.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior announced that security authorities arrested a citizen after leaving and entering the country illegally despite issuance of several orders to arrest him. The ministry's Public Relations and Security Information Department said in a press release that the citizen has been transferred to the competent authorities. The ministry called on citizens and residents to abide by the laws of the country and use its official ports during travel and entry. Sheikh

Khaled Al-Jarrah on Tuesday called for forming a committee of inquiry into the incident.

Municipality Campaign

Farwaniya governorate municipality carried out field tours of makeshift markets and stores in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Hasawi, Farwaniya, Ishbelia, Abdullah Al-Mubarak and Sabah Al-Nasser to remove all eyesore and raise the level of cleanliness in the governorate. Director of the public cleanliness and road occupancy department Saad Al-Khraiej said the campaign resulted in confiscating 57 cu m of fruits and vegetables, in addition to used furniture. He said 25 citations were issued, the sites were cleaned of leftovers and 115 cu m of rubbish was removed.

Rain damage compensations

Compensations for the damage caused during the rains last year will be paid by mid-July, well-informed

sources said. The sources added that state departments only need 15 days to complete the procedures once the parliament approves the state budget for the new fiscal year 2019-2020, which is due to be done by the end of June. Notably, the ministerial team assigned by the Cabinet had studied 3,931 claims including 2,251 for vehicles, 780 for real estate and 900 for personal belongings.

Trucks' lane

Responding to recommendations made by some lawmakers concerning Sabah Al-Ahmad City's problems, acting director of the Public Authority for Roads and Transport (PART) Soha Ashkanani said PART is currently coordinating with relevant bodies to divert trucks and other traffic from Wafra to Mina Abdullah Road. Ashkanani added that an additional lane has been allocated for trucks along the Wafra-Mina Abdullah road as part of the road's development project.



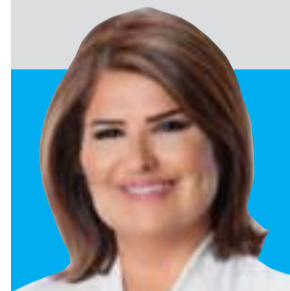
Kabd clinic

Health Minister Sheikh Dr Basel Al-Sabah stressed the need to develop health services in Kabd by building a special clinic and emergency center, pointing out that the area is very vital and is visited by endless numbers of Kuwaitis during winter and spring. He added that the Health Ministry's engineering affairs sector is currently preparing a study for the project.

In My View

Aviation safety, Eid vacation and summer

By Nabila Al-Anjari



Several civil aviation-related developments have recently taken place. It is worth to take them into consideration, especially when we are about to start the high travel season and the Eid Al-Fitr vacation, followed by the long summer vacation that most Kuwaitis spend abroad. The developments include a US warning to all commercial flights flying over the Gulf to be highly cautious, the repeated crises resulting from Boeing crashes and other problems in less than six months, with the result that many carriers stopped using that type of aircraft, including some GCC carriers.

The aforementioned developments call for more caution, not only by the authorities and bodies concerned with civil and commercial aviation in Kuwait, but also passengers and travel agents due to the following threats:

1- The first threat lies in a warning made by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on May 17 to all commercial flights over Gulf waters and the Gulf of Oman to be aware of accelerating military activities and political tension. It even included frank warnings of possible military mishaps, misjudgment or confusion in identifying flights.

2- The second threat lies in the repeated Boeing 737 Max crashes within a few months starting with an Indonesian flight in October killing all 189 onboard, then an Ethiopian plane in March killing all 157 onboard, and finally the deviation of a Miami flight in the beginning of May.

Many countries worldwide, including Kuwait and other GCC states, immediately stopped all flights of this type of aircraft. Boeing is working on studying and handling the fatal faults in this model of aircraft. It is not yet known whether thousands of these planes still in use worldwide will wait for Boeing's final decision - whether they would be repaired or adjusted or the owners will eventually sell them to recoup part of their losses.

Onboard, airport alertness

Having made this review, one should consider the following:

1- Many airlines have not yet declared suspending flights on Boeing 737 Max planes.

2- Suspending Boeing planes does not mean that other planes are risk-free. Contrarily, the growing demand for other aircraft (such as Airbus) might increase the possibility of mishaps in those planes.

3- Recent studies on airline spending on safety procedures, which was published two weeks ago in the Harvard Business Review, shows that leading companies can sometimes be less safe than others and more capable to tolerate crises and public anger. The study shows a direct connection between airline profits and their safety factor. They also show that regardless of the number of planes put out of service, what staff members do on board or on the ground is more important.

4- In view of the above, aviation safety measures should be prioritized by all parties involved in travelling, even at the expense of delaying some flights to achieve more safety, just like what Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) did when it banned Boeing 737 Max flights from flying over Kuwait.

For some people, these guidelines might spoil the summer season, but they will surely make it less dangerous, especially for families who might prefer to postpone a trip, change airlines or even change destinations to get more safety.

Passenger traffic up by 8% this summer

KUWAIT: The Directorate General for Civil Aviation (DGCA) announced yesterday its readiness to serve passengers at the national airports and furnish them with various facilities. Yousuf Al-Fozan, the DGCA General Director, said in a statement that passengers' movement is expected to reach some six million people, between June and September, higher by eight percent compared to last year, when it reached approximately 5.5 million passengers. Up to 43,000 flights will be organized during this period, nine percent higher than last year, when they amounted to 39,000 flights. Fozan indicated a plan to "distribute" the passengers to the four terminals after shifting the KAC passengers to Terminal 4 and those of Al-Jazeera to Terminal 5. Special teams have been formed to oversee operations at the air facilities and ensure that the passengers get the required services. — KUNA

Firemen put out Sabah Hospital blaze



KUWAIT: A vehicle engulfed in flames on Airport Road.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firemen put out a minor fire in the Sabah



Firemen seen inside Sabah Hospital where a fire was reported.

Hospital elevators' control room. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's Public Relations Department said there was no need for evacuation, and work was not inter-

rupted. Meanwhile, Farwaniya firemen put out a fire in a vehicle on Airport Road. No injuries were reported. The efforts were led by Lt Col Abdelrahman Al-Busairi.

ABK honored for supporting Blind Association's Ramadan activities

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was recently honored by the Kuwait Blind Association for its support of the Ramadan sport activities that were organized by the Association for the visually impaired. The honorary ceremony was held on the premises of the Blind Association on May 23, 2019, where the success of the initiative was celebrated and winners of the sporting championship were rewarded for their great achievements.

The two-week sporting championship featured a variety of sport activities that included swimming and table tennis for both male and female categories, and goal ball for the male category. The participants displayed their talents in a fun, challenging atmosphere of healthy competition.

Sahar Al-Therban - Senior Manager Corporate Communications at ABK attended the ceremony alongside Fayeze Al Azmi - Chairman of the Kuwait



Blind Association whereby cash prizes, medals and trophies were handed out to the winners. ABK continuously seeks to make a solid presence in the commu-

nities in which it operates by joining hands with active organizations that aim to create a more prosperous future for Kuwait.

AUB honors winners of annual Holy Quran recitation competition

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) honored the winners in the Annual Quran Competition organized by the bank during the Holy month of Ramadan at its Head Office. This year, the competition comprised six categories: two for male and female employees who were tested in Surat As-Saff, one for the employees' children aged 5-14 years who were tested in Surat Al-Fajr, one for the employees' children aged 14-18 years who they were tested in Surat Noah. The competition also comprised a general category for the children aged 5-12 years who were tested in Juz' 29, and another general category for youth aged 13-18 years who were tested in Juz' 27 of the Holy Quran.

In the employees' male category, Ali Yousef took the first place, Ahmad Rashwan took the second place, and Abdulaziz Al-Alaian took the third place. While, in the employees' female category, Sahar Abdul Fatah Subaih won the first prize, Eman Mahmoud Omrani took the second place and the third place went to Sara Al-Makinzy.

As for the employees' male children (5-14 years) category, Ali Adel Abbas took the first place, and Jadul-Karim Noaman Mohammad took the second place while the third prize went to Khadher Muhammad Bahlu. As for the employees' female children (5-14 years) category, Remas Mohammad Saad took the first place, and Remas Ibrahim Al Saeed won the second place.

In the employees' male children (14-18 years) category, Omar Ismail Ahmad took the first place, and

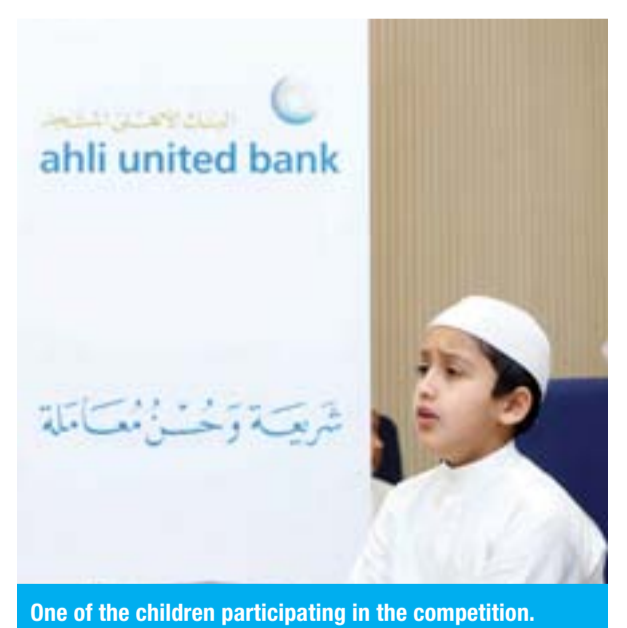
Ahmad Noaman won the second place. In the employees' female children (14-18 years) category, Mariam Adel Abbass took the first place, and Farida Ahmad Rashwan took the second place, while the third place went to Habiba Ahmad Rashwan.

In the male children category from outside the bank aged (5-12 years), Kamal Tamer Al-Sharkawy won the first prize, and Faisal Anwar Al-Yaqoot took the second place, meanwhile the third prize went to Ahmad Abdelreda Ashkany. In the female children category from outside the bank aged (5-12 years), Samaa Ashraf Muhammad Al-kasaby took the first place, and Mona Tamer Al-Sharkawy took the second place, meanwhile the third prize went to Lajeen Hashem Mohammad.

In the male youth category from outside the bank aged (13-18 years) Moamen Ashraf Al-Kasaby took the first place, and Ali Nader Ismail Dashti took the second place, meanwhile the third place went to Abdulrahman Mohammad Al-Merry. In the female youth category from outside the bank aged (13-18 years) Aliaa Makram Ali Al-Mahey took the first place, and Wadha Mohammad Al-Merry won the second place, meanwhile the third place went to Kholoud Alaa Ali.

In the deaf category, Abdullah Anwar Sultan won the first place, Mahmoud Al-Hussein Mahmoud won the second place, Shabib Mohammad Al-Azmy won the third place, Abdullah Musabah Al-Karym won the fourth place, Yousef Mohammad Al-Kandari won the fifth place and Ahmad Samer Goma won the sixth place. In the blind category, Yosef Nahar Al-Saliy won the first prize, Abdulaziz Ahmad Hassab Allah won the second place, Faris Sahar Al-Mutairy won the third place, Ibrahim Fahad Mubarrad won the fourth place, Abdulrahman Khalifa Al-Suwailem won the fifth place and Othman Gaber Al-Enzy won the sixth place.

The winners were honored at the Head Office of the bank in the presence of Abdullah Al-Shuaib; Head of Shariah Internal Audit Department at AUB. On this occasion, Abdullah Al-Shuaib; said in a press release



One of the children participating in the competition.

"The bank continues its Ramadan activities every year to spread the spirit of enthusiasm and competitiveness among contestants, pointing out that their high turnout to the competition was highly appreciated and valued by the bank management and the competition organizing committee which congratulated the winners and thanked everyone participated and contributed to the success of the competition."

Shuaib expressed the hope that this competition would encourage all segments of the society to memorize and understand the noble meanings of the Holy Quran, apply its principles in their practical life and disseminate its right religious values stressing the bank's standing commitment to these purposeful activities which come in line with the bank's social mission.

Amir chairs Kuwaiti delegation at Makkah summits in Saudi today

Emergency summits to discuss aftermath of attacks on ships, oil pumps



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



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation are set to leave Kuwait today, heading to Saudi Arabia, where His Highness will chair the delegation of the State of Kuwait at the emergency summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab League's emergency summit and the fourteenth summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation scheduled to be held in the city of Makkah.

The Saudi holy city of Makkah will host today two urgent GCC and Arab League summits called by King Salman bin Abdulaziz after attacks on commercial ships off the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Houthi militias' assault on two Saudi oil pumps. The two summits, to be

attended by heads of state and government or their representatives, would touch upon consequences of these attacks on regional and international peace and security, and how they might affect oil supplies and stability of international oil markets. The summiteers will also discuss boosting security and stability in the Middle East, and importance of consultations and coordination among Gulf and Arab countries vis-a-vis the US-Iranian tension.

Meanwhile, the OIC leaders, holding the 14th regular summit on Friday themed 'Hand in Hand towards the Future,' are expected to approve the Makkah Declaration which would address issues of interest to the Islamic world. They will also discuss the

Palestinian cause, developments in the Arab, African and Asian regions, Islamophobia, confronting terrorism and violent extremism, as well as a variety of cultural, economic, scientific, social and political matters of mutual interest.

Receptions

In other news, His Highness the Amir received yesterday at Bayan Palace His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Deputy Premier

and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Separately, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to King of Thailand Maha Vajiralongkorn. In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed deepest condolences over victims of a bomb attack that targeted a Ramadan market in Bo Thong town, Nong Chik, Pattani, reaffirming at the same time Kuwait's strong condemnation of the heinous criminal act that resulted in the loss of innocent lives, as well as causing instability to the friendly country. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister also sent similar cables to King Vajiralongkorn. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

First Deputy Premier receives US ambassador

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received yesterday the US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman. During the reception, bilateral relations and matters of mutual, regional and international interests were discussed, according to a defense ministry statement. Sheikh Nasser praised the deep-rooted relations between the two countries. The Ambassador was accompanied by head chief of the Military Cooperation Office in the US Embassy of Kuwait Brig Gen Randolph Staudenraus and US military attache to Kuwait Lt Col Jason Belknap.

In other news, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah met Tuesday with the UK's new Cyber Security Ambassador Henry Pearson, escorted with UK Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. During the meeting, they discussed several topics related to cybersecurity, according



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with the US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman, head chief of the Military Cooperation Office in the US Embassy of Kuwait Brig Gen Randolph Staudenraus and US military attache to Kuwait Lt Col Jason Belknap. — KUNA

to Interior Ministry statement. The Interior Minister affirmed the deep-rooted security relations between the both countries, it added. Meanwhile, Pearson praised the role of Kuwait in bringing peace to the region, stressing the depth of relations and cooperation between the two friendly countries in all fields, especially security.

Later, Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-

Jarrah met Kuwait's Ambassador to Cuba Mohammad Khalaf. The interior minister underlined the important role of Kuwaiti embassies in consolidating relations internationally and regionally, appreciating the permanent and continuous cooperation between the security establishment and the foreign ministry in all fields of common interest. —KUNA

Mexican Ambassador sends Eid greetings

KUWAIT: Embassy of Mexico to the State of Kuwait released the following statement yesterday: "Ambassador of Mexico Miguel Angel Isidro has the honor to extend his sincere felicitation and best wishes to His Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the government and the people of the State of Kuwait, on the occasion of the advent of Eid Al-Fitr, wishing the friendly people of Kuwait further prosperity and stability and looking forward to further consolidating the bilateral relations between both nations that reflect the strong will to reach strategic partnership that



Mexican Ambassador Miguel Angel Isidro

will lead to further development and promote peace and prosperity for both friendly peoples."

NBK celebrates girgian at Terminal 4



Aishah Abdulwahab Al-Marzouq



KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continued to celebrate culture occasions of Kuwait's heritage by distributing girgian to passengers at the Kuwait Airways Terminal 4 (T4) at Kuwait International Airport in cooperation with Incheon International Airport Corporation (IAC) the operator of the terminal.

The celebration comes as part of the Bank's ongoing commitment to remaining close to its customers and has received great response during its most recent girgian celebration targeting travelers and customers equally at T4.

Aishah Abdulwahab Al-Marzouq from Consumer Banking

Group, National Bank of Kuwait said: "At NBK, we ensure we are always close to our customers in every occasion. This time, we've distributed girgian favors to travelers from the new T4 to share the joy of celebrating our rich cultural heritage." Marzouq added: "We invest our efforts to revive Kuwaiti cultural events that are close to the hearts of every age group. Celebrating girgian and marking it with the distribution of the traditional favors is part of the Bank's objective to organize meaningful social events during the holy month of Ramadan."

She concluded by reaffirming that NBK is even more

committed to providing excellent banking services in its new branch at T4 and enabling customers and travelers to complete their transactions easily and conveniently through an enriching banking experience. The new branch at T4 is located directly at the departure hall and provides its services to customers 24/7, except during the holy month of Ramadan. The branch has a reception hall where customers can relax until their transactions are completed.

The new branch also offers a variety of services suitable for those travelling an ITM, the second NBK machine of its kind available in Kuwait with the first placed in The Avenues

mall. The branch also offers multiple currency exchange services. In addition, the NBK branch at T4 provides a cash withdrawal service in six different currencies: Kuwaiti Dinar, US Dollar, Euro, British Pound, UAE Dirham and Saudi Riyal.

NBK maintains its leadership position in the banking industry in Kuwait with its wide network of branches, ATMs and POS terminals. NBK also enables customers to easily manage their accounts and transactions 24/7 through NBK Mobile Banking and NBK Online Banking App, or by calling 1801801, which caters to customer inquiries and needs around the clock.



Food Bank distributes iftar meals



KUWAIT: Meshaal Al-Nasari, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Ayman Al-Mutairi, Salem Al-Hamar and other volunteers pose for a group photo after the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan takes part in distributing iftar meals.



Meshaal Al-Ansari, donor Nasser Al-Mesri and his daughter.



Salem Al-Hamar, Abd Al-Rahman, Meshaal Al-Ansari, Asaad Al-Kurdi and other volunteers.



Distributing iftar meals



Meshaal Al-Ansari supervising Warba Bank meals' distribution.



Volunteers distributing dates.

KUWAIT: Kuwait Food and Relief Bank held daily iftar meals distributions in various areas around Kuwait as part of their Iftar Campaign in collaboration with the Awqaf General Secretariat, Warba Bank and several other companies. The campaign has been feeding several hundreds of unprivileged people throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

While visiting one of the Iftar Campaign's sites in Mubarakiya Market, Food Bank's vice chairman Meshaal Al-Ansari thanked the Kuwait Times and other sponsors for their support of the campaign. "I would like to also thank Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and Warba Bank's Public Relations Manager Ayman Al-Mutairi for their personal participation today and for increasing the awareness. Our initiative encourages everyone to

donate or give a hand - and the more participation we get the more people we can help feed," said Al-Ansari.

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan attended the Mubarakiya Market Iftar Campaign event and expressed his gratitude. "I would like to thank the Kuwait Food and Relief Bank spearheaded by their Chairman Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi for their initiatives and continued support of humanitarian work around the world. The Iftar Campaign is only the latest of many campaigns the Food Bank has in store. I would also like to thank Mishaal Al-Ansari the Vice Chairman of the Food Bank and Salem Al-Hamar Food Bank's Director for their kind hospitality and their hard work today". For more information, please visit the website <https://www.kuwaitfoodbank.org/6xuASO>



Long queues of people waiting to receive their iftar meals.

Gulf Bank celebrates annual ghabqa



KUWAIT: In keeping with a much anticipated annual tradition, Gulf Bank brought its employees and executive management together for its yearly Ramadan ghabqa. This year's ghabqa, which welcomed over 700 total attendees, took place at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and offered employees across all departments an entertainment-filled

evening outside of the workplace.

The annual ghabqa is a wonderful opportunity for employees from different administrative divisions and branches to enjoy an evening of delicious food and great conversation, deepening the sense of familial spirit that makes the Gulf Bank family so unique.

Gulf Bank's General Manager of Human

Resources, Salma Al-Hajjaj, said: "The annual ghabqa is one of our most anticipated events throughout the year, and never fails to deliver a spectacular evening for all Gulf Bank employees. We are so proud to bring together employees from all over the Bank, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, a time of strengthening bonds and creating new ties of

friendship."

The evening included awarding the best volunteer of the year, as well as the winner of the internal Ramadan football tournament of Gulf Bank's employees. Gulf Bank is keen to enhance a spirit of open communication among its employees through various activities and events throughout the year.





Gulf Air hosts its annual Ramadan ghabqa in Kuwait



KUWAIT: Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Sabre, the leading technology provider to the global travel industry, recently hosted a ghabqa event in Kuwait City, which was attended by trade partners, VIP

clients, media representatives, and a number of professionals from the aviation industry. The evening included a number of entertaining activities and interactive segments with the guests. Held at the Four Seasons Hotel, the ghabqa event

was organized jointly by Gulf Air and Sabre highlighting the strong business relationship between the two companies.

Earlier at the beginning of Ramadan, Gulf Air and Sabre launched their Ramadan initiative that saw

the two trade partners collaborate to collect tangible and monetary donations by placing donation boxes at Gulf Air Headquarters in Bahrain and at the Bahrain Financial Harbor to encourage the spirit of giving - a fundamental value of the holy month.



BUY 2 GET 1 FREE

Garments • Sarees • Churidars
Footwear • Ladies Bags

Offer valid from 29.05.2019 to 08.06.2019 or until stocks last. Purchase Limit May Apply.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>1.240 0.875</p> <p>Al Marai UHT Milk 1Ltr 4's (Full Fat/Low Fat)</p> | <p>1.250 0.895</p> <p>From 29 to 02.06.2019 Nescafe 3 in 1 My Cup Stick 20gm 24's</p> | <p>1.390 0.895</p> <p>Heinz Tomato Ketchup 14oz 2's</p> | <p>3.695 2.590</p> <p>Galaxy Jewels 650gm</p> |
| <p>2.700 1.795</p> <p>From 29 to 02.06.2019 Nestle KitKat 2Finger 20.5gm 36's</p> | <p>1.895 1.195</p> <p>From 29 to 04.06.2019 Grapes Red Crimson (Australia) per kg</p> | <p>0.895 0.695</p> <p>From 29 to 04.06.2019 Pomegranate (India) per kg</p> | <p>0.695 0.495</p> <p>From 29 to 04.06.2019 Potato Box</p> |
| <p>3.490</p> <p>From 29 to 02.06.2019 Tide Washing Powder 3kg 2's</p> | <p>1.295 0.695</p> <p>Kraft Cream Cheese Spread 480gm</p> | <p>4.590 3.890</p> <p>From 29 to 31.05.2019 Norwegian Whole Salmon / kg</p> | <p>5.990 5.590</p> <p>From 29 to 31.05.2019 White Pomfret (Medium) /kg</p> |
| <p>32.000 15.900</p> <p>39.900 18.900</p> <p>49.900 23.900</p> <p>American Tourister Bradford Soft Trolley</p> | <p>1.350 0.890</p> <p>Harpic Toilet Cleaner 500ml 2+1 Free</p> | <p>159.900 119.900</p> <p>EXCLUSIVE WARRANTY Sony 50" FHD Smart LED KDL50W660F</p> | <p>379.900 339.990</p> <p>Apple iPhone Xs</p> |
| | | <p>300.000 164.990</p> <p>Samsung Galaxy Smartphone Note 9</p> | |

HYPERMARKETS.
SUPERMARKETS.
DEPARTMENT STORES.

Buy better.

Where the world comes to shop

W luluhypermarket.com
f LuluHypermarketKw
t luluhyperkw
luluhyperkw
luluhypermarket.com



Floating sweatshops:
 Is the fish you eat
 caught by 'slaves'?

Modi healthcare scheme won hearts, and votes



RABAT: A handout picture provided by the Moroccan Royal Palace late Tuesday shows Moroccan King Mohammed VI (center) and his son Crown Prince Moulay Hassan (right) sharing an iftar meal with Senior Advisor to the President of the US Jared Kushner (left) at the Royal Residence. —AFP

Trump envoys seek support for peace plan

Kushner, Greenblatt meet Morocco king • Palestinian leaders sharply critical of effort

RABAT: US President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner met Morocco's King Mohammed VI on Tuesday in Rabat as part of a fresh push on a long-promised but yet-to-be-delivered peace plan for the region. The trip - which will also include stops in Amman and Jerusalem - comes amid a flurry of other administration moves to shore up alliances with Arab allies against Iran and the deployment of warships and bombers to the region.

Kushner is accompanied by Jason Greenblatt, Trump's special representative for international negotiations, and Brian Hook, the special US representative for Iran. The meeting in Rabat focused on developments in the Middle East and North Africa as well as strengthening the partnership between Morocco and the US, a palace spokesman told AFP. Greenblatt tweeted that he and Kushner shared an iftar dinner - the traditional meal to break the daily fast during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan - with Morocco's king, Crown Prince Moulay Hassan and Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita.

"Thank you to His Majesty for a special evening and for sharing your wisdom," Greenblatt wrote. "Morocco is an important friend & ally of the United States." The Trump administration is expected to unveil the peace plan - after numerous failures by its predecessors - possibly as early as next month, but the Palestinians have already rejected it

as heavily biased in favor of Israel. Washington has yet to commit to an exact timetable with respect to the political aspects of the plan.

Kushner also will attend the Bilderberg conference in Montreux, Switzerland, where he is expected to be a speaker, at the end of the week and then will meet Trump in London when the latter makes a state visit there next week. The trip is similar to one that Kushner and Greenblatt took in February to Gulf states to drum up support for the economic portion of a Middle East peace plan they have been developing on behalf of Trump.

Kushner is the chief architect of the proposal and Greenblatt, a longtime Trump lawyer, has served as his right-hand man on the Middle East initiative. Upon his arrival in the White House more than two years ago, Trump proclaimed his ambition to secure a final accord ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But the odds of his succeeding where every previous US president - Republicans as well as Democrats - have failed appear particularly low. Palestinians have boycotted the process since Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in Dec 2017.

Bahrain conference

The US is expected to roll out the economic aspects of the peace plan at a conference in Bahrain on June 25-26.

Co-hosts US and Bahrain have billed it as "a pivotal opportunity... to share ideas, discuss strategies and galvanize support for potential economic investments and initiatives that could be made possible by a peace agreement." But Palestinian political leaders say they will boycott it and Palestinian business leaders said they won't go either, raising further questions about the plan's viability. "Any economic project without a political solution is selling an illusion," said Arafat Asfour, chairman of the Palestine Trade Center.

"We didn't mandate anyone to negotiate on our behalf, and if anyone wants to trade the interests of the Palestinians for their own benefit, let them do it out of their own pockets," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat told Reuters. "We urge all Arabs who have accepted to go to Bahrain to reconsider out of respect for the Palestinians," he said. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have said they will participate, and a senior US official said officials from Qatar have said privately their country was expected to attend as well.

The Russian foreign ministry took a dim view of the conference in a statement on Tuesday, saying the United States was attempting to "impose an 'alternative vision' of the Palestinian-Israeli settlement". "The Palestinian leadership has already categorically refused to take part, saying

that the PLO will not surrender to anyone its exclusive rights to make crucial decisions regarding the realization of Palestinians' national aspirations," it said.

Among those declining an invitation was Bashar Al-Masri, a high-profile Palestinian businessman who worked with international partners and in cooperation with the Israelis to invest \$1.4 billion in the new Palestinian town of Rawabi. Kushner, who will join up with Trump in London after his Middle East trip, has been evasive about the US plan, which has been shrouded in secrecy. While promising new ideas to revive a moribund peace process, he has refused to talk about a two-state solution, the formula that has long been at the heart of international efforts to achieve peace and also the official US position.

Instead, he has looked to an alliance with the Saudis against Iran as a way to gain Arab support for his plan. Three days before Kushner's trip, Trump authorized \$8.1 billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia and other Arab allies, bypassing Congress. Arms sales to the kingdom were frozen after the assassination of Saudi dissident Jamal Khashoggi in October and in response to mounting concerns over the human toll of a Saudi-led armed campaign in Yemen. But the administration defended the sales as necessary "to deter Iranian aggression and build partner self-defense capacity." —Agencies

Pak man murders HIV positive wife in epidemic-hit south

KARACHI: A Pakistani man killed his HIV positive wife yesterday in southern Pakistan, where hundreds of people have tested positive for the virus in recent weeks, stirring panic and casting a light on the country's dismal public health standards. Police said the murder took place in a village near the epicentre of the outbreak on the outskirts of Larkana city in Pakistan's Sindh province, where thousands have been screened in the last month. The victim - a 32-year-old mother of four - tested positive in recent days, according to a local police officer, with her husband accusing her of having an extramarital affair.

"This morning the husband strangled (the victim) with a rope and then hung her from a tree outside his home," Roshan Ali - a police officer in Shikarpur - told AFP, adding that the suspect was now in custody. Shikarpur district police chief Sajid Sadozai confirmed the incident, saying an investigation into the killing was ongoing and the suspect had been booked on murder charges. Anger and fear continue to swell in the desperately poor villages and suburbs near Larkana affected by the epidemic, which authorities say could be linked to either gross negligence or malicious intent by a local doctor using tainted syringes.

In rural Sindh - long bridled by harsh poverty and illiteracy - access to information about HIV and other diseases has kept the large swathes of the population in the dark about how the virus is transmitted. Health officials say nearly 700 people, many of them children, have tested positive in recent weeks as experts warn of a surge in infection rates across Pakistan due to the use of unsanitary equipment and rampant malpractice - often at the hands of quack doctors.

Pakistan was long considered a low prevalence country for HIV, but the disease is expanding at an alarming rate - particularly among intravenous drug users and sex workers. With about 20,000 new HIV infections reported in 2017 alone, Pakistan currently has the second fastest growing HIV rates across Asia, according to the UN. —AFP

India's ailing finance minister quits govt

NEW DELHI: India's influential but ailing finance minister Arun Jaitley announced yesterday that he would not serve in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new Hindu nationalist government because of poor health. Modi is set to be sworn in today after winning a second landslide election and should name his new cabinet shortly after. Jaitley, 66, a key member of the last government, said in a letter to Modi he released on Twitter that he would "like to keep away from any responsibility" so he could concentrate on his health and treatment.

Jaitley underwent a kidney transplant in May last

year and in February travelled to the United States for surgery after being diagnosed with cancer. "I am writing to you to formally request you that I should be allowed a reasonable time for myself, my treatment and my health and therefore not be a part of any responsibility, for the present, in the new government," he added in the letter.

Jaitley also hailed the "spectacular win" of Modi's right Bharatiya Janata Party in the six-week election that ended last week. The BJP swept 303 of the 542 contested parliamentary seats to win a second five-year term. A lawyer-turned-politician, Jaitley guided the government's rollout of a complex nationwide tax and often acted as a spokesman on contentious issues. Railways minister Piyush Goyal, who stepped in for Jaitley to present an interim budget in February, and BJP president Amit Shah are in contention for Jaitley's job, media reports said.

Where's Joe? Biden taking it slow in early campaign days

WASHINGTON: While Democratic presidential hopefuls barnstorm through early voting states, the party's frontrunner for the nomination, Joe Biden, is working at a different pace altogether, rolling out his 2020 campaign in limited stages and to moderate numbers of voters. Despite Biden's sluggish start, President Donald Trump is already fixating on the former vice president as his main rival in next year's election, going so far as to invoke North Korea's dictator in tweets criticizing Biden.

Biden didn't refer to the debacle during a teachers' union town hall that lasted more than an hour Tuesday in Houston, Texas, his first public campaign event in 10 days. But in a possible response to the growing criticism of his spotty public appearances, he announced several more campaign events to take place this week and published his first detailed policy proposals - on education.

When Biden does hit the trail, he routinely promises that "no one is going to work longer and campaign harder" to win voter trust and support in the run-up

to 2020. But since officially launching his White House bid in April, the veteran Democrat has made fewer than a dozen campaign stops, and his team has routinely offered a daily update to reporters: "Joe Biden has no public events scheduled."

During that period, Senator Cory Booker has crisscrossed Iowa in an RV camper; Bernie Sanders, number two in the Democratic polls, has campaigned in four states; and Senator Elizabeth Warren has held no less than eight public events, including four on Sunday. After his campaign kickoff rally on May 18 in Philadelphia, the 76-year-old Biden has largely kept his head down, attending fundraisers in Florida and Tennessee. Fundraisers are also set for this week in Texas.

'Just wait and see'

While Biden has eased into the race, Trump has not hesitated to attack him, including sending eyebrow-raising tweets during his visit to Japan amid tensions with North Korea and its leader Kim Jong Un. Trump tweeted Saturday that he "smiled when (Kim) called Swampman Joe Biden a low IQ individual, & worse." On Tuesday, the Biden camp pushed back firmly, calling the president's comments "beneath the dignity of the office" and part of a pattern of Trump "embracing autocrats."

"To be on foreign soil, on Memorial Day, and to side repeatedly with a murderous dictator against a

India is the world's sixth largest economy and although it has been growing at about seven percent a year, it is showing signs of a slowdown. Modi, 68, has invited the heads of countries who are in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Maritime and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to the swearing-in. India's archrival neighbour Pakistan is not a part of the alliance and so Modi avoided inviting Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. —AFP



Arun Jaitley

fellow American and former Vice President speaks for itself," deputy campaign manager Kate Bedingfield said in a statement. A senior campaign official said the Biden team waited until after Memorial Day out of respect for the "sacred purpose" of the holiday that honors veterans. "Trump hit back on Twitter, saying he "was actually sticking up for Sleepy Joe Biden while on foreign soil", and that "Kim Jong Un called him a 'low IQ idiot,' and many other things."

Advisors have argued that because of his near-universal name recognition, and popularity within Democratic circles, Biden does not need to relentlessly introduce himself to voters, as several other candidates are doing. His commanding lead in early polling also signals that media attention will follow him wherever and whenever he hits the campaign trail. Biden senior advisor Symone Sanders said at the Philadelphia rally that the candidate will soon ramp up his campaigning. "He knows that folks have questions about his stamina, his ability to go long days, long nights," she said. "What he'll tell you is 'just watch, just wait and see.'"

Several instances when Biden was deemed to have been too "tactile" with women threaten his bid, with some women denouncing his gestures as too affectionate. But despite the criticism, Biden held a 10-year-old girl by the shoulders at the teachers' town hall after she asked him a question and he told her: "I bet you're as bright as you're good looking." —AFP

International

Sudan central bankers lead strike as pressure mounts on generals

Travellers stranded as shutdown enters second day

KHARTOUM: Hundreds of workers at Sudan's banks and government offices, including the key oil ministry, went on strike for a second day yesterday to demand the country's ruling generals step down. The two-day strike aims to pressure the military council that took power after ousting longtime president Omar Al-Bashir in April to hand over to civilian rule. The Alliance for Freedom and Change protest movement called the strike after the suspension of talks over the shape of a transitional authority.

Thousands of employees of government offices, banks, private sector firms and the docks of Port Sudan observed the strike on Tuesday, saying only civilian rule can lift Sudan out of its political crisis. Yesterday, the capital's airport began to return to normal after scores of staff stopped work on Tuesday, although the flights of Sudanese airlines Badr, Tarco and Nova remained suspended.

But outside central bank headquarters in downtown Khartoum, hundreds of employees along with workers from other banks, the oil ministry and telecommunications sector held a demonstration against the military council, an AFP correspondent said. Carrying Sudanese flags, banners and placards reading "civilian rule", they chanted slogans against the generals.

'We reject the military'

The demonstrators said they were striking and protesting after a group of soldiers reportedly attacked bank employees on Tuesday. "We are here to say that we reject the military government and what happened

to central bank employees," said protester Somaya Osman, an employee of telecoms company Zain. "It's unacceptable... that's why we want a civilian government," she said. Around her, fellow protesters chanted "freedom, peace, justice!" - the catch cry of the protests that began in December over a hike in bread prices and escalated into a nationwide movement against Bashir.

Late on Tuesday, the Sudanese Professionals Association, the group that launched the protests, said troops had tried to force central bank staff to work. Hundreds of people also gathered outside the University of El-Fasher in the state of North Darfur in support of the strike yesterday, witnesses said. At Khartoum's main bus terminal, stranded passengers were looking for private transport as bus company staff remained on strike.

"This is the second day I came to the bus terminal with my family and I'm still unable to travel," said Mohamed Al-Amin, who was trying to reach the eastern state of Kassala. "Now I'm trying to hire a car with some other passengers." Several newspapers were unable to publish because their printers had shut for the day. "My newspaper is not on strike but we were unable to print the edition because the technicians were on strike," the owner of Al-Mjher newspaper, Al-Hindi Ezzeddine, wrote on Twitter.

Ahead of the strike, protest leaders said the strike would be observed by medics, lawyers and employees of utility and transportation firms, among others. The army ousted Bashir in April after months of protests



KHARTOUM: Sudanese protesters gather during a demonstration outside the Central Bank yesterday. — AFP

against his autocratic rule, including a sit-in by tens of thousands outside military headquarters. Thousands of protesters have remained camped outside the sprawling Khartoum compound for weeks.

But the generals, backed by key Arab powers, have resisted calls from African and Western governments to

step down. Before suspending talks last week, the two sides had agreed on many aspects of the political transition, including its duration and the bodies to oversee it. But negotiations broke down over the question of whether a planned transitional body would be headed by a civilian or military figure. — AFP

News in brief

Egyptian militant transferred from Libya

CAIRO: One of the most-wanted Egyptian militants who was captured in neighboring Libya last year has been transferred to Egypt, state media reported yesterday. Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar handed over Hisham El-Ashmawy after meeting with Egypt's intelligence services chief in Benghazi, his office said in a statement late Tuesday. Egyptian pro-government media broadcast footage of Ashmawy arriving in Egypt on a military aircraft early yesterday morning. A former officer with Egypt's special forces, Ashmawy left the army in 2012 and later joined Ansar Beit al-Maqdis which is based in the Sinai Peninsula. Ashmawy is believed to have gone to Libya in 2013, before Maqdis pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group in Nov 2014, becoming one of Egypt's most wanted terrorists. — AFP

Algeria activist dies in prison

ALGIERS: An Algerian human rights campaigner and Mozabite Berber activist died Tuesday in pre-trial detention, his lawyer said, accusing judicial authorities of causing his death. Released in July 2017 after serving two years in prison for public order offences, Kamel Eddine Fekhar was re-arrested in late March for "attacks on institutions". He was placed in detention in Ghardaia, some 480 km south of the capital Algiers. His lawyer Salah Dabouz said Fekhar died at the Blida hospital after being transferred there "in a comatose state". The activist had been on hunger strike since he was detained, he told AFP. In a video posted on his Facebook page, Dabouz denounced "this relentless and this planned death by the judicial authorities of Ghardaia" who detained Fekhar without reason. — AFP

Iraq repatriates 200 children

BAGHDAD: Iraq repatriated to Turkey yesterday 188 children of Turks accused of belonging to the Islamic State group, a capital offence in Iraq, the judiciary said. The move follows the repatriation to Tajikistan late last month of 84 children of nationals convicted by Iraqi courts of membership of IS or other jihadist groups. That came after dozens of children were flown to Russia and after France and Germany repatriated the children of women nationals detained in Iraq. Iraqi courts have dealt with a steady flow of militants - with 500 foreign men and women already found guilty of having joined IS. The caseload has swelled in recent months after thousands of militants were transferred from Syria after the battle to stamp out the last IS enclave. — AFP

Buhari sworn in for second term

ABUJA: Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in for a second term in office yesterday, vowing once more to tackle crippling security threats and root out corruption in Africa's key economy. The 76-year old leader, in power since 2015 and re-elected in February, took the oath of office for a second four-year term in the capital Abuja. "I do solemnly swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria," Buhari said, dressed in simple white robes and traditional embroidered cap. "I will preserve, protect and defend the constitution." Buhari took the oath of office at what officials called a "low-key" ceremony. It included a red-carpet arrival flanked by bagpipers with a military guard of honor and seating packed with dignitaries. Vice President Yemi Osinbajo was also sworn into office. — AFP

Fresh strikes on Idlib kill 13

BEIRUT: The latest strikes in an unprecedented wave of regime bombardment on a jihadist enclave in northwestern Syria killed at least 13 civilians yesterday, a war monitor said. Air strikes, some using deadly barrel bombs, and shelling by both government and Russian warplanes have claimed a mounting civilian death toll over the past few weeks. The violence, which has rattled a fragile truce deal brokered by Moscow and Ankara in September, is causing mass displacement and bringing Syria to the brink of the worst humanitarian catastrophe yet in its eight-year-old conflict.

The United States and the United Nations demanded an end to airstrikes on Tuesday, as bombardment by Damascus killed 27 people - the single highest civilian death toll in the region since the regime increased attacks in late April. But yesterday, aerial bombardment did not relent. According to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring organization, seven of yesterday's victims were killed in an air raid on the village of Sarja.

It lies in Idlib province, most of which is controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, a group dominated by former members of Al-Qaeda's Syria affiliate. The four other victims were a father and his three children in the village of Bara, said Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman. Two others were killed in strikes on the Idlib town of Hbeit, he said. "The bombardment by the regime

and Russia continues to be intense on several areas. The Russian strikes are focused on Khan Sheikun but have not caused any casualties for now," he said. Syrian state news agency SANA reported one woman was killed by jihadist shelling on northern Hama.

'Spare no effort'

The regime has not announced an all-out offensive to retake the entire enclave, a large area which is home to almost three million people. Analysts predict that the government of President Bashar Al-Assad and its allies will continue to chip away at the area but not unleash a major assault that would create chaos on Turkey's doorstep. The regime is likely to continue applying sustained military pressure whilst attempting to preserve a fragile truce agreement reached in Russia last year to spare the region a large-scale humanitarian disaster.

On Tuesday, Syria's UN envoy Bashar Jaafari said Damascus "will spare no effort" to free the residents of Idlib from jihadist control, according to comments carried by SANA. UN deputy aid chief Ursula Mueller, however, told the Security Council that a further escalation would threaten humanitarian assistance for the region's residents. She said some 270,000 people had been displaced by the fighting in Idlib since late April.

Aid agencies have been forced to suspend their work in some areas, she said, adding that 22 hospitals and clinics had been hit by air strikes or shelling since April 28. The United States has said that "indiscriminate attacks on civilians and public infrastructure such as schools, markets and hospitals is a reckless escalation". — AFP

Iraq condemns 7th Frenchman to death for IS membership

BAGHDAD: A Baghdad court sentenced a Frenchman to death yesterday for joining the Islamic State group, bringing to seven the number of French jihadists on death row in Iraq. Yassin Sakkam was among 12 French citizens transferred to Iraqi authorities in January by a US-backed force fighting the group in Syria. "I admit to having sworn allegiance" to IS, he told the court, saying he was paid \$70 (62 euros) a month. He added that he regretted his decision to join the group, and asked to be pardoned.

Sakkam, now 29, left France in late 2014 to fight for IS, posting online pictures of himself carrying arms and speaking to multiple media outlets about IS. He became one of the most notorious militants in France, which has been seeking his arrest since 2016. Kurdish authorities detained him in Syria in 2017. His brother Karim carried out a suicide attack at the Iraqi-Jordanian border in 2015, according to the French Terrorism Analysis Centre (CAT).

Sakkam's sentence came despite France reiterating its opposition to capital punishment this week amid a series of similar judgments against French citizens handed to Baghdad. Iraq has taken cus-

tody of thousands of jihadists in recent months after they were captured in neighboring Syria by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) during the battle to destroy the IS "caliphate". They include hundreds of foreigners suspected of IS membership, raising the question of whether suspected IS jihadists should be tried in the region or repatriated.

France has long insisted that its adult citizens captured in Iraq or Syria must face trial locally, while reiterating its opposition to capital punishment. Iraqi law provides for the death penalty for anyone joining a "terrorist group" - even those who did not take up arms. Also yesterday, an Iraqi court sentenced Tunisian Mohammed Berriri to death for joining IS, after a hearing lasting less than an hour. Berriri, 24, admitted to joining the group, saying he thought it was "defending the weak", but said he now regretted doing so. — AFP



Yassin Sakkam



Mabrook Hotel Supplies and RAK Porcelain partnership in Kuwait

Mabrook Hotel Supplies and products. announces its partnership with RAK Porcelain L.L.C in an attempt to further develop the porcelain tableware business in Kuwait catering to the international HORECA segment.

Situated in the quaint emirate of Ras Al Khaimah in UAE, RAK Porcelain is a leading porcelain tableware manufacturer, designer and supplier endorsed by 40,000+ starred hotels present in over 165 countries. The company has added premium quality cutlery ranges to their portfolio to enhance peoples dining experiences and cater to the various trends in table decor.

Established since 1958, Mabrook continuously strives to collaborate and import products from the world's leading brands in Tableware and Commercial Kitchen equipment; thereby seeking to provide the food service industry with superior quality products, latest concepts and designs.

Mabrook and RAK Porcelain's new partnership is meant to assist professionals of the hospitality industry to find and apply the perfect tableware solutions in their daily pursuit for innovation and perfection.

In-line with this objective the new partnership with HORECA Industry favourite RAK Porcelain, is a perfect association in their pursuit to offer novel solutions

@mabrookco +965 22204140

International

Floating sweatshops: Is the fish you eat caught by 'slaves'?

Seafood companies turn to vulnerable migrant workers to remain profitable

JAKARTA: Enslaved, beaten, malnourished, and so desperate for water he had to collect condensation to drink: Rahmatullah left Indonesia seeking better prospects at sea - instead he endured a living hell. The global fishing industry is riddled with forced labor, anti-trafficking experts say, warning that consumers are unaware of the "true cost" of the seafood they buy in stores and restaurants. Exploited workers face non-payment, overwork, violence, injury, and even death. Indonesia and Southeast Asia are major sources of such labor and unscrupulous brokers target the poor and uneducated with promises of good wages at sea.

Rahmatullah was told he was heading to Peruvian waters where he would receive \$400 a month salary, plus a per ton bonus, but he was allegedly duped by an Indonesian recruiting agency and trafficked to Somalia, where he spent nine brutal months aboard a Chinese fishing vessel, working 18-hour days. "I felt like a slave," the 24-year-old told AFP, adding: "The Chinese crew drank clean water while we had to collect water from the air conditioning." "We were often beaten when we didn't catch enough, even if we were sick."

'Couldn't fight back'

Rahmatullah is one of 40 Indonesians pushing for compensation after allegedly being tricked with false promises by recruiter PT Maritim Samudera. Some were sent to vessels in the seas off Japan, and others to boats sailing the Somali coast. In interviews with AFP and accounts provided to police and government officials, the men recounted beatings and psychological abuse, hunger, and dehydration. Two crewmates died from thirst and exhaustion, according to Rahmatullah's testimony. Most of the men subsisted on white rice scattered with cabbage or boiled fish, while some grew so desperate for water they collected condensation from the air conditioning unit.

"The food was terrible," said 21-year-old Arianus Ziliwu, who was on a boat in Japanese waters. "And the sleeping conditions didn't seem fit for humans," he explained. Cellphone video footage and images provided to AFP showed some men slept without mattresses in a grimy cargo hold. "We couldn't fight back - I'm from a village and didn't know any better," added Rahmatullah, who had never worked on a fishing boat before. Both groups were rescued after sending SOS messages in brief windows of access to mobile Internet.

Targeting the vulnerable

The young men spent between six and nine months manning nets and packing fish before being saved, and all are owed thousands of dollars in unpaid wages, according to sworn statements to police. Faced with plummeting global fish stocks due to overfishing, seafood companies have increasingly turned to vulnerable migrant workers in a bid to remain profitable, anti-trafficking advocates said. "If you want cheap tuna or squid, the way to do it is with cheap labor," said Arifsyah M Nasution, oceans campaigner at Greenpeace Indonesia. "And cheap labor comes from Southeast Asia," he added.

The Global Slavery Index says labor exploitation and modern slavery in some fisheries are well documented. But few shoppers know about these high-seas horrors. "There is still very little awareness among consumers about the true costs and hidden facts of the seafood products that they buy at stores and supermarkets," he said. Critics say the Indonesian government is not doing enough to combat widespread abuse of its migrant sailors, despite efforts to clamp down on human rights violations in its own territorial waters.



JAKARTA: This picture taken on May 5, 2019 shows Indonesian fishermen unloading their catch at a port. — AFP

Although there are no reliable estimates on the number of Indonesian migrant fishermen that fall victim to trafficking, authorities estimated in 2016 that some 250,000 Indonesians were working as "unprotected" crew on foreign fishing vessels. — AFP

News in brief

1,000 murder suspects held in Brazil

SAO PAULO: Brazilian police carried out a giant anti-murder operation in nearly every state of the country Tuesday, arresting 968 suspects in one day, according to the National Council of Civilian Police Chiefs. The arrests included 56 people suspected of killing someone in an act of domestic violence or of gender-based discrimination. The efforts were phase two of the unusually large so-called Operation Cronos. In each state, police shared real-time updates of their work on social media, including photos and videos. "By imprisoning murderers, we hope to prevent future crimes," Civil Police tweeted in the northern state of Para. During Operation Cronos's first phase in August, police arrested nearly 3,000 people accused of murder, gender-based killings and domestic violence, among other crimes. — AFP

Belgian king meets far-right leader

BRUSSELS: King Philippe of Belgium met with the Flemish far-right party leader yesterday, the first time since 1936 that an extreme right-wing party has been received by the monarch. The royal palace announced the meeting with the 32-year-old Tom Van Grieken of the Vlaams Belang party, which scored a surprise second place in Dutch-speaking Flanders in federal and regional elections on Sunday. While extremely limited, the role of the Belgian monarch is to serve as a facilitator to build a ruling coalition, a complicated task in a country deeply split between French and Dutch speaking communities. Before the announcement Van Grieken told Flemish media that he would definitely accept the invitation, should he get one. "If you want to get respect you have to show respect, and that comes from both sides," he told Radio 1. — AFP

Rights court condemns Azerbaijan

STRASBOURG: Europe's top rights court ruled yesterday that Azerbaijan had violated its human rights obligations by ignoring a judicial order to free a jailed opposition leader critical of strongman President Ilham Aliyev. The Strasbourg-based European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) found the country had flouted its 2014 ruling to release Ilgar Mammadov, who was jailed in 2013 and ultimately freed only in August 2018. The ECHR is part of the Council of Europe (CoE), the pan-European rights body which Azerbaijan joined in 2001. It ruled five years ago that criminal proceedings against Mammadov had no legal basis and were politically motivated. Pro-democracy campaigner Mammadov was widely expected to run in presidential elections against Aliyev when he was arrested in Feb 2013 on charges of causing unrest in the town of Ismayilli. — AFP

Dutch ban Hells Angels biker gang over 'violence'

THE HAGUE, Netherlands: Dutch judges yesterday banned biker club Hells Angels and ordered all its chapters to close in the Netherlands as authorities pursue a clampdown on so-called outlaw motorcycle gangs. The country-wide ban is a first for the club that operates some 470 chapters in more than 50 nations around the world, the Dutch public broadcaster NOS said. "The Hells Angels is a danger to the public order," the court in the central Dutch city of Utrecht ruled.

"The Hells Angels sees itself as a one-percenter club, a club of outlaws," said the court, citing a slogan used by biker gangs rejecting the authority of national laws or societal norms. "It's a club where there's a culture of lawlessness and the authorities are kept outside their doors," the court added in a statement. It referred to a number of patches or so-called "colours" on the cut-off vests of the Hells Angels, called "cuts", saying "they are handed out to members who commit (serious) violence". "The Hells Angels' profile is that of the largest and most powerful motorcycle club. They believe other clubs should listen to them and that leads to long-running conflicts."

Dutch prosecutors, who have been trying for more than a decade to have the club banned, referred to an incident in the southern town of Kerkrade where a cafe frequented by rival gang Bandidos was set on fire in 2015. — AFP

Merkel govt vows climate action as voters turn up heat

BERLIN: Chancellor Angela Merkel's government yesterday pledged a new climate strategy by September as it scrambles to tackle what has become Germany's hottest political issue. Merkel's coalition took heavy losses in Sunday's European Parliament elections at the hands of the ascendant Greens in what was seen as an indictment of Berlin's plodding progress on tackling global warming. Young voters in particular - energized by the Fridays for Future school strikes, anti-coal protests and a passionate campaign from leading YouTube stars - abandoned the mainstream CDU/CSU and SPD parties in droves.

Environmental groups demand that Germany fast-forward its phasing out of dirty coal, currently targeted for 2038, and better promote zero-emission cars that remain a rare sight on German roads. Merkel, who acknowledged on CNN that "we have to give better answers" to the planetary challenge, met ministers of her "climate cabinet" Wednesday to discuss how Germany should meet its carbon reduction targets.

Afterwards, Merkel's office reaffirmed Germany's intention "to meet the 2030 climate targets to which it has committed itself internationally" - a 55-percent cut in emissions from 1990 levels. "This means significant additional CO2 reductions year after year," said her spokesman Steffen Seibert, stressing that Merkel's government "sees this as a key focus of its work". "The government will in September make the fundamental decisions on the laws and measures and the cabinet will adopt them by the end of the year," he added.

Why a deadly shadow hangs over Everest summit

KATHMANDU: As the return of cloud and frozen hurricane-force winds seal off Mount Everest for another year, questions are being asked about how to police the world's highest peak after the deadliest climbing season in years. On average five climbers die each year on the icy, narrow, oxygen-starved paths to the 8,848-m peak. This season, 11 people died on the treacherous slopes where mountaineers queued sometimes for hours for their turn at the top.

Some veterans say too many of the new wave of mountaineer tourists are ill-prepared for what remains a major test of body and soul. Others have called for a cut in the number of climbing permits, or tougher standards for guides. As the blame game is played out, here are some of the problems facing the lucrative Everest industry - and potential solutions:

Summit Days

Although final numbers have yet to be released, the number of people to make it up Everest this year could overtake the record of 807 set last year. Nepal issued 381 permits costing \$11,000 each for the spring season and at least another 140 were granted for the northern flank in Tibet. As most Everest hopefuls are escorted by at least one Nepali guide, the crowds caused bottlenecks on the path to the top - especially after bad weather cut the number of climbing days.

The 2018 climbers were helped by favorable weather that opened the summit for 11 days, but this year vicious winds cut the number of days to fewer than six. Five people died in 2018. This year nine climbers died on the Nepal side of Everest and two on the Tibet side. Nirmal Purja, who climbed six 8,000-m mountains in



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

just 31 days this season, said the route to the summit should be fixed earlier to ease the traffic. "We did that on Annapurna to stay on track. It gives teams more days to reach the summit," he said. But Ang Dorji Sherpa of the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee - which oversees the opening of the lower part of the route - said the focus should be on limiting the number of climbers as weather dictates when ropes can be set.

Crowd management

Just as a beach is crowded on the first day of summer, the ridge to the Everest summit was clogged by more than 200 climbers on May 22 when it reopened after bad weather. Teams waited for hours in freezing temperatures to reach the top and then descend. The wait increased the risk of frostbite, deadly altitude sickness and simple exhaustion from depleted oxygen levels. The traffic jam in the Everest "death zone" has been blamed for at least four deaths this year.

Indian climber Aditi Vaidya said waiting for one hour was a potential killer. "That's where maximum people got frostbite. Because you don't walk, you don't move, your body's not warm, you are cold and no matter if you buy the best mountaineering equipment, I don't think anything - any man-made thing - can fight nature." Gyanendra Shrestha, a government liaison officer at the Everest base camp, said climbers are in too much of a rush when the window opens. "If there was

'Climate chancellor'

Germany long earned plaudits as a clean energy pioneer, and Merkel was dubbed the "climate chancellor", for pushing renewables while committing to phase out nuclear power by 2022 and now coal by 2038. However, green activists now feel that progress has stalled and demand a far earlier end to coal and the combustion engine, as well as dramatic shifts in transport, agriculture and other fields. Germany is now set to miss its 2020 target of cutting CO2 emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels. It is currently on course for only a 32-percent reduction.

Since the European election, criticism has been raining down from all sides, not just environmental groups. Friedrich Merz, a conservative former investment fund boss with designs on Merkel's job, charged that "the CDU must ask itself why, after 14 years of having a 'climate chancellor', we are missing our climate targets, burdening households and companies with the highest electricity prices in Europe and at the same time losing strategic and cultural control over the issue."

The poor poll result has also heightened tensions between the two uneasy coalition allies. A day after the ballot box drubbing, the SPD Environment Minister Svenja Schulze voiced her frustration about the CDU's foot-dragging on her climate bill, saying that she could not "take responsibility for further delays."

'Sabotage'

The Greens' politician Cem Ozdemir held out special criticism for Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer of Bavaria's conservative CSU party, saying that so far he had "sabotaged any serious climate policy". Scheuer said in a statement that his philosophical approach was to "allow, facilitate and enable - not to prohibit, demonize and raise costs". Greenpeace Germany chief Martin Kaiser said that "the last new diesel and petrol engines would have to roll out of car dealerships in 2025 in order to reduce traffic



BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel leads the weekly cabinet meeting at the Chancellery yesterday. — AFP

emissions to zero by 2035". The pressure group also believes Germany must shutter seven coal plants by 2022 and completely phase out the polluting energy source by 2030. And Kaiser demanded a shift away from "industrial agriculture with bee poison and mass livestock farming that ruins the climate and groundwater", and toward organic farming. Germany's new climate law will look at the energy sector, housing, transport, industry, agriculture and forestry, and waste management, government spokesman Seibert said.

It will also address "CO2 pricing" to factor in the economic cost of emissions, which can take the form of a carbon tax or trading of emissions certificates. In one fresh proposal, Housing Minister Horst Seehofer yesterday suggested tax deductions for green building renovations, such as insulating walls and roofs and replacing old heating systems. — AFP

Mozambique militants step up attacks

MAPUTO, Mozambique: Islamist insurgents have resumed attacks in northern Mozambique after a cyclone last month, killing nearly two dozen villagers and torching homes in a mounting political threat in the run-up to a general election. A shadowy jihadist group that has targeted Cabo Delgado province since October 2017 briefly halted attacks after Cyclone Kenneth made landfall on April 25, leaving 45 dead and 250,000 affected. Relief teams and UN agencies were still searching for survivors and distributing aid when the Islamists returned to action.

In less than a month, the insurgents have killed at least 22 people, wounded dozens more and burned hundreds of homes, according to a record kept by AFP. The attacks have increased despite fresh police and military deployments as authorities struggle to prevent the insurgency disrupting voter registration ahead of presidential and legislative elections in October. Islamist fighters have been attacking remote communities in the gas-rich, Muslim-majority northern region since Oct 2017.

But the group's identity and motives remain unclear. "The country is falling victim and we all need to understand the real reasons," President Filipe Nyusi said last week in a rare interview with the privately-owned Canal de Mocambique newspaper. "The defense and security forces are putting their whole resources into this, so we can learn (the insurgents') motivation and who these people are." The government refuses to confirm details of attacks, but AFP tracked the violence via local sources.

On May 3, as communities were still reeling from the cyclone, gunmen stormed the village of Nacate, in Macomia district, killing six and setting fire to a dozen homes. The following day, the nearby villages of Ntapuala and Banga-Vieja were attacked, with four people killed, including a teacher driving a motorcycle and three others who died in burned houses. Hours later, the villages of Ida and Ipho, in the district of Meluco, were torched after local people fled to surrounding forests.

The pattern has been repeated through the month. Attacks have often forced the temporary closure of voting registration stations, according to the Center for Public Integrity, a Maputo-based civil action group. On May 10, insurgents targeted the road from the provincial capital Pemba to the coastal district of Palma, where a major gas extraction project is being built. — AFP

International

Modi healthcare scheme won hearts, and votes

Need to build more facilities, train more staff and implement more reforms

SITAPUR, India: While Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nationalist tub-thumping has been widely credited with his recent election win, another factor was one he kept relatively quiet about: Modicare. Despite some teething problems and a dire need for further reforms and more spending, this huge initiative launched last year - one of the world's largest publicly funded healthcare programs - has made a difference.

"This scheme has infused a sense of belief in the poor that if they fall sick they will get treatment without spending a rupee," said Anil Agarwal, chief medical superintendent at a hospital in Sitapur, a city with some of India's worst health indicators. Indeed, voting data from the mammoth election that ended last week with a landslide for Modi showed particularly strong support for his right-wing party in poorer areas where people would have benefited most.

"It has certainly been welcomed as a welfare measure by the poor and probably contributed to (Modi's) electoral victory," said K Srinath Reddy, president of the non-profit Public Health Foundation of India. The flagship program, dubbed Modicare, covers hospital costs up to \$7,200 for the poorest 40 percent of Indians, or some 500 million people, in a country where the average annual income is about \$1,670. Even before Modicare, or the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS), was introduced in September, treatment was largely free at government hospitals.

But patients still had to shell out for diagnostics and medicines, which make up a big chunk of the costs of hospital care, as well as for implants like stents. Private clinics were out of reach for many, with a consultation alone costing some 1,000 rupees (\$15) - a large amount for millions living on less than \$2 a day. But now poorer Indians can visit these clinics, providing they sign up to the scheme.

New belief

Sabir Ali, an impoverished weaver who got a Modicare

card for himself and his family to use at any of the 15,000-odd participating hospitals, had a cyst removed from his forehead. "It was unbelievable to hold the card in my hands," Ali told AFP, his head bandaged at the Sitapur district hospital in northern India. "I used the card and I didn't have to spend a single rupee on my treatment." Until recently only a quarter of India's population had any health insurance, forcing hundreds of millions to pay out of their own pockets, go to quack doctors or just skip treatment.

An estimated 60 million Indians are pushed below the poverty threshold every year paying for medical care, while a report last year by The Lancet medical journal found sub-standard healthcare was responsible for some 1.6 million deaths a year. Almost two million people have benefited from the scheme so far, with the government allocating some \$1.2 billion since the launch. The costs are shared between federal and state governments 60:40. "Schemes such as Modicare played a larger role (in the election outcome) than anyone had anticipated," said political analyst Parsa Venkateshwar Rao. "The overall message that has gone out is that Modi is willing to help the poor."

Teething troubles

In his second term, however, Modi will have to iron out some of the scheme's teething problems, with some hospitals complaining they cannot recoup what they spend. "We can't cope with (receiving) 9,000 rupees (\$128) for a caesarean section which would include stay of the patient, fees of the anesthetist, pediatrician, medicines and so on," said Doctor V K Monga from the Indian Medical Association. "But corrective steps are being taken... The health sector is overall satisfied now with the scheme," he told AFP.

Reddy of the Public Health Foundation of India also said the scheme needed more financial resources. "If the state governments too can be stimulated to increase their



SITAPUR, India: In this photograph taken on April 16, 2019, chief medical officer Dr Anil Agarwal gestures during his inspection round in a hospital. — AFP

health budgets, the scheme will become sustainable." More broadly, Modi needs to build more facilities, train more staff and implement more reforms in what remains a dysfunctional healthcare system, experts say. The newly re-elected prime minister has promised to hike health spending to 2.5 percent of GDP by 2025, from 1.15 percent now - one of the lowest in the world - but it is unclear if this will suffice.

Critics also say that Modicare helps unscrupulous private providers - already accused of over-diagnosing and

carrying out unnecessary surgeries - boost profits. Ali too has his complaints. "I live nearby the hospital so I can come, but if someone lives outside the city, they will struggle with the number of times they are expected to visit the hospital," he said. "They make us run around a lot." But the family of Vindeshwari Devi, who has had her uterus removed at the same Sitapur hospital, is satisfied. "I think this scheme is good and it will only get better," said Sunil Kumar, a daily-wage laborer and Devi's son-in-law. "For those who have nothing, it means a lot." — AFP

50 injured as Kashmiris help rebels escape

SRINAGAR: At least 50 people were injured in clashes in Indian Kashmir yesterday as protestors helped rebels escape a siege by government forces, police and hospital authorities said. While protests in support of the surrounded rebels have increased on the Indian side of the divided territory in recent years, it is rare for insurgents to escape. Militant groups fighting the 500,000 Indian soldiers deployed there demand independence or a merger with Pakistan.

Thousands of villagers poured onto roads yesterday as two suspected rebels fought a gun battle with soldiers from inside a house in the Kulgam area in southern

Kashmir. Protesters pelted government forces with stones to give the fighters cover to escape, they said. Fifty people were taken to a local hospital after government forces fired shotgun pellets and live bullets to push the protestors back, witnesses and hospital officials told AFP.

"The house was blown up but the militants escaped in the confusion. No dead bodies were found in the debris," a top police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity. The officer said however that only three people were injured, one with a bullet and two with pellets in their eyes. "Scratches cannot be considered injuries," he said, to explain the discrepancy in numbers. Clashes between rebels fighting Indian rule in Kashmir and government forces occur almost daily. More than 90 militants have been killed so far this year.

Residents from nearby villages often throng the streets to help rebels by hurling stones at Indian soldiers. Kashmir was divided between India and Pakistan after their independence in 1947. Tens of thousands have died in an uprising launched three decades ago, most of them civilians. — AFP



SRINAGAR: Kashmiri volunteers and medical workers transport an injured youth on a stretcher after he was wounded by pellet shots during clashes with government forces at a hospital yesterday. — AFP

another rally in Yangon he caused widespread offence by saying "soldiers protecting the country should be worshipped like Buddha".

'Face of Buddhist Terror'

Wirathu is no stranger to jail. He was sentenced in 2003 to 25 years behind bars under the former military junta on charges including preaching extremism and distributing banned books. As the country opened up, he was released in 2012 alongside several thousand political prisoners. He immediately returned to his hardline preachings, calling for boycotts of Muslim-owned businesses and restrictions on interfaith marriages. The abbot appeared on the cover of "Time" magazine as "The Face of Buddhist Terror" in 2013. In 2015 he called UN special envoy Yanghee Lee a "whore".

The Buddhist authority had previously prohibited him from speaking in public for a year after he delivered "hate speech against religions" - but the ban expired in March last year. Facebook blacklisted him in January 2018 after a string of incendiary posts targeting the Rohingya. Rights groups say these helped whip up animosity towards the community, laying foundations for a military crackdown in 2017 that forced some 740,000 to flee to Bangladesh. Like many in Myanmar, Wirathu pejoratively refers to the minority as "Bengali", implying they are illegal immigrants. Refugees' testimonies of mass killings, rapes and arson spurred UN investigators to call for the prosecution of top generals for "genocide" and the International Criminal Court (ICC) is conducting a preliminary probe. "The day the ICC comes here... is the day Wirathu holds a gun," he told a rally last October. — AFP

independent investigation into the incident earlier this week, saying "if the reports are correct that the army killed protestors by unlawfully using live ammunition, this would be a very serious violation of international law". The incident follows months of rising tensions between the two sides, with the military publicly and repeatedly warning PTM leaders to end their criticism of the country's armed forces - largely seen as a red line in Pakistan.

Since bursting onto the scene last year, the PTM has rattled Pakistan's military with its calls to end alleged abuses by security forces against ethnic Pashtuns. Darwar's claims also come as the Committee to Protect Journalists called for the release of Pakistani journalist Gohar Wazir who was arrested in nearby Bannu earlier this week after interviewing the PTM leader. "Gohar Wazir should not have to face arrest merely for doing the job of reporting the news, even reporting on controversial events such as protests by the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement," said Steven Butler, the CPJ Asia program coordinator. A local official confirmed the arrest of the journalist along with 22 others, saying Wazir had violated a public order ordinance for taking part in PTM protests. The PTM has unleashed festering anger over abuses allegedly committed against Pashtuns, including enforced disappearances and targeted killings, during the military's fight against insurgents. Pashtuns account for roughly 15 percent of Pakistan's population, with a majority based in the northwest and a significant presence in the southern port city of Karachi. — AFP

Wanted Myanmar monk summoned by Buddhist council

YANGON: An ultra-nationalist monk dubbed the "Buddhist Bin Laden" for his anti-Muslim vitriol has been summoned for reprimand by Myanmar's top religious council, as police pursue him on charges of stirring up unrest. Wirathu has long been the face of the country's hardline Buddhist movement, notorious for espousing hate against Islam and particularly the long-persecuted Rohingya minority. A court issued an arrest warrant for the abbot late Tuesday under article 124(a) which targets anyone who "excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government".

After the warrant was issued, Wirathu posted on his social media page a summons dated May 22 from the country's highest Buddhist authority, the State Sangha Maha Nayaka. This is a state-appointed body of high-ranking monks overseeing the clergy across Buddhist-majority Myanmar. The letter ordered him to report to its Yangon headquarters today for a reprimand over his "involvement with social affairs during a rally". Wirathu told local media by phone Wednesday he was in Yangon ahead of the meeting, but said the police had not yet come for him. "If they want to arrest me, they can do it," the Irrawaddy newspaper quoted him as saying.

The exact reasons behind the warrant have not been given but the rabble-raising monk has given several provocative speeches at nationalist rallies recently. In April, he took aim at the country's civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi. "She just dresses up like a fashionista, wears makeup and walks around in stylish, high-heeled shoes, shaking her ass at foreigners," he told a cheering crowd. At

Pak MP accuses officials of lying about clash

PESHAWAR: A Pakistani parliamentarian and civil rights leader yesterday accused authorities of lying about a violent clash between Pashtun activists and security forces over the weekend as tensions soar between the military and rights group. Moshin Dawar - an MP and leading member of the Pashtun Protection Movement (PTM) - disputed claims by the military that activists assaulted the military during a protest near a checkpoint along the Afghan border Sunday, saying security forces fired into the unarmed crowd.

"We did not attack any army checkpoint rather we were attacked," Dawar told AFP by phone from an undisclosed location where he is believed to be hiding. "The state and the state institutions are using force against us and I will raise voice against these excesses from whatever forum possible," he added. Dawar went on to claim that at least 13 people were killed by the firing, dismissing earlier reports from the military that just three activists were killed during the melee. Amnesty International called for an

News in brief

18 killed in Taliban strike

HERAT: Taliban fighters have stormed several security posts providing protection to Afghanistan's historic minaret of Jam, cutting access to the UNESCO World Heritage Site and killing 18 security forces, officials said yesterday. The attack comes less than a week after the revered 12th-century minaret, located in a remote part of the western province of Ghor, was threatened by surging floodwaters. "The Taliban have captured some checkpoints around the minaret. We had to retreat because more fighting would cause damage to the minaret," Sayed Zia Hussaini, the deputy police chief of Ghor, told AFP. Abdul Hai Khatebi, the provincial governor spokesman, said 15 pro-government militias and three policemen had been killed in the attacks, which started Monday. — AFP

'Eggboy' donates to NZ victims

SYDNEY: An Australian teen who egged a far-right senator over his offensive comments about the Christchurch mosque attacks says he has donated almost Aus\$100,000 (US\$69,000) raised for his legal defense to the victims of the shootings. William Connolly, nicknamed "Eggboy", made international headlines when he cracked an egg over controversial then-senator Fraser Anning's head at a press conference after the massacre of 51 Muslim worshippers. Anning, who has since lost his seat in Australia's parliament, triggered outrage by claiming the attack in neighboring New Zealand was the result of Muslim immigration to the country. Connolly wrote on Instagram late Tuesday that he had "decided to donate all monies to help provide some relief to the victims of the massacre... it wasn't mine to keep". "Finally!!! After a huge amount of red tape, \$99,922.36 has today been transferred to the Christchurch Foundation and Victims Support," he said, adding that he didn't need the money as a law firm acted pro bono for him. — AFP

B'desh to charge 16 after girl killed

DHAKA: Bangladesh police were set to file charges yesterday against 16 people, including the headmaster of an Islamic seminary, over the shocking murder of a 19-year-old girl burned to death. The killing of Nusrat Jahan Rafi last month sparked protests across the South Asian nation, with the prime minister promising to prosecute all those involved. Bangladesh's Police Bureau of Investigation said they would file the charge sheet in a court in the country's south against the 16 people, who include two girls who were classmates of Rafi. "They are charged under the women and children repression law and we'll recommend death penalty for all 16 accused," PBI lead investigator Mohammad Iqbal told AFP. Iqbal said the principal of the Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa Siraj U'd Doula where Rafi was a student ordered the murder from jail. — AFP

Japan police search attacker's home

TOKYO: Japanese police yesterday searched the home of the man behind a stabbing rampage in the town of Kawasaki a day earlier that killed two people, including a child. The 51-year-old attacker, identified by police as Ryuichi Iwasaki, died after stabbing himself after the rampage, and his motives for the horrifying assault remain unclear. Yesterday, police searched his home, not far from the scene of the morning attack, seizing unspecified material, public broadcaster NHK reported. Local media said Iwasaki was living with relatives in their 80s, but gave no further details. His occupation was unknown. The rampage in the town south of Tokyo on Tuesday morning killed two people - 11-year-old schoolgirl Hanako Kuribayashi and a 39-year-old parent identified as government official Satoshi Oyama, a Myanmar specialist. Seventeen more people, mainly young children, were injured, according to authorities. — AFP



Peter O'Neill

PNG PM resigns, throwing gas deal into doubt

PORT MORESBY: Papua New Guinea's embattled prime minister stepped down yesterday, capping a months-long political crisis and calling a multi-billion-dollar French and US-backed gas deal into question. Facing a string of cabinet resignations and a vote of no confidence he looked sure to lose, veteran leader Peter O'Neill told parliament he had handed his letter of resignation to the country's governor general. "I hereby tender my resignation as Prime Minister of the independent state of Papua New Guinea, effective immediately," read the letter that was obtained by AFP.

O'Neill said he had decided to step down "in the interests of ongoing political stability in our country" citing the need for "economic confidence and social unity". For eight years O'Neill had led the rugged and ethnically diverse nation, which is home to over 800 languages. But he had been heavily criticized for endemic corruption and chronic underdevelopment, in a country that has increasingly become a venue for US-China rivalry.

The government's purchase last year of 40 Maseratis to ferry foreign dignitaries around Port Moresby's few fully paved roads during an APEC summit became emblematic of his tenure. But the breaking point appeared to have been a recent \$13 billion deal with Total and ExxonMobil to extract, pipe and ship liquefied natural gas (LNG) overseas. The deal angered powerful regional and tribal leaders, who suggested they were not getting a fair share.

Finance minister James Marape - from the Helela province in the highlands - was the first to resign in protest, saying the money would not go to ordinary Papua New Guineans, local firms or the regions. A similar deal in the last decade has failed to bring wealth to a country where only 13 percent of citizens have regular access to electricity. O'Neill had earlier promised to resign, but subsequently took court action in a bid to cling to power, prompting physical confrontations in parliament.

But on Wednesday O'Neill finally resigned. In a valedictory speech, he touted his achievements in office, including hosting the 2018 APEC summit, a vast undertaking for a developing country with limited central government capacity. "We have always been known for the wrong reasons," O'Neill said. — AFP

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 : 24835618P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
Email: info@kuwaittimes.com
Website: www.kuwaittimes.netA prayer for trees:
For Kenyan tribes,
saving forests is a
sacred duty

As Tume Racha made tea for her grandchildren in the family's small wood-frame house woven from rags and camel hides, she talked about what her community holds most sacred: its trees. Racha, 50, belongs to the Gabra tribe, which lives on both sides of the border between northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia. Its members believe the nearby Forole mountain is a holy sanctuary.

The community of herders pray to the mountain whenever they need rain, and cutting down its trees is forbidden. If anyone from Racha's village at the foot of the mountain is caught breaking that rule, they are cast out. "Even children are taught from a young age that the trees within the village are not to be cut," said Racha. Across Kenya, nature-worshipping tribes have taken on the responsibility of protecting their local forests.

And their grassroots actions are making a small but significant difference as the rest of the country works to combat deforestation and restore its depleted forests. Climate scientists say preserving forests is a key way to keep climate change in check, as trees suck planet-warming carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store the carbon until they are burned or rot, when it is released back into the air.

Racha took pride in the lengths the people in her village will go to in order to keep their forest untouched. If anyone needs firewood or building materials, she explained, they must travel 10 km to the community's grazing fields. And if a family decides to move, they can only take the wood from their dismantled home if it comes from outside the village.

Call to communities

With less than 8% of its land now covered with forests, according to World Bank data, Kenya is struggling to reach the minimum level of 10% recommended by the United Nations. During the launch of a new greening initiative in April, environment minister Keriako Tobiko stressed that communities should help with restoring the country's forests.

The effort "requires collaboration and huge investments that are beyond (the) government's capacity", he added. Of the 2.5 million hectares (6 million acres) of forest recorded by the environment ministry, around 140,000 hectares are "heavily degraded", he said, and the forestry service alone can only restore up to 5,000 hectares each year.

"You can see how much time it will take to regenerate all 140,000 hectares," said Mugo Mware, head of environmental studies at Karatina University in central Kenya. Mware applauded the strict rules in Forole as an example of how communities can take charge of conservation. "This is good practice, and it is sustainable" - as long as villagers properly manage how they use the wood they get from their grazing lands, he said.

"These are people with needs, so there should be some balance," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. According to Forole resident Wato Ramata, young herders are tasked with planting new trees on grazing land to replace any that are cut down, as well as guarding them from outsiders. "This is because people here have recognized the importance of trees and they know the value of protecting them," he said.

Tips for tourists

About 1,000 km south of Forole, the people of the Mijikenda tribe in Kinondo also consider it their duty to keep the trees around them safe. The Kaya Kinondo forest, home to several rare species of plants and animals, including the colobus monkey, is the largest of 11 sacred forests - once home to fortified villages, or kayas - spread over 200 km along Kenya's coast. Like the Gabra, the Mijikenda pray to the forests for rain and their tribal elders have also long forbidden the felling of trees in the kayas.

Abdala Munyenze, chairman of the Mijikenda Kaya Elders Council, said parents teach their children to respect the trees, and that reverence is passed on to anyone who marries into the community, to hand down to future generations. "This way, they will grow up valuing what we have," he said. More recently, protecting the forests has become a joint effort between the Mijikenda and the local government, said Simon Wahome, head of coastal region conservation for the Kenya Forest Service (KFS).

When community elders approached KFS staff with a request to build fences around the forests to help stop illegal logging, the authorities quickly agreed and the areas were closed off last year, Wahome said in a phone interview. The fact that the community was leading the conservation effort made it an easy decision, he added. "This was a good thing for us ... when (the project) is bottom-up, one can be sure that it is worthwhile and hence value for our money," 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.



Alonso Ancira (center), head of Altos Hornos de Mexico, arrives to court in Palma de Mallorca yesterday after being arrested on the Spanish island. The Mexican executive accused of orchestrating the sale of a defunct paper business to state oil company Pemex for nearly half a billion dollars was arrested on the Spanish island of Mallorca. — AFP

With raids, warrants and arrest, Mexico
leader sends first big message on graft

MEXICO CITY: Mexican authorities have raided the home of a close aide of former President Enrique Peña Nieto and secured the arrest of one of the country's best-known businessmen in a drive to get justice for scandals that tainted the last government. A former Peña Nieto campaign chief who went on to run state oil firm Pemex, the country's largest company, Emilio Lozoya was not home during the raid late on Tuesday night in the upscale Lomas neighborhood, his lawyer Javier Coello said in an interview with Milenio Television.

The swoop for Lozoya, who ran Pemex from 2012 to 2016, and the arrest in Mallorca on Tuesday of steel-magnate Alonso Ancira, who the government accuses of paying Lozoya bribes, were the boldest steps yet in a new drive by current president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador after he took office on Dec 1 pledging to root out corruption.

The attorney general's office said it had issued warrants for several people in relation to the case, which the country's anti-laundering tsar said centered on bribes paid in connection with the \$475 million purchase by Pemex of a fertilizer plant from Ancira's company Altos Hornos de Mexico. The tsar said the case had links also to Brazilian builder Odebrecht, whose executives have testified about bribes to politicians across Latin America.

The play came after days of intensifying speculation about Lozoya's future sparked by the government's decision last week to ban him from public service for 10 years

as part of a probe into the 2014 purchase of the fertilizer plant, which was out of service. Government auditors estimate the plant's real value was closer to \$50 million.

Gonzalo Monroy, an energy analyst often critical of Lopez Obrador's policies, especially in the energy industry, said the move was "a step in the right direction," but warned that success on clamping down on corruption would only come if the case against Lozoya was fair. "We will see if the rule of law truly exists here, or is there going to be a perverse application of justice," Monroy said.

Lozoya, who was not immediately available for comment, has always denied wrongdoing and defended the fertilizer factory purchase as a wise investment, but had been under pressure for his role at Pemex even during the Peña Nieto administration. In 2017, Lozoya denied having funneled cash to Peña Nieto's election campaign after Brazilian newspaper O Globo alleged that Lozoya had taken \$10 million in bribes in 2012 from a former executive of troubled construction firm Odebrecht.

He was one of the rising young stars of the Peña Nieto administration but by the end, some senior officials in the then-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) were privately forecasting he would eventually face prosecution. The decision to go after him comes just days ahead of state elections on Sunday that will provide the first major test of Lopez Obrador's popularity since he took office in December. Though he has failed to curb surging violence

and the economy shrank in the first quarter, Lopez Obrador is expected to win easily the governorships up for election in the border state of Baja California and the central region of Puebla. Speculation has swirled for months about whether Lopez Obrador would go after high profile targets to underline his commitment to end corruption, a chronic malaise blamed for hurting growth and stoking violence and inequality in Mexico.

Opposition politician Jesus Ortega, a former campaign manager for Lopez Obrador who is now a senior member of center-left opposition party the Party of Democratic Revolution, said the strides against corruption six months into the election were at least in part motivated by the president's need to satisfy his base. "The pressure within his own party and the pressure within his cabinet had become enormous. This, I think, was a determining factor in the rush by the attorney's general's office to investigate," Ortega said.

Ortega said the decision to move on Lozoya and Ancira was "audacious" but cautioned that the case being brought by prosecutors needed to be solid enough to win convictions. Lopez Obrador's predecessor, Peña Nieto, signaled his own intent to clean up politics by having former teachers union boss Elba Esther Gordillo arrested in the third month of his government. Gordillo later ended up under house arrest and was released shortly after Lopez Obrador won office in July. — Reuters

Is the Syrian
regime about
to retake Idlib?

SYRIA's regime has increased its deadly bombardment of Idlib in recent weeks, but analysts say that is unlikely to signal an all-out offensive on the jihadist bastion.

Why the alarm?

Eight years into Syria's civil war, the government has notched up a series of victories against rebels and jihadists, and controls around 60 percent of the country. Two regions largely remain beyond its control: a Kurdish-held swathe of the northeast and a northwestern region controlled by Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate, Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham. The jihadist bastion is supposed to be protected from any massive onslaught by a buffer zone deal signed in September by regime ally Russia and rebel leader Turkey, which shares a border with Idlib.

But deadly bombardment by the regime and its Russian ally has spiked in recent weeks, and pro-government fighters have seized several towns on its southern flank. The increased air strikes and rocket fire since late April have killed more than 270 civilians, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says. At least 13 were killed on Wednesday alone, the Britain-based monitor said. The spike in violence has also displaced some 270,000 people from their homes, knocked 19 hospitals out of service and damaged several more, the United Nations says.

Is this a full-blown offensive?

But analysts are sceptical that the regime's bombing is the start of an all-out battle for the enclave. "I strongly doubt this offensive will aim to retake the entire Idlib region," said Aron Lund, from US think tank The Century Foundation. "Retaking the whole area would be a massive undertaking that Turkey would be sure to resist, not least because it would send hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming toward the Turkish border." Under the buffer zone deal signed in September, jihadists were

supposed to withdraw from the planned demilitarized zone. Turkish troops were to deploy to observation points around it, and traffic would be restored to two commercial arteries running through the province. Turkish forces have since deployed as monitors, but the jihadists never pulled back from the planned buffer and the roads were not re-opened. Yet analysts say the deal, born of the so-called Astana negotiations track between Russia, fellow regime ally Iran, and Turkey, is not dead yet. "Russia doesn't want to cut the last thread of the Astana process or its relationship with the Turks," said Nawar Oliver, an analyst from the Turkey-based Omran Centre for Strategic Studies. "There's still hope." The Observatory said Turkish troops were rotated at one of the monitoring points near Idlib as recently as Tuesday.

So what does the regime want?

Fellow analyst Sam Heller said the regime was instead seeking gains against HTS and allied rebels on the region's peripheries. "Rather than a total offensive, Damascus and Moscow instead seem to be aiming for a few specific areas along the edge of the larger Idlib area," the International Crisis Group analyst said. Capturing areas like the western flank of the bastion "will put more distance between rebels and government-held areas they've shelled", including the key Russian airbase of Hmeimim, he said. Damascus and Moscow have repeatedly accused "terrorist groups" - a catch-all term for jihadists and more moderate rebels - of using Idlib to launch attacks against Hmeimim.

But the regime might also be also piling pressure on Turkey to further implement the terms of the September deal, including the opening of the two key highways, Heller said. They include a section of the M5, a road that before the war crossed the entire country, connecting the Turkish frontier in the north with the Jordanian border in the south.

In recent years, the regime has retaken control of the majority of that artery, to the south of Idlib. President Bashar Al-Assad's regime has repeatedly said that eventually all of Idlib will return to regime control. Syria's UN envoy Bashar Jaafari on Tuesday said Damascus "will spare no effort" to free the residents of Idlib from jihadist control. — AFP

Deal or no deal?
UK rivals at odds
over Brexit plan

The race to replace Theresa May as British prime minister in a contest due to end in July has 11 declared contenders so far. Here is a look at the hopefuls in the Conservative Party leadership battle and their stances on Brexit, with Britain currently due to leave the EU on October 31:

In favor of no-deal
ESTHER McVEY

The 51-year-old Brexit supporter and former television presenter, McVey resigned as work and pensions secretary last year over Brexit compromises. A blue-collar Conservative, she wants a clean break with Brussels.

Open to no-deal in October
Boris Johnson

A former mayor of London, Johnson says he would get Britain out of the European Union, "deal or no deal". A key figure in the 2016 Brexit campaign, he served as foreign minister afterwards but resigned after falling out with May over the government's Brexit strategy. Charismatic and popular with grassroots Conservatives, the 54-year-old has maintained his public profile by writing a weekly column in The Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Dominic Raab

An ardent eurosceptic with a black belt in karate, the 45-year-old former Brexit minister resigned in protest at the Brexit deal struck with the EU by May. He says Britain should be ready to walk away from the EU without an agreement while still trying to negotiate a better deal than the one May signed.

Andrea Leadsom

Leadsom stole a march on her rivals by quitting her position as leader of the House of Commons last week, hastening the prime minister's demise and staking out her pro-Brexit credentials. The 56-year-old got down to the final two in the 2016 leadership race, but pulled out before the decision was handed over to party members, with whom she was

popular, after coming under fire for saying that being a mother would give her an advantage as prime minister over the childless May.

James Cleverly

The Conservative Party's former deputy chairman, 49, is an army lieutenant colonel who entered parliament in 2015. A junior figure in the Brexit ministry, he says it would be best to leave with a deal, urging the EU to be flexible, but is prepared to lead Britain out without a deal if necessary.

No to no-deal in October
JEREMY HUNT

The foreign secretary supported remaining in the European Union in the 2016 referendum but has switched since then. A former businessman who speaks fluent Japanese, he is a resilient politician, having headed up the National Health Service for six years during a funding crisis. The 52-year-old has said he will push hard for a new deal with Brussels without taking the possibility of a no-deal outcome off the table.

Against no-deal
Matt Hancock

The 40-year-old health secretary is one of the party's rising stars, a moderate who is widely seen as competent at his job and skilful at handling the media. He is one of several ministers who opposed Brexit during the 2016 referendum before switching sides and defending the withdrawal agreement May struck with the EU. He entered government in 2013 and has moved up the ladder quickly.

Rory Stewart

The international development secretary, 46, is a former Foreign Office official who served in the coalition administration in Iraq following the US-led invasion in 2003. Says no-deal policy would be "damaging".

Yet to say -
Michael Gove

Brexit campaigner Gove initially supported Johnson's leadership bid in 2016. His last-minute decision to enter the race himself caused both men to lose out to May. After a year in the political wilderness, he was appointed environment minister in 2017. The cerebral 51-year-old is among the most ardent eurosceptics left in May's government but is seen as a possible unifying figure between the two wings of the party. — AFP

Business

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019

12 Egyptian pound strengthens against dollar, trading at its highest in 2 years**13** US Treasury again says China is not manipulating currency**14** Huawei calls on US to adjust its approach to tackle cybersecurity

BAOTOU, Mongolia: A cyclist wearing a protective face mask while riding along a dusty road, where dozens of factories process rare earths, iron and coal operate, on the outskirts of Baotou city in Inner Mongolia, north-west China. —AFP

China threatens to deprive US of rare earths

US relies on China for 80% of its rare earths imports

BEIJING: Chinese state media yesterday dangled the threat of cutting exports of rare earths to the United States as a counter-strike in the trade war, potentially depriving Washington of a key resource used to make everything from smartphones to military hardware.

The warning is the latest salvo in a dispute that has intensified since President Donald Trump ramped up tariffs against China and moved to blacklist telecom giant Huawei earlier this month, while trade talks have apparently stalled.

Huawei stepped up its legal battle yesterday, announcing it had filed a motion in US court for summary judgment to speed up its bid to overturn US legislation that bars federal agencies from using its equipment over security concerns. Beijing had already dropped a big hint that rare earths could be in the firing line by showing images last week of President Xi Jinping visiting a rare earths factory in Ganzhou, central China. State media made it clearer yesterday.

"Will rare earths become China's counter-weapon against the unprovoked suppression of the US? The answer is not mysterious," warned The People's Daily, the Communist Party mouthpiece. "We advise that US not to underestimate China's ability to safeguard its own development rights and interests, and not to say we

didn't warn you," it said.

The state-owned Global Times warned in an editorial that the "US will rue forcing China's hand on rare earths". "It is believed that if the US increasingly suppresses the development of China, sooner or later, China will use rare earths as a weapon," the nationalist tabloid said.

Shares in rare earth companies surged in the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock markets yesterday. An unnamed official from the National Development and Reform Commission, China's state planner, had issued a cryptic warning late Tuesday. "What I can tell you is that if anyone wants to use products made from our rare-earth exports to curb and suppress China's development, I'm sure the people of Ganzhou and across China will not be happy with that," the official said in answers to questions published by state media.

The official said rare-earth resources should "serve domestic needs first" but China is also willing to meet the "legitimate needs of countries around the world".

Huawei fights back

China produces more than 95 percent of the world's rare earths, and the United States relies on China for upwards of 80 percent of its imports. Rare earths are 17

elements critical to manufacturing everything from televisions to cameras and lightbulbs.

Huawei, meanwhile, is fighting back in what is shaping up as a battle for who will dominate the future of high-tech. Huawei has sued the US over the federal ban. But it also faces a recent Trump administration order that cuts it off from critical American-made components for its products.

"The US government has provided no evidence to show that Huawei is a security threat," Huawei's chief legal officer Song Liuping told reporters, rejecting US warnings that the company's equipment could be used by China to spy on other countries.

Risky business

China has been accused of using its rare earth leverage for political reasons before. Japanese industry sources said it temporarily cut off exports in 2010 as a territorial row flared between the Asian rivals, charges that Beijing denied. But experts say the Japan experience showed that China's leverage has some limits. "Ultimately, concentrated rare earths supply in China had limited economic and political effects," according to a 2014 report by the Council on Foreign Relations think tank written by University of Texas professor Eugene Gholz.

The report said China's rare earth advantages were already slipping away in 2010 due to normal market behavior, including increases in non-Chinese production and processing capacity, and innovations that have contributed to reducing demand for some rare earth elements.

Analysts have said China appears apprehensive of targeting the minerals just yet, possibly fearful of hastening a global search for alternative supplies of the commodities. "I think China's current objective is to put pressure on the US for more American concessions in the trade talks and compel the US to be less harsh on Huawei and other Chinese tech companies," said Li Mingjiang, China program coordinator at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore.

But China is likely to use a rare earths ban as a policy tool if the US continues to be tough on trade and Huawei, he said. The Global Times acknowledged that banning rare earth exports to the US could "produce complex effects, including incurring certain losses on China itself."

However, it added, "China also clearly knows that the US would suffer greater losses in that situation." —AFP

Venezuela claims 130,000% inflation

CARACAS: Venezuela ended 2018 with inflation above 130,000 percent while its crisis-hit economy shrank by nearly half in the last five years, the central bank claimed Tuesday—a figure far below international estimates. Millions of people have fled the country as astronomical rises in the cost of consumer goods and broader economic woes have made food and basic supplies unobtainable for average people.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts inflation of 10 million percent by the end of the year, a nearly eight-fold spike from the 1.37 million percent it estimated for 2018.

Mismanagement of the country's economy and "highly distortionary policies" such as the use of price controls and directed lending was responsible for the country's dire fiscal straits, the World Bank said in an April report that forecast a further 25 percent GDP cut this year. The central bank also reported that oil exports—which account for 96 percent of the country's revenue—plummeted to \$29.8 billion in 2018, down from \$71.7 billion in 2014, when oil prices collapsed and the country's political and economic crisis began.

Oil prices have since rebounded, but a drop in production has hampered a return to previous revenue levels. Venezuela was producing 1.03 million barrels of oil per day in April, compared to 3.2 million barrels a



CARACAS: View of a tree decorated with banknotes which are worthless - as a result of inflation - as people queue at a gas station (left) in Caracas during a power outage. —AFP

decade ago.

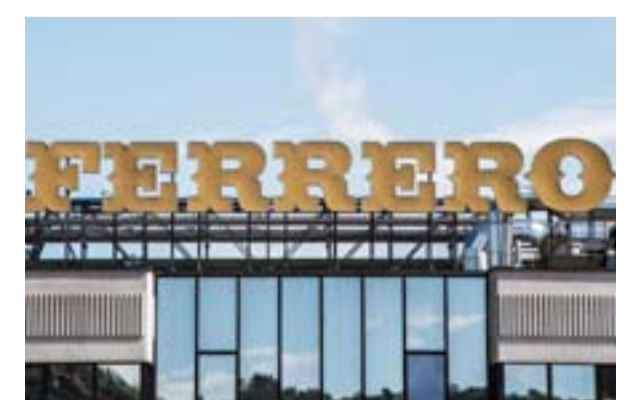
The central bank stopped providing official figures three years ago without giving an official reason, though it had already been holding back the amount of economic information it reported.

Top IMF official Alejandro Werner told AFP in April that Venezuela's economic implosion had been "even bigger than we anticipated". "Based on experiences with countries that have suffered similar collapses... for most of them to recover living standards similar to what they had before the collapse it has been a question of a decade or decades," he said. —AFP

Italy's Ferrero to buy biscuit businesses of Kellogg

MILAN: Italian chocolate giant Ferrero said Monday it was buying the biscuit and snack businesses of the American Kellogg Company for \$1.3 billion (1.16 billion euros). "The Ferrero Group... will acquire the cookie, fruit and fruit-flavored snack, ice cream cone and pie crust businesses from Kellogg Company," which generated sales of approximately \$900 million in 2018, it said.

The brands Ferrero will acquire include popular Keebler cookies as well as Famous Amos and Murray Sugar Free cookies and fruit snacks such as Stretch Island. Ferrero, founded as a family business in 1946 and now the third-largest company in the global chocolate confectionery market, has acquired several US brands and businesses since 2017. The company behind Ferrero Rocher and the hazelnut spread Nutella said it would also be buying from Kellogg six food manufacturing facilities across the US, from Washington to Kentucky, as well as two plants in Chicago.



ALBA: This picture taken yesterday in Alba, shows the logo at the entrance of the Italian manufacturer of branded chocolate Ferrero. —AFP

The Kellogg biscuit businesses "are an excellent strategic fit for Ferrero as we continue to increase our overall footprint and product offerings in the North American market," said Giovanni Ferrero, Executive Chairman of the Ferrero Group. "We have great respect for Kellogg, its legacy and values, and are proud that Kellogg has chosen Ferrero as a good home for these businesses," he said in a statement.

The deal is expected to close in the second half of the year.—AFP

Business

NBK Economic Report

Egyptian pound strengthens against dollar, trading at its highest in 2 years

Currency outlook stable after adoption of reform program

KUWAIT: Following the adoption of a comprehensive reform program that was supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan of \$12 billion over three years, the Egyptian pound (EGP) plunged around 50 percent following its flotation in November 2016.

It was a critical step in resolving the shortage of foreign exchange and improving the economy's competitiveness. This decision ended several months of tensions in the currency markets, which had fostered numerous restrictions on trade and financial transactions, and encouraged the development of a parallel exchange market.

Moreover, it helped to narrow the current account deficit, with exports slightly increasing and imports moderating. There have also been improvements in foreign capital flows, as well as a sharp increase in remittances and in the number of tourists. However, the floating of the exchange rate combined with subsidy cuts and tax reform pushed inflation to as high as 33 percent in July 2017, before easing to 13 percent in April 2019.

After only a few months of fluctuations, the pound's value against the dollar remained steady at around EGP 17.6-18.0 for almost two years, even at the height of the crisis that gripped some emerging markets (Turkey and Argentina) in the second half of 2018. In fact, the EGP exchange rate remained stable despite a shift in investors' sentiment that led to a sharp decline in capital flows even in the presence of IMF support and the improvement of credit rating.

However, since the beginning of 2019, the EGP started to regain strength. On May 26, the Egyptian currency was trading at 16.81 to the dollar for buying and 16.96 to the dollar for selling, recording less than 17 pounds for the first time in two years.

While most of the traders and analysts projected a depreciation of the EGP to the range of 18 to 20 pounds per US dollar in 2019, there were many factors that led to its appreciation.

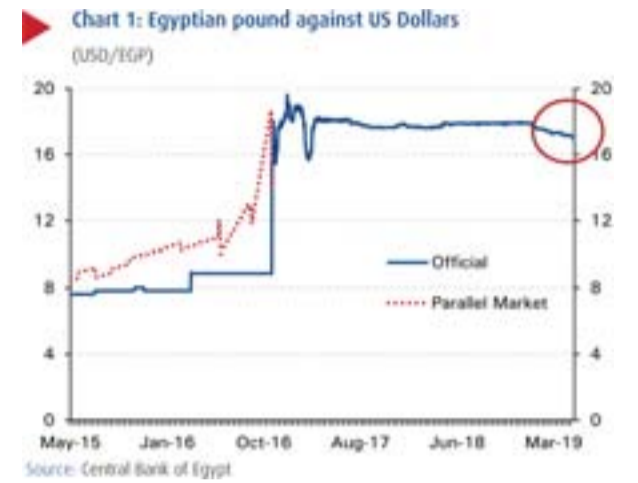
Terminating the repatriation mechanism. The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) decided to terminate on December 4 the use of the "Repatriation Mechanism", which allowed

foreign investors to repatriate their investment in dollars when they choose as guaranteed by the central bank (CBE). This mechanism provided some kind of stability for the EGP, limiting its movements in response to capital outflows that took place in the second half of the year.

Once the repatriation mechanism was ended, capital flows (incoming and outgoing) are to be accommodated by commercial banks and the exchange rate started to respond more to market forces, with the exchange regime becoming more of a flexible exchange rate. However, given that some of the largest banks in Egypt are publicly-owned, they could intervene to moderate movements in the rate.

Egyptian economy on the right path. While the appreciation of the currency was supported to some extent by the change in the repatriation mechanism, such appreciation reflects more Egypt's strong economic performance. Egypt's ambitious and bold economic reform program over the past two and half years has addressed macroeconomic imbalances and restored international investors' confidence. Egypt's macroeconomic situation and risk profile have improved considerably under its IMF-supported program. According to the latest data, real GDP accelerated to 5.6 percent in 1Q19 from +5.5 percent in the previous quarter, while the budget deficit for the first nine months of FY18/19 shrank to 5.3 percent of GDP, compared to 6.2 percent in the same period a year earlier. The significant progress made so far won the praise of all and ushers in a new era for Egypt.

Growing investor confidence. The recent appreciation of the EGP could be also attributed to portfolio investment inflows. In fact, in a context of economic recovery, political stability and improvement in Egypt's sovereign rating, investors are flocking back to Egypt. In addition, with economic reform continuing economic fundamentals are not expected to have any adverse impact on the exchange rate, there is a lot of carry trade as investors take advantage of the current high interest rates compared to rates in other countries. Foreign investment in treasury bills increased to \$16.9 billion in April 2019 returning to their



levels that prevailed in July 2018 before some large capital outflows took place in the second half of the year.

A solid level of foreign currency reserves in CBE. Egypt's foreign currency reserves increased from around \$42 billion in December 2018 to \$44.2 billion in April 2019, covering about eight months of Egypt's commodity imports, higher than what is typically considered an acceptable level of three months.

Increasing foreign cash in the commercial banks. The ending of the repatriation mechanism redirected part of portfolio investment outflows from the CBE to commercial banks, which caused a sharp deterioration in banks' net external position in late 2018. But thanks to the narrowing of the external current account deficit in the FY18/19 and capital inflows in early 2019, the dollar liquidity has increased in the banking system. This has allowed some banks, especially state-owned, to sell its foreign currency assets to other banks in the interbank market, making dollars more available and supporting the pound's strength.

Currency outlook

Continued good economic performance and forging ahead with the remaining reform measures will most likely foster foreign portfolio and direct investment into Egypt. Barring any major exogenous shocks, the EGP is expected to remain relatively stable and to move in response to economic fundamentals within a moderate range. However, given Egypt's strong dependence on foreign capital, any shift in investors' behavior and sentiment could lead to large swings in the rate. In such circumstances, it is likely

that the authorities will step in to smooth out these fluctuations especially those that are not warranted by economic fundamentals.

With the inflation rate steadily coming down from the highs of 2017, the CBE will likely cut interest rates in tandem, reducing bond and T-bill yields and therefore ease the inflow of portfolio capital and that related to the carry trade, thus moderating the pressure on the exchange rate to appreciate.

The initial flotation of the pound in the context of the economic reform program has served the economy very well. The depreciation of the pound boosted exports, tourism and remittances and at the same time reduced imports leading to a noticeable improvement in the external current account. We believe that the authorities are cognizant of the fact that the appreciation of the pound beyond a certain level may undermine some of these achievements and will therefore stand ready to intervene when needed especially when large swings in the exchange rate result more from speculative and temporary factors and less from changes in economic fundamentals.

Renault tries to reassure partner Nissan on Fiat plans

TOKYO: Renault officials yesterday sought to reassure the firm's alliance partner Nissan over a possible tie-up between the French automaker and Fiat Chrysler, which could up-end the auto industry.

Renault and Nissan representatives were meeting outside Tokyo yesterday along with officials from the third partner in their alliance, Mitsubishi Motors. The alliance has been rocked by the arrest of its former head, Carlos Ghosn, the Nissan chief who faces four charges of financial misconduct and has been pushed out of all his executive roles.

And the partnership was shaken further this week by news that Renault is studying "with interest" a 50-50 merger proposal with Fiat Chrysler (FCA), a prospect that took Nissan by surprise.

In a brief statement, the alliance said their operating board meeting yesterday included "open and transparent discussion on FCA's recent proposal to Groupe Renault." "The meeting also discussed and positively concluded several current operational alliance matters," the statement added, after the meeting at Nissan's headquarters in Yokohama.

Arriving in Japan on Tuesday, Renault chairman Jean-Dominique Senard offered an optimistic assessment. "I think that all the recent events are very good for the alliance, and I will make sure that Nissan and Mitsubishi will take great advantage of the news," he said. But Nissan CEO Hiroto Saikawa has received news of the proposed tie-up more cautiously. —AFP

From European dream to global giant: Airbus marks half century

PARIS: Fifty years ago at the Paris air show, France's transport minister and Germany's economy minister signed an agreement that would change aviation history. The year was 1969 and Europe needed a smaller, lighter and more cost-effective passenger aircraft than American rivals. Five years later, the A300B2 was born, a short-to-medium range plane with two engines, despite safety concerns in an era when three engines was the standard minimum.

Fast-forward to 2019, Airbus is celebrated as a success of European cooperation, one of two kings of global civil aviation along with Boeing. Around the world, an Airbus takes off or lands every two seconds. It now produces passenger planes ranging in size up to the A380 jumbo jet, helicopters, fighter jets and is even involved in space exploration. Its story has been marked by setbacks, political turbulence and production problems but Airbus management believes it can confidently look forward to the next half century.

"Airbus produces half of the world's large commercial aircraft and has thriving helicopter, defense and space businesses," said CEO Guillaume Faury, who in April replaced Tom Enders who

served five years at the helm. "We employ 130,000 highly-skilled people globally and are a powerful engine of productivity, exports and innovation for Europe."

The firm delivered its last thousand planes in just 30 months. But in the early days, it took nearly twenty years to produce a thousand aircraft. It faced criticism for developments like fly-by-wire controls, which improve handling, and flight envelope protection, which stop the plane performing manoeuvres outside its performance limits.

Apart from technological advances, cracking America was a key ingredient in creating the global giant. The A300 made a strong impression on Frank Borman, the former Apollo astronaut who headed Eastern Air Lines and championed the idea of buying more economical planes.

Airbus's backbone, the A320

In 1984, Airbus launched the A320, a single-aisle, medium-haul aircraft to challenge Boeing, which until then had dominated the largest segment in the civil aviation market. The aircraft paved the way for the more fuel efficient A320neo which has become the backbone of the company, strengthening its hold on the key market segment after Boeing's 737 MAX planes were grounded after two deadly crashes in March and October.

Despite a failed deal with British defense firm BAE Systems in 2012, Airbus' partnership with Canadian Bombardier's C Series program in 2018 enhanced its position as a global force.

France and Germany still hold 11 percent stakes in Airbus through holding companies with a smaller 4 percent



The Airbus 320neo

stake held by the Spanish government. The rest of the shares are traded on the stock exchange. But production hasn't always run smoothly. The firm announced in January it would scrap production of its A380 passenger giant by 2021 due to lack of orders.

The double decker jet earned plaudits from passengers but failed to win over enough airlines to justify its massive costs. Key clients have also hit trouble as some airlines hit financial difficulty with Europe's third biggest low-cost airline Norwegian saying it was further delaying deliveries of Airbus and Boeing 737 MAX planes it had ordered.

The company in April reported a slump in first quarter net profits which fell 86 percent from the same period in 2018 at 40 million euros (\$45 million).

Airbus is also under investigation in

France, Britain and the United States after disclosing transaction irregularities in 2016, while US President Donald Trump has threatened the European Union with new tariffs if it does not end subsidies to Airbus. But analysts see Airbus as having an opportunity to profit from the booming airline market, particularly in Asia, and from the global grounding of Boeing's 737 MAX series plane after two recent deadly crashes involving the popular new airliner.

Airbus's boss Guillaume Faury said the firm aims to continue being a leader in aviation innovation.

"The aerospace industry stands on the cusp of a technological revolution to match anything in its history", he said. "European aerospace should aspire to lead this coming revolution in innovation and the transition to a more sustainable aviation sector." —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

| Al-Muzaini Exchange Co. | |
|--|---------|
| EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES | |
| Al-Muzaini Exchange Co. | |
| US Dollar Transfer | 304.750 |
| Euro | 341.930 |
| Sterling Pound | 387.790 |
| Canadian dollar | 226.920 |
| Turkish lira | 50.960 |
| Swiss Franc | 304.900 |
| US Dollar Buying | 296.550 |
| ASIAN COUNTRIES | |
| Japanese Yen | 2.791 |
| Indian Rupees | 4.379 |
| Pakistani Rupees | 2.051 |
| Sri Lanka Rupees | 1.725 |
| Nepali Rupees | 2.730 |
| Singapore Dollar | 221.480 |
| Hongkong Dollar | 38.827 |
| Bangladesh Taka | 3.592 |
| Philippine Peso | 5.848 |
| Thai Baht | 9.623 |
| Malaysian ringgit | 77.941 |
| GCC COUNTRIES | |
| Saudi Riyal | 81.321 |
| Qatari Riyal | 83.757 |
| Omani Riyal | 792.073 |
| Bahraini Dinar | 809.750 |
| UAE Dirham | 83.027 |
| ARAB COUNTRIES | |
| Egyptian Pound - Cash | 20.750 |
| Egyptian Pound - Transfer | 18.210 |

| Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 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 | 32.181 |
| 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 Lanka 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 |

| BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| CURRENCY | BUY | SELL |
| Europe | | |
| British Pound | 0.378336 | 0.392236 |
| Czech Korune | 0.005125 | 0.014425 |
| Danish Krone | 0.041450 | 0.046450 |
| Euro | 0.332411 | 0.346111 |
| Georgian Lari | 0.108357 | 0.108357 |
| Hungarian O.000946 | 0.001136 | |
| Norwegian Krone | 0.030830 | 0.036030 |
| Romanian Leu | 0.054416 | 0.071266 |
| Russian ruble | 0.004682 | 0.004682 |
| Slovakia | 0.009116 | 0.019116 |
| Swedish Krona | 0.027688 | 0.032688 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.296146 | 0.307146 |
| Australasia | | |
| Australian Dollar | 0.202463 | 0.214463 |
| New Zealand Dollar | 0.192712 | 0.202212 |
| America | | |
| Canadian Dollar | 0.220222 | 0.229222 |
| 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 | 0.036735 | 0.039485 |
| Indian Rupee | 0.003710 | 0.004482 |
| Indonesian Rupiah | 0.000017 | 0.000023 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.002704 | 0.002884 |
| Korean Won | 0.000244 | 0.000259 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 0.069089 | 0.075089 |
| Nepalese Rupee | 0.002681 | 0.003021 |
| Pakistan Rupee | 0.001456 | 0.002226 |
| Philippine Peso | 0.005714 | 0.006014 |
| Singapore Dollar | 0.215952 | 0.224952 |
| Sri Lanka Rupee | 0.001377 | 0.001957 |
| Taiwan | 0.009515 | 0.009695 |
| Thai Baht | 0.009254 | 0.009804 |
| Vietnamese Dong | 0.00013 | 0.00013 |
| Arab | | |
| Bahraini Dinar | 0.793785 | 0.810285 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.017595 | 0.020195 |
| Iranian Riyal | 0.000084 | 0.000086 |
| Iraqi Dinar | 0.000210 | 0.000270 |
| Jordanian Dinar | 0.424927 | 0.439277 |
| 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

US Treasury again says China is not manipulating currency

Germany remains on US 'monitoring list'

WASHINGTON: The US Treasury expanded the number of countries subject to scrutiny in a semi-annual report released on Tuesday, but again found that neither China nor any other trading partners was manipulating its currency.

Treasury urged the Asian giant to avoid allowing the renminbi (RMB) to weaken persistently—which would give its products more competitive advantage. Germany remains on the US "monitoring list" due to its large trade surplus, as did Japan and South Korea, indicating they "merit close attention to their currency practices."

Despite a bitter trade war with China focused on bringing down the US trade deficit, Treasury held back from escalating the fight further. Tensions between the two economic superpowers have risen in recent weeks after President Donald Trump accused Beijing of renegeing on its commitments, and with a US crackdown on Chinese telecom giant Huawei.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said his agency "takes seriously any potentially unfair currency practices," and "is working vigorously to achieve stronger growth and to ensure that trade expands in a way that helps US workers and firms and protects them from unfair foreign trade practices."

Treasury said the report concluded that "direct intervention by the People's Bank of China in the last year has been limited."

However, the US "continues to urge China to take the necessary steps to avoid a persistently weak currency."

Expanding scrutiny

The closely watched report broadened the field of its scrutiny for potential exchange rate manipulation, since a weak currency makes US products less competitive and could undermine Washington's efforts to cut a soaring global trade imbalance. Mnuchin said Treasury "is expanding the number of US trading partners it reviews to make currency practices fairer and

more transparent."

With the newly expanded list, Treasury put nine trading partners on the monitoring list, including Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam.

Beginning with this report, the Treasury is assessing all US trading partners with annual trade surpluses in goods of more than \$40 billion. Based on trade in 2018, that standard covered 21 countries with nearly \$3.5 trillion in goods trade with the United States, according to the report.

China's currency dropped 3.8 percent against the US dollar in the second half of last year, making it eight percent weaker over the last year.

However, China only triggered one of the criteria used to determine whether a country merits close monitoring. A senior Treasury official told reporters that China still merited inclusion "given the importance of China and their large, increasing surplus."

Punitive duties

Treasury's analysis could become even more critical after the Commerce Department last week announced it intends to change its rules in order to impose duties on countries that "act to undervalue their currency relative to the dollar, resulting in a subsidy to their exports."

In the details of the proposed change, Commerce said it will "defer to Treasury's evaluation as to undervaluation" of a currency. However, a senior Treasury official said that would be "a distinct, different process" from the currency report.

The text is largely symbolic since it only calls for consultations with countries deemed to be currency manipulators, but would gain more teeth if Commerce can impose duties to retaliate.

Germany remains on the monitoring list for a third year, and Treasury noted it has "the world's largest current account surplus," and a \$68 billion trade surplus with the United States in 2018.

While Germany has repeatedly been listed, like



BEIJING: A Chinese cashier counts renminbi banknotes at a currency exchange in Beijing. Treasury urges China to avoid allowing the renminbi (RMB) to weaken persistently—which would give its products more competitive advantage. —AFP

Italy and Ireland it is part of the eurozone and no longer has independent control over its currency or monetary policy, which is handled by the European Central Bank. Singapore disputed its inclusion on this year's list, with the country's central bank saying Wednesday that it "does not manipulate its currency for export advantage".

The Asian city-state's import-reliant economy

benchmarks its dollar against a basket of currencies used by its major trading partners. The latest report removed India and Switzerland because for two consecutive reports they had both met only one of three criteria necessary for inclusion on the monitoring list.

While India had a significant bilateral surplus, Switzerland had a material current account surplus, according to the report. —AFP

Trade war biggest risk to financial stability: ECB

FRANKFURT: A growth slump that could be caused by rising trade tensions is the biggest risk to financial stability in the eurozone, the European Central Bank said yesterday.

"A potential trade war is perhaps the main risk, the main threat to the economic environment globally and simultaneously for financial stability," ECB vice-president Luis de Guindos said in a Frankfurt press conference. Among other factors such as Brexit and weakness in emerging markets, trade tensions between Brussels, Washington and Beijing were behind a slowdown in the euro area in the second half of 2018.

Growth rebounded in the first three months of this year, to 0.4 percent quarter-on-quarter, but with the United States and China still locked in a tariff battle knock-on effects continue to rattle the single currency bloc. And the White House persists in dangling the prospect of trade taxes on imports from the EU like cars. A growth blow could impact all four main

financial stability risks identified by the ECB in its twice-annual review. Those include a "disorderly" increase in the premium lenders charge on risky debt, and growing concerns about debt sustainability for some companies and highly-indebted countries like Italy.

"Whenever tensions between the Italian government and the European Commission come down, the spreads narrow" between yield on Rome's bonds and those of reference countries like Germany, de Guindos said. "The lesson I think that is quite evident is it's very important to meet and to respect the fiscal rules" that apply to eurozone members, he added.

He also noted that Italy had a "good track record" of managing its debt pile. Other risks identified by the ECB include eurozone banks' low profitability, which could suffer further if growth slows. And non-bank financial players like asset managers are taking bigger risks, with a cash pile that has more than doubled since 2008, to 13.8 trillion euros (\$15.4 trillion) — making for potentially massive losses if risk premiums change suddenly.

De Guindos highlighted that the ECB also included a chapter on climate change risks to financial stability, days after voters handed environmentalist



FRANKFURT AM: The headquarters of the European Central Bank (ECB) in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany. —AFP

parties increased representation in the European parliament. "We believe this is something that is going to become systematic and structural" for financial stability, the central banker said.

The financial system could suffer from both "physical risks" like natural disasters, and "transition risks" as the econo-

my undergoes the costly switch to reduced carbon emissions.

"We are trying to weigh and combine the exposure of the financial system with the carbon footprint of different polluters in order to have a clear picture of where the risks are allocated," de Guindos said. —AFP

While the Treasury report said "direct intervention by the People's Bank of China in the last year has been limited," the department also released a statement urging "China to take the necessary steps to avoid a persistently weak currency."

The report's conclusion "is in line with basic common sense", Lu told reporters during a regular news briefing. "We have repeatedly advised the US side to act in accordance with the

relevant multilateral international rules and not to unilaterally assess other countries' exchange rates," he said.

Despite ratcheting trade tensions and punitive tariffs on half of its exports to the US, Chinese officials have repeatedly said they will not resort to competitive devaluation of the yuan to help Chinese exporters. The onshore yuan yesterday traded at 6.91 to the dollar while it stood at 6.93 to the dollar offshore. —AFP

China warns US not to politicize exchange rates

BEIJING: China warned the United States yesterday not to "politicize" the

exchange rate of its currency amid a festering trade war between the two economic giants.

The US Treasury declined to label China a currency manipulator in its latest semi-annual report but also called on Beijing to prevent the yuan from weakening. "We have always said here that we hope the US side will respect objective facts, market rules and not politicize the exchange rate issue," said foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang.

Stocks, oil sink as China 'warns on metal exports'

LONDON: World stock markets and oil prices tumbled yesterday as China reportedly warned it would limit exports of rare metals, used in cameras, computers, smartphones and televisions, in the latest eruption in its trade war with the United States. Investor sentiment also took a knock as Chinese technology giant Huawei stepped up its legal battle to overturn US legislation barring American federal agencies from buying its products, as Beijing toughened its trade war stance. "Again we see how the market is moving around on US-China news flow that is hard to lock down," commented Niel Wilson at Markets.com. "China's threats to stop rare earth exports is clearly a bargaining chip, if not exactly a trump card, but one the market is starting to really take seriously," he noted.

Asian equities slid as investors grew anxious about a possible economic slowdown in the absence of progress in

resolving the US-China trade spat. In a sign of intensifying concern over economic growth, the yield, or rate of return for investors, on the 10-year US government bonds hit 2.22 percent, the lowest level since September 2017.

"With investors flocking to US 10-year Treasury bonds on Tuesday night—yields are at a 20-month low—the European markets resumed their fearful performance on Wednesday," said Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell. "The catalyst for the latest round of losses was a thinly-veiled threat from China over its willingness to throw around its rare earth weight in its battle with the US." A Chinese state media report suggested Beijing would restrict exports of rare earths, using the minerals as leverage in the trade dispute.

China's 'secret weapon'?

Rare earths are a key component in electrical devices and any move to restrict their supply would have a devastating impact on manufacturers, with China producing more than 95 percent of the metals. "Given that the materials are used in everything from iPhones to missile guidance systems to electric cars... the country may have found its not-so-secret weapon in the trade war," Campbell added.



TOKYO: Pedestrians walk past a stock indicator showing share prices of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo. —AFP

Economists agree that the trade dispute between the world's top two economic superpowers will have grim implications for consumers, who will have to bear the costs of punitive tit-for-tat tariffs. Back in Europe, investors digested the implications of a possible new row between the European Commission and Italian authori-

ties over budget plans that would push Rome's public deficit above the EU limit. The Commission said it had asked for "clarifications" on Italy's 2019 budget, but Italy's far right Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini brushed off the threat. The yield on 10-year Italian government bonds stood at 2.66 percent. —AFP

Slow global growth weighing on US manufacturers: Fed report

WASHINGTON: US manufacturers increasingly worry trade spats and other factors will dampen their growth prospects, while widespread worker shortages are also hampering industries nationwide, the Federal Reserve said yesterday.

Even though manufacturers have reported solid growth in recent weeks, and the US economy has continued to turn in respectable albeit slower performance, the Fed's "beige book" survey added more evidence that concerns are building. President Donald Trump's aggressive trade policies, Brexit and other issues are showing signs of hitting global growth. Trump slapped punishing tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, as well as \$250 billion in goods from China, which drew retaliation against US products. Meanwhile, wage increases are becoming more widespread as companies compete to fill open positions, although prices "continued to increase at a modest-to-moderate pace" as firms seeing higher input costs still cannot consistently pass them along to consumers, the report said.

The anecdotal reports in the beige book are consistent with the outlooks offered by the International Monetary Fund and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which have downgraded forecasts for US and global growth this year amid major trade frictions, Brexit and other factors. And New York Federal Reserve Bank President John Williams said in a speech yesterday that the US economy would "slow considerably" this year to around two percent as the boost from last year's economic stimulus fades. Many of the Fed's 12 regional banks said manufacturing activity remained solid or rose and the San Francisco Fed cited a steel manufacturer in Oregon that "noted strong activity in the industry due to lower competition from abroad arising from trade policy actions."

However, "numerous manufacturing contacts conveyed concerns about weakening global demand, higher costs due to tariffs and ongoing trade policy uncertainty," the Fed said in the report, prepared in advance of the monetary policy meeting of March 19-20. And in spite of Trump's goal to reduce the US trade imbalance, the US merchandise trade deficit soared last year to its highest level ever, while goods deficits with China, Mexico and the European Union likewise hit records.

Jobs not college?

Concerns in American industry were becoming more widespread than in previous reports which for months have expressed worries about the uncertainty caused by the trade friction. The Cleveland Fed laid out factors weighing on demand and the growth outlook, including "slower global growth—particularly in Europe and China," as well as "continued uncertainty about the future of tariffs on steel and aluminum and ongoing US-China trade negotiations," and "decreased consumer confidence."

Meanwhile, tight labor markets continue to serve as a brake on expansion throughout the United States and that is obliging companies in many areas to raise wages and other benefits for low-skilled and high-skilled workers. "Labor markets remained tight for all skill levels, including notable worker shortages for positions relating to information technology, manufacturing, trucking, restaurants and construction," the report said. —AFP

Business

Huawei calls on US to adjust its approach to tackle cybersecurity

China firm files motion for summary judgment in its court case

BEIJING: Huawei yesterday filed a motion for summary judgment as part of the process to challenge the constitutionality of Section 889 of the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (2019 NDAA). It also called on the US government to halt its state-sanctioned campaign against Huawei because it will not deliver cybersecurity.

Banning Huawei using cybersecurity as an excuse "will do nothing to make networks more secure. They provide a false sense of security, and distract attention from the real challenges we face," said Song Liuping, Huawei's chief legal officer. "Politicians in the US are using the strength of an entire nation to come after a private company," Song noted. "This is not normal. Almost never seen in history."

"The US government has provided no evidence to show that Huawei is a security threat. There is no gun,

no smoke. Only speculation," Song added.

In the complaint, Huawei argues that Section 889 of the 2019 NDAA singles out Huawei by name and not only bars US government agencies from buying Huawei equipment and services, but also bars them from contracting with or awarding grants or loans to third parties who buy Huawei equipment or services—even if there is no impact or connection to the US government.

Song also addressed the addition of Huawei to the "Entity List" by the US Commerce Department two weeks ago. "This sets a dangerous precedent. Today it's telecoms and Huawei. Tomorrow it could be your industry, your company, your consumers," he said.

"The judicial system is the last line of defense for justice. Huawei has confidence in the independence and

integrity of the US judicial system. We hope that mistakes in the NDAA can be corrected by the court," Song added. Glen Nager, Huawei's lead counsel for the case, said Section 889 of the 2019 NDAA violates the Bill of Attainder, Due Process, and Vesting Clauses of the United States Constitution. Thus the case is purely "a matter of law" as there are no facts at issue, thereby justifying the motion for a summary judgment to speed up the process.

Huawei believes that US suppression of Huawei will not help make networks more secure. Huawei expects the US to take the right approach and adopt honest and effective measures to enhance cybersecurity for everyone, if the US government's real goal is security. In line with a court scheduling order, a hearing on the motion is set for Sept 19.



Dr Song Liuping, Chief Legal Officer of Huawei

Ooredoo launches newly-revamped passport packages

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait announced yesterday the launch of the newly-revamped and much improved Ooredoo Passport packages. The products have been built on consumer feedback. These products are designed to help in improving their journey while they travel. Especially with the upcoming Eid holiday, customers can benefit and experience the enhanced roaming packages while they are travelling abroad. The Ooredoo Passport package has a host of added features above its existing ones, in which customers now can easily activate the newly revamped Passport Packages through the MyOoredoo App and use it for over 70+ countries. Moreover, Ooredoo is the first operator in Kuwait to have incorporated Inflight Roaming services across all airlines as a part of the Ooredoo Passport coverage list.

Customers now have 3 validity options: daily, weekly and monthly with the option of auto renewal. The Daily option only offers Data usage for customers who would like to have quick access for the internet on their smartphones. The Weekly and Monthly packages offer both Voice and Data usage built-in, making them ideal for summer travelers who would like to use their smartphones abroad without having to change their SIM card.

The new Ooredoo Passport Packs will be available today and can be conveniently activated and auto-renewed through the 'Roaming Bundles' section of the company's My Ooredoo smartphone App. The existing Ooredoo Passport packs will be replaced by these 3 packages automatically, with the exception of customers that have been given a free roaming package on their contracts.

Commenting on the launch of the revamped service, Ooredoo Kuwait issued a statement saying that the new service is aimed to enrich the experience of the telecom service provider's customers and meet their expectations, taking in mind the lifestyle of the company's global-oriented customer base. The packages also reiterate Ooredoo's commitment to helping customers enjoy the internet, especially since mobile internet is an essential part of everyday use to many customers. Ooredoo noted that the newly revamped Ooredoo Passport service can be conveniently activated and auto-renewed through the company's MyOoredoo smartphone App.



Global economic slowdown hits diesel consumption

LONDON: Global manufacturing and trade volumes have been decelerating since the third quarter of 2018 and the slowdown is starting to show up in sluggish consumption of middle distillates such as gasoil and diesel.

Global manufacturers have reported falling export orders for eight months since September, according to the new export orders component of the JP Morgan global purchasing managers index.

World trade volumes peaked in October and have since been contracting at the fastest rate since 2009, according to the Netherlands Bureau of Economic Policy Analysis. Every real-time measure of manufacturing and trade flows points to a very sharp slowdown over the last nine months (<https://tmsnrts/2Wf88Tp>).

Container shipments are falling. Air cargo is down. Rail freight is shrinking. And shipping lines are cancelling voyages owing to lack of demand. Distillates are the most heavily exposed to the business cycle since most gasoil and diesel is used in freight transportation, manufacturing, mining, oil and gas extraction and farming.

OECD stocks of gasoil and diesel were down by less than 2 percent in March compared with the same month a year earlier, and by less than 4 percent in the first quarter compared with the same period in 2018.

Year-on-year stock draws have slowed from more than 12 percent for single-month and three-month periods in the second quarter of 2018, according to statistics from the Joint Organisations Data Initiative. — AFP

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah weekly draw

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its weekly draw on 26th May 2019 announcing the names of the winners for the week of 19th May until 23rd May 2019. The weekly draw consists of five winners who receive KD 1,000 each, every week.

The winners this week are:
Ali Ahmad Jassim Alkout Minor
Abdulaziz Awadh Khalaf Alenezi
Rimas Fahad Sayyah Al-Azmi - Minor
Mohammed Ali Hussain Al-Ateyah
Mousa Akbar Jaber Akbar

Gulf Bank's second Al-Danah quarterly draw for the prize of KD 250,000 will be held on 26 June 2019, and the third quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be

Trade spat shifts business from 'Factory of the World'

HANOI: From socks and sneakers to washing machines and watches, Asian countries are hoping the US-China trade war will permanently boost manufacturing as brands dodge the row by choosing cheaper locations to make their goods.

Business has fanned out from China, often referred to as the 'Factory of the World', into Vietnam, Cambodia, India and Indonesia for years. But the shift has accelerated as the world's two biggest economies slap tit-for-tat tariffs on each other.

In the latest round of the bruising spat, US President Donald Trump this month raised tariffs to 25 percent on \$200 billion of Chinese goods, prompting Beijing to retaliate with higher duties on \$60 billion worth of American products. That "really became a kicker to force people to move", said Trent Davies, manager of international business at the advisory and tax firm Dezan Shira & Associates in Vietnam.

A surge in relocations from China or plans to scale up production has strengthened the manufacturing hubs of Southeast Asia and beyond. Casio said it was moving some of its watch production to Thailand and Japan to avoid the US penalties, while Japanese printer-maker Ricoh said it was also shifting some of its work to Thailand.

American shoe giant Steve Madden plans to boost production in Cambodia, and Brooks Running Company, Haier washing machines and sock maker Jasan—which sells to Adidas, Puma, New Balance and Fila—are all eyeing Vietnam. The country is a logical move for manufacturers, wooed by low-cost labour, attractive tax incentives and close proximity to China's unparalleled supply chains.

"It's not just a result of the trade war, a lot of it is opportunity in Vietnam," Davies said.

Boom times

Some Vietnamese suppliers say the trade dispute has fast-tracked the trend as companies scramble to dodge fresh tariffs that could affect some 4,000 categories of exports to the US. On a busy stretch of road in Hanoi, the bustling Garco 10 factory is churning out men's shirts for American brands like Hollister, Bonobos and Express.

The company says exports to the US were up seven percent last year, with an expected 10 percent jump this year. "Thanks to the trade war... several sectors of the Vietnam economy have gained, especially our garment sector," Garco 10 director Than Duc Viet told AFP.

"We want to open more factories, we want to expand our capacity," he said at one of his facilities where an army of workers made shirts destined for



HANOI: Countries across Asia are hoping the US-China trade war will boost manufacturing as brands dodge the row by choosing cheaper locations to make their goods. — AFP



held on 25 September 2019. The final Al-Danah draw for KD 1,000,000, will be held on 16 January 2020, where the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced at a live event.

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

Al-Danah offers a number of unique services to cus-

American shopping malls and department stores. US imports from China during the first three months of this year reached nearly \$16 billion, up 40 percent from the same period last year, according to US trade data. And that number could rise.

Labor woes

More than 40 percent of US companies in China are now considering moving or have already done so, mainly to Southeast Asia or Mexico, according to a poll this month from the American Chamber of Commerce in China. But the shift is not expected to be seamless.

While Southeast Asia offers low-cost labor—monthly factory salaries are about \$290 in Vietnam and \$180 in Cambodia and Indonesia, compared to around \$540 in China—workers are less experienced.

"Labor costs are three times higher in China, but the efficiency is also three times higher," said Frank Weiland, co-chair of the manufacturing committee at the American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam.

There is also a smaller labor pool to draw on. Vietnam employs around 10 million people in the manufacturing sector compared to 166 million in China, according to data from the International Labour Organization.

Indonesia employs 17.5 million, and Cambodia 1.4 million. Experts warn companies may also face supply chain woes, infrastructure challenges and land shortages in less developed markets without the capacity to absorb overspill from China.

Global shift

This could be a problem for Indonesia, whose clunky bureaucracy has left it trailing some of its neighbors. But now the country is hoping to soak up foreign investment from the trade war.

"We're trying to make it easier for investors by speeding up the process for getting business permits," said Yuliot, a senior official at the Indonesian Investment Board who goes by one name.

The country is also beefing up infrastructure and skills training while offering corporate tax breaks, he added. With no end to the trade war in sight, analysts say the manufacturing shift out of China is likely to continue—and could redefine long-entrenched global trade patterns.

"Certainly it will end China's dominance as the 'Factory for the US'," Gary Hufbauer, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, told AFP.

US companies and consumers may also get the short end of the stick: higher tariffs on goods out of China means the average American will likely have to pay more for a pair of Nike sneakers or Levi's jeans. And if Trump was hoping to drive US manufacturers back home by imposing those tariffs as part of his 'Make America Great Again' clarion call, he's not likely to get his wish.

American industries—and wages—are not set up for low-cost manufacturing on the scale of China. Instead, countries like Vietnam are likely to continue scooping up those jobs. Le Thi Huong, who sews hems at Hanoi's Garco 10 factory, said: "I hope there will be more orders... so we have more jobs and more income." — AFP

tomers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD 200 at any given time, a KD2 fee will be charged to their account monthly until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the weekly draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2019 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw. Furthermore, loyal Al-Danah customers are rewarded with loyalty chances. Loyalty chances are the total chances accumulated from the previous year which are added to the customer's chances the following year. Terms and conditions apply.



Lulu Hypermarket launches Whatsapp marketing campaign

Lulu Hypermarket, the leading retail chain in the region, launched an exciting Whatsapp Marketing Campaign to provide shoppers with news of their latest offers.

Register on Lulu Hypermarket's official Whatsapp number 95500366 to keep ahead of the best offers from the retail giant. All you have to do is just type 'LULU' along with your name and send it to 95500366 to receive all the latest promotions, news and updates right at your fingertips.

Be the first to know about any special discounts, new promotions, special event celebrations or when the latest fashion brands are available at any of Lulu Hypermarket's various outlets in the country. The Whatsapp campaign is yet another initiative by Lulu Hypermarket to keep connected and regularly interact with their customers.



Burgan Bank offers customers a discount from Ghasel App

KUWAIT: Accommodating its loyal customers with modern age privileges, Burgan Bank announced its partnership with the first mobile app for vehicle wash services in Kuwait, Ghasel. The new offer presents numerous options for customers to choose from, for different vehicles and models, ranging from cars, motorcycles, and boats.

Ghasel is a platform that links clients to licensed car wash providers, and professional washers and detailers. With Ghasel you can order a car wash at home, work or any preferred location from one of certified service providers available on Ghasel platform.

Providing optimal convenience and affordability, Burgan Bank customers can avail the offer by applying promo code before finalizing the order in the last step.

Keeping in line with the latest trends and demands, through a 10 percent discount presented by Burgan Bank, customers can enjoy the benefit of having their vehicles washed anytime and anywhere. Burgan Bank customers can avail the discounted offer by using any of Burgan Bank cards along with a special code. To know more about Burgan Bank's latest offers, or any of its products and services, customers can visit any of the bank's branches or Burgan Bank's Instagram page on @BurganBankKuwait or to contact the call center.

What's On



KFH concludes Girgian events

Kuwait Finance House (KFH) concluded its Girgian events for children, as part of its eventful Ramadan program, "Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 5", and in continuation of the Bank's social responsibility. The participation of KFH was characterized by the diversity of locations where the distribution occurred, to all age groups of children that contributed to the joy and delight of children who enjoyed the distinctive program that was rich in cultural competitions, popular games, interesting performances, coloring faces and many different social events.

KFH organized the event at Discovery Mall, which was widely attended by children. The bank's booth was designed as a large-scale Girgian box that incarnates "Baity" account for children. KFH participated in the Girgian ceremony of the Kuwaiti Society of Engineers, which witnessed a variety of recreational activities for children, and the Dasman Diabetes Institute for Children with Diabetes and their relatives in Kuwait. The aim of the celebration was to put a smile on the faces of children with diabetes and educate them in an entertaining way while urging them to practice physical activity, choose healthy food, considering moderation and awareness of health values.

KFH also participated in Girgian celebrations at the Kuwait Association for the care of children in hospitals, supporting the bank's role in social initiatives and activities that promote the spirit of participation, giving and communicating with all segments of

society, especially sick children. KFH's volunteer team distributed Girgian gifts at Naif Palace within the framework of the daily presence of distributing Iftar meals. The ceremony at Naif Palace was attended by a large audience daily prior to the launch of the Ramadan traditions in Kuwait. The canon program is broadcasted live daily on Kuwait TV channel.

KFH participated in the Girgian ceremony of the Kuwait Center for Down Syndrome, where the participation of KFH contributed to the joy and delight in children, giving them a sense of community interest towards them. The participation received a great praise for children's parents who praised KFH social initiatives that reflect the extent of the bank's commitment to the burdens of social responsibility and community participation in various community events and activities.

The ceremony is organized within the framework of KFH's program in Ramadan "Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 5" and based on social responsibility and preserving the authentic popular heritage that confirms the bank's adherence to its community identity, and its pride in Kuwaiti customs and traditions. KFH has a variety of Ramadan activities that emphasize its leadership in social responsibility, within the program "Increase Good Deeds in Ramadan 5", which includes Iftar the Fasting campaign, activities and various social contributions, awareness initiatives and daily communication with the public. This responsibility con-



firm the bank's keenness on commitment towards its social and humanitarian mission, which reinforces the

concept of social responsibility, and aims to support all initiatives of voluntary work.



Mother gives Ramadan meals in late son's name

By Faten Omar

During the holy month of Ramadan many people in Kuwait give charity, including Iftar meals to fasters. Ninon Al-Gharabally has taken on this burden, distributing iftar meals in the name of her late son, Ahmed Al-Gharabally as a way to mark the two year anniversary since his passing and to keep her son's legacy alive.

"My adored son Ahmed passed away on 30 May 2017. There are no words to describe my suffering and pain about this tremendous loss. After almost two years of crying and suffering, I've managed to translate my tears to strength by devoting the rest of my life to help people in the loving memory of my adored son. This is precisely what I will do until my last days," Ahmed's

mother told Kuwait Times. Ninon added that she prepares food to distribute the Iftar meals at different locations in Al-Rai, Sulaibikhat, the airport areas, Mishref, at bus stations, mosques and even near her home.

"Ahmed was a true humanitarian. He played an active role contributing to the Kuwait community and drove to make a difference in this world. He was a role model as an example of tolerance. He launched initiatives to raise awareness and supported the laborers, waste collectors, as well as volunteered with some organizations." Al-Gharabally was a well-known local entrepreneur, activist and humanitarian. "I am starting a charity organization 'Jamaia Kheiria' in the loving memory of my adored son, an organization that will be founded upon the initiative of Ahmed who was a visionary and wanted to make the world a better place," she said.



Ahmed Al-Gharabally



Ninon Al-Gharabally distributing food to workers during Ramadan.

Gather your loved ones for an Eid brunch at Jumeirah Messilah

Share the gift of togetherness this Eid-Al Fitr with Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa. Marking the end of Ramadan Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa brings an exceptional festive offer for family and friends as it unveils its three-day brunch celebrations for the onset of Eid Al Fitr.

Begin your gastronomic day at the Layali Al Messilah tent with a sumptuous Eid buffet featuring culinary attractions that includes a wide variety of traditional and international dishes with live cooking stations, and a special buffet for kids. Savor a lavish feast with your family and friends with musical entertainment from a live band and classic spreads of brunch favorites, along with freshly made bakery items, braised meats, seafood dishes, traditional Arabic dishes and mezzes and more. Specialties are replete with fresh options of Middle Eastern, Asian and International dishes and heavenly desserts that are exclusively made for the occasion.

Georges Akar, Director of Sales & Marketing, Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, said, "Every experience at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa is a unique one, and we are keen to reflect this in every element within this year's Eid offerings. We look forward to the three days of Eid Al-Fitr, a chance for our guests to celebrate with each other, as well as with our warm and friendly team here at the resort."



"We have prepared three marvelous days of extravagant Eid Brunch featuring traditional Arabic dishes and an array of international cuisine coupled with a splendid dessert selection and fun activities for the children. Our exceptional brunch menu caters to those with discerning tastes and enables guests to experience an unforgettable culinary journey created around the finest Arabic tradition," he concluded. After brunch, rejuvenate and re-energize at the renowned Talise Spa with the ultimate Top to Toe or the Arabian Delight Spa experience moment to conjure with the Eid weekend. Begin your spa journey with some warm tea while a therapist guides you through the treatment to reveal your smoothest and most natural skin glow while soothing your mind, body and soul.

Health & Technology

SpaceX satellites pose new headache for astronomers

May threaten views of the cosmos; deal a blow to scientific discovery

WASHINGTON: It looked like a scene from a sci-fi blockbuster: an astronomer in the Netherlands captured footage of a train of brightly-lit SpaceX satellites ascending through the night sky this weekend, stunning space enthusiasts across the globe. But the sight has also provoked an outcry among astronomers who say the constellation, which so far consists of 60 broadband-beaming satellites but could one day grow to as many as 12,000, may threaten our view of the cosmos and deal a blow to scientific discovery. The launch was tracked around the world and it soon became clear that the satellites were visible to the naked eye: a new headache for researchers who already have to find workarounds to deal with objects cluttering their images of deep space.

"People were making extrapolations that if many of the satellites in these new mega-constellations had that kind of steady brightness, then in 20 years or less, for a good part the night anywhere in the world, the human eye would see more satellites than stars," Bill Keel, an astronomer at the University of Alabama said. The satellites' brightness has since diminished as their orientation has stabilized and

they have continued their ascent to their final orbit at an altitude of 550 kilometers. But that has not entirely allayed the concerns of scientists, who are worried about what happens next. Elon Musk's SpaceX is just one of a several companies looking to enter the fledgling space internet sector.

To put that into context, there are currently 2,100 active satellites orbiting our planet, according to the Satellite Industry Association. If another 12,000 are added by SpaceX alone, "it will be hundreds above the horizon at any given time," Jonathan McDowell of the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics told AFP, adding that the problem would be exacerbated at certain times of the year and certain points in the night. "So, it'll certainly be dramatic in the night sky if you're far away from the city and you have a nice, dark area; and it'll definitely cause problems for some kinds of professional astronomical observation."

Musk's puzzling response

The mercurial Musk responded to the debate on Twitter with contradictory messages, pledging to look into ways to reduce the satellites' reflectivity

but also saying they would have "0% impact on advancements in astronomy" and that telescopes should be moved into space anyway. He also argued the work of giving "billions of economically disadvantaged people" high-speed internet access through his network "is the greater good." Keel said he was happy that Musk had offered to look at ways to reduce the reflectivity of future satellites, but questioned why the issue had not been addressed before.

If optical astronomers are concerned, then their radio astronomy colleagues, who rely on the electromagnetic waves emitted by celestial objects to examine phenomena such as the first image of the black hole discovered last month, are "in near despair," he added. Satellite operators are notorious for not doing enough to shield their "side emissions," which can interfere with the observation bands that radio astronomers are looking out for. "There's every reason to join our radio astronomy colleagues in calling for a 'before' response," said Keel. "It's not just safeguarding our professional interests but, as far as possible, protecting the night sky for humanity." — AFP



CAPE CANAVERAL: This video grab taken from the Space X webcast transmission on May 23, 2019, shows a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with 60 Starlink satellites ready for launch from Space Launch Complex 40 (SLC-40) at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. — AFP

CLINIC

PAGE





248 33 199





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 @haddclinic



Tel: 1801082
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
Mobile: 90974754/ 99166746

 saharpolyclinic
 Dr.saharghannsmclinic
 Email: drsgderma@gmail.com

WELCOME

Dr Tammam Abu Ali

Consultant ENT, Head Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon

Following of the vocal cord college of surgeons in UK and Ireland. 18 years work experience in Qatar Hospital WLL Doha.

As Head of ENT department in Forensic Hospital WLL Doha. 10 years work experience in UK and Ireland.

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





1 888 883

www.qmc-kuwait.com

qmckuwait



Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or

Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617

or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com



Dr. Husain Alenzi

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



Expert in diagnosing and treating:

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

Contact Taiba Hospital: 1808088

94449452

Twitter: @DrHusain_Urol

Our Doctors Provide care For the entire Family

Book your appointments today!





Dr. Kiran Turak
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Zareena Zahir
Ophthalmologist



Dr. Hasan Khan
Senior Cardiologist



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

50721507
24551555

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

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 Alsheer st., Building 14, Floor 13.
Tel.: (+965) 22060777
@DrFahamed, @Fahmed, @fardonabb
Email: drfahamed@beautybeyond.com.kw

To advertise on this Page

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

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

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

مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tel:1802 555

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

Specialized in:

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

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

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

Specialized in:

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

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

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

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

Scope of Clinical Practice:

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

Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:

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

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

مستشفى دار الشفا Dar Al Shifa Hospital
Tel:1802 555

DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

Academic Certificates - Training

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

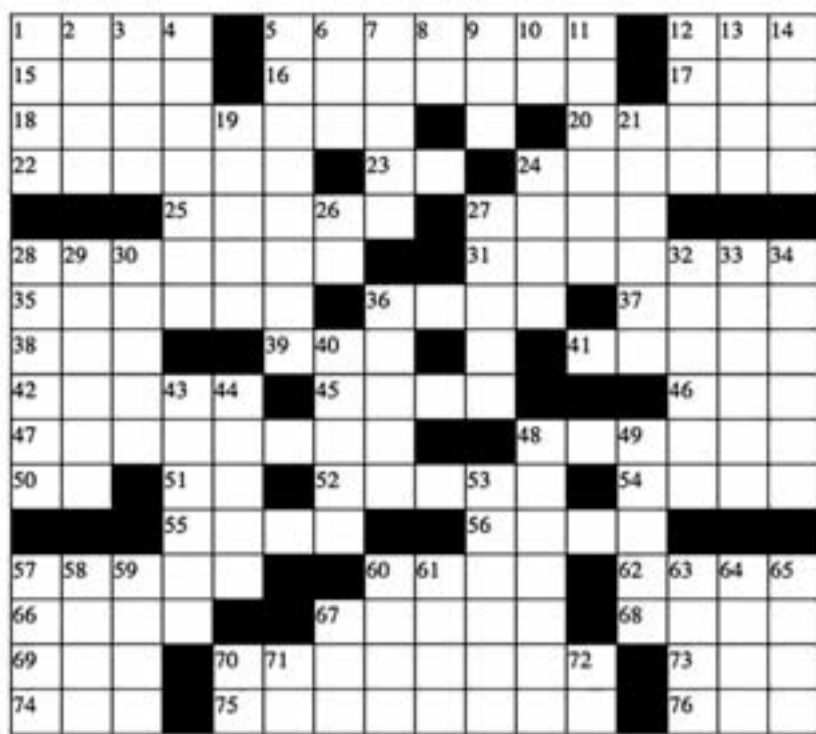
Scope of clinical Practice.

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

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

Stars

CROSSWORD 2221



ACROSS

1. An instance or single occasion for some event.
 5. A blank leaf in the front of back of a book.
 12. Sandwich filled with slices of bacon and tomato with lettuce.
 15. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
 16. French physicist who invented the alcohol thermometer (1683-1757).
 17. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
 18. Brown for its thickened edible aromatic root.
 20. (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
 22. One of two pieces of armor plate hanging from the fault to protect the upper thighs.
 23. Being one more than one hundred.
 25. (prefix) Within.
 28. An early French settler in the Maritimes.
 31. A flat tortilla with various fillings piled on it.
 35. Natural qualities or talents.
 37. Winning all or all but one of the tricks in bridge.
 38. Two-year-old sheep.
 39. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
 41. Extremely small in scale or scope or capability.
 42. Fill with high spirits.
 45. Filled or abounding with fog or mist.
 46. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.
 47. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Clinoril).
 50. A soft silvery metallic element of the rare earth group.
 51. A yellow trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
 52. Left-hand page.
 54. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
 55. Footwear usually with wooden soles.
 56. Predatory black-and-white toothed whale with large dorsal fin.
 57. Brought from wildness into a domesticated state.
 62. A fraudulent business scheme.
 66. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
 68. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
 69. Black tropical American cuckoo.
 73. The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.
 74. Having any of numerous bright or strong colors reminiscent of the color of blood or cherries or tomatoes or rubies.
 75. An early Christian church designed like a Roman basilica.
 76. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- DOWN**
1. Consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offence.
 2. The content of cognition.
 3. A master's degree in library science.
 4. An anticonvulsant drug (trade names Emeside and Zaronitin) used to treat petit mal epilepsy.
 5. Italian omelet with diced vegetables and meats.
 6. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
 7. West Indian evergreen with medium to long leaves.
 8. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
 9. The rate at which energy is drawn from a source that produces a flow of electricity in a circuit.
 10. A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.
 11. Noisy quarrel.
 12. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
 13. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
 14. A device in which something (usually an animal) can be caught and penned.
 19. A proteolytic enzyme secreted by the kidneys.
 21. A Uralic language spoken by a Samoyed people of northern Siberia.
 24. A visual representation of an object or scene or person produced on a surface.
 26. A radioactive gaseous element formed by the disintegration of radium.
 27. Inability to coordinate voluntary muscle movements.
 29. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Columba and Eridanus.
 30. Of or relating to alga.
 32. American novelist noted for children's books (1832-1888).
 33. A native of ancient Troy.
 34. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
 36. The state prevailing during the absence of war.
 40. An Indian tree of the family Combretaceae that is a source of timber and gum.
 43. Being colored slightly.
 44. Having come or been brought to a conclusion.
 48. Of or related to the sacred texts of Islam.
 49. A ceremonial dinner party for many people.
 53. Large South American evergreen tree trifoliate leaves and drupes with nut-like seeds used as food and a source of cooking oil.
 58. An inflammatory disease involving the sebaceous glands of the skin.
 59. A female domestic.
 60. An antidepressant drug that acts by blocking the reuptake of serotonin so that more serotonin is available to act on receptors in the brain.
 61. The bottom of a shoe or boot.
 63. A small restaurant where drinks and snacks are sold.
 64. A Loloish language.
 65. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
 67. An associate degree in applied science.
 70. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
 71. An informal term for a father.
 72. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Others say you're charismatic. On the other hand, they find you powerful too. You say what you think and with that comes some power. You may owe some of your good results to helping others. That too brings authoritative feelings. When you help others, it puts you into their debt. That's something you don't mind at all. It's part of your spiritual outlook. You may be facing a loss of some kind but from that you'll grow emotionally as well. Suspicions of someone for which you care keep playing at the edge of your mind. You can't seem to let it go. Things will get better.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You have a natural sense of history which may be brought out by a job having you write for or speak to a crowd. This is something you love. It won't feel like work. You may even decide on a business venture that takes care of people in the food industry or in real estate. You've got a need to feel respected now. Some, whom you care, understand your feelings and are quick to show support for your ideas. They may even tell you about times you've helped them before. Don't go shopping now because you'll use it to soothe your feelings. Be with friends if possible, later.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You appear commanding at work now possibly because you're so full of energy. Others want to do what you want to do especially at work which brings notice to you and is good for you. Someone you respect who is older and who works with you in an authority position takes notice and seeks you out now. Maybe it's your special day for two reasons. This isn't the time to challenge authority without good reasons and you'd better be able to show those reasons too. All in all, this is a very good day. Make it jam-packed with the party you'll attend later.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

A cycle of mental development is here. This time emphasizes your past, what makes you who you are and makes want to learn about your roots and family overall. Anyone for DNA matches? Curiosity is piqued. You've been bitten. Now is the time to get into it full force and study but unless that has something to do with your new job, it may have to wait until tonight. This is a good time to get down to the nitty gritty at your work place. Someone in authority may need to meet with you now. Seems like you're in the process of working all the time lately with no time for much pleasure. Finding past relatives may be what brings fun for you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Today you may decide to take a much-needed day off to be with your life's partner. He or she may need some attention too. You're a hard role to follow especially with the way life has been for you lately. Your lover may feel left out and you understand this problem for what it is, insecurity. You're willing to take the time to shore up your family foundation and to enjoy the time you're spending with the person you've chosen to walk with through your life and theirs. Do something you both like. Try to use that gift you've had for a little while now to see what he or she would like as well. You're a good partner.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You're driven in unusual directions at work and at home. This will turn out wonderfully for you in time. Someone you least expected will back you in these endeavors which make you look good for some time to come. Perhaps you have a new invention or manner in which to do things for work, born of originality. It's so exciting because it lives on its own merits with a very long shelf life. This means your creative thoughts are right on in a prosperous manner. Emotions, which were unexpected, get the best of you now. Showing and communicating your feelings take over. It's best to get them out and learn from them.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You have a need for change now. You desire the new and different in work and life at the moment. Anything that isn't commonplace takes your fancy. Friends and family make you feel needed and offer the security you need at this time. Take advantage of the good feelings and think about what you want in your life. Those people close to you request advice about some very personal issues. You're just the right person to help them out. You can cut through any red tape to get to the crux of the problem and justify the reasoning for them coming to you in the first place.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This isn't the best time to shop or try to redecorate your home or office. Letting things be, is your best advice for the moment. You may understand others issues now but that doesn't mean you want to help them in any manner. You have problems appreciating anyone but family and maybe your lover. Your communication skills are very good now. The point you're trying to make is communicated with a talent akin to a great swordsman. Try to dial back that cleverness a little. Others need you to care and you do but you're not going out of your way to soothe anyone now.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You're like a child now, exploring, smelling, touching and learning while doing so. This is one of the best times in your life. You're more outgoing and investigational than you've been in some time. Even with your lover, you're willing to be creative in ways you would've shied away from before. Eager to take chances pushes you to the limits at work and at home. Others look at you in amazement. A phase of long periods of good conversation is part of everything in your life. If you can't talk about it, why do it, is your saying now. You're clear about your motives for all you do. Reaching out and touching someone is important.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is a time when your energy level is at a high. Be proud of this and use it to help you at work. Taking care of business is a calling for you now. Don't leave out home and love either. All of those items take precedence in your life now. Problem solving makes your day. It's like a crossword puzzle is to a puzzle addict. This isn't going to be your best day for a while in other regards but it is in this way now. You may have someone disagree with you on the job. They don't take your bad look and cover away as is generally done. Items like this should be forgotten. Think of the better qualities of the day.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Today isn't the best time to be working with others. Maybe you should take the day off to be with loved ones. They are the only ones who feel you're doing something right at this time. Go home to your spouse or significant other and entertain yourselves. Make a trip to the park to watch the ducks and eat a burrito for lunch. Take the ducks lettuce. All of you will have some fun then. When you get home, rest a while. Think about good things and enjoy your family and pets.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a time in which you bring imagination and new ideas into your life and life's direction. This may be okay but it could also cause some issues when you don't allow practicality to blend with this creativity you seek. Religious, philosophical and psychic understanding all take a high place in your mind now. Studying and learning what makes others look at particular spiritual concepts hits your hot button. A need to know drives you on. Nervous energy has you working like a house a fire. Watch that you take time for you to sit down and enjoy a beverage to get a little rest.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Old TV Shows 1 - Word Search

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

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| ADDAMS FAMILY | GUNSMOKE | ROSEANNE |
| BATMAN | HAZEL | TARZAN |
| BEWITCHED | HEE HAW | THE NANNY |
| CHINA BEACH | HOWDY DOODY | THE WALTONS |
| COACH | I SPY | TWIN PEAKS |
| DEAR JOHN | LAUGH IN | |
| DOCTOR WHO | MANNIX | |
| FRASIER | MAVERICK | |

Yesterday's Solution

Movie Musicals 2 - Solution

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
F 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 O F E M Y Z M A N
A A P L C I N C K 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 | FUNNY FACE | OKLAHOMA |
| BLUE HAWAII | GIGI | PAL JOEY |
| BUGSY MALONE | GREASE | SILK STOCKINGS |
| CALAMITY JANE | HAIR | STATE FAIR |
| CARMEN | HIGH SOCIETY | SWING TIME |
| CHICAGO | JAILHOUSE ROCK | TOMMY |
| DREAMGIRLS | MARY POPPINS | YENTL |
| FAME | MY FAIR LADY | |

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily Sudoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Lifestyle

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2019



The Al-Rabat Sweets and Bakery, founded by Iraqi immigrants in the UAE, is pictured during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, in Sharjah. — AFP photos



The Al-Sultan sweets shop, founded by Syrian immigrants in the UAE, is pictured.



A Pakistani immigrant in the UAE sits at his shop selling traditional sweets in Dubai's Al-Satwa district.



A street cart selling Pakistani food pictured in Dubai's Al-Satwa district.

UAE EXPATS GET TASTE OF RAMADAN TRADITIONAL SWEETS

Nida Mohammed drove for more than an hour from Fujairah to Sharjah in the UAE just to buy special Iraqi sweets and juices for the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. "Over there (in Fujairah) you can't find Iraqi stuff," Mohammed says, as she picks up her order of sharbet zbeeb, or raisin juice, a special Iraqi drink taken to break the day-long fast. The oil-rich United Arab Emirates is home to more than nine million expatriates who hail from well over 100 countries and form 90 percent of the population.

During Ramadan, immigrants in the Gulf state reconnect with traditions from their homeland, especially the rituals of breaking the fast and taking lots of traditional desserts and juices. Shops like this help "me remember the country we came from," says Mohammed, who made the journey with family members and stocked large quantities of Iraqi sweets. Muslims around the world refrain from eating and drinking, as well as from sex, between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan. Far away from their homes, many of which are in conflict zones, immigrants still get a taste of their culture from their traditional foods and desserts.

"Every country has its own culture when it comes to their desserts," especially for Ramadan, says Samer Al-Kasir, the Syrian general manager of Al-Sultan sweets in Dubai. "These sweets here are based on Syrian traditions," he says, pointing to mosaic of sweets packaged neatly in a box. Men, women and children are seen gazing at the array of items on display in glass door fridges—each taking their time before placing their orders.



The Al-Rabat Sweets and Bakery, founded by Iraqi immigrants in the UAE, is pictured during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, in Sharjah.

Decades-old tradition

The owner of the Al-Rabat sweets store where Mohammed was shopping says he opened the business in 2006 to serve the Iraqi community in the UAE. "Iraqis did not have a special place catering for them, so I opened this place... because some of the baking is different to other (Arab) traditions," says Wesam Abdulwahab. "Most of our customers are Iraqis. They consider this place one that brings them together. We get our goods from Iraq, stuff that may be difficult to get here."

For Saad Hussein, the items offered in Al-Rabat coupled with the spirit of Ramadan bring back memories of his childhood, particularly a popular Iraqi game called Mheibes. In the game, men divided into two groups—traditionally from different neighborhoods—have to guess which member of the opposing team is hiding a ring, or mahbas in Arabic, in their hand.

"Of course, during the games, Ramadan foods and sweets are distributed," adds Hussein. Seemingly out of place, yellow boxes of Jordanian Tutu biscuits are stacked near the register and on the shelves of Al-Rabat. Abdelwahab says that Tutu, although not Iraqi, represent something significant for his countrymen. During the Iraqi war in the early 1990s, he explains, the people had little access to sweets from abroad—except for Tutu. "Tutu was an exceptional treat that brings back memories of enjoyment for Iraqis," he says.

'Tempting'

In Al-Satwa district of Dubai, Ahmed Naveed from Pakistan is standing in front of his family's shop taking orders for different kinds of samosa—popular in many Asian countries. Residents from all walks of life, including Emiratis, stood in line on the busy street to get their fried and baked pastries for iftar. Qudsia Osman, who hails from India, was driving past with her mother when they decided to stop at the shop after being drawn in by the sight and scent of the food. "It's very tempting. When we passed by and saw it, we got carried away with this food," Osman says, adding she is pleased the UAE included an array of communities to cater to the different cultures.

"I was born and brought up in Dubai... it is my home," she says. Mohammed Shiraz, a Pakistani who has been living in the UAE for nearly 20 years, also considers the emirate his home. "The UAE caters to the population," he says, explaining he enjoys the holy month in the Gulf state for all the Ramadan offers and promotions. But for many, although the UAE has become their new home where they have started new traditions, the taste of home resonates with them. "In the old days, it wasn't like now. Food preparations were done at home, including desserts," Abdelwahab says. "My mom, of course, used to do it," he says. "Her food is still better than anything I've ever had." — AFP

Lifestyle | Gossip



Marwan Kenzari joins The Old Guard

Marwan Kenzari has joined the cast of 'The Old Guard'. The 36-year-old actor - who can currently be seen as the villainous Jafar in Guy Ritchie's live-action remake of Disney's 'Aladdin' - is set to star in the film adaptation of a five-issue comic book series of the same name about immortal warriors. The movie will also star Charlize Theron as Andy, the leader of the warriors, an Amazon from the Herodotus age of ancient Greece and has no idea why she's still alive. Starring alongside Charlize as another

immortal warrior will be 'If Beale Street Could Talk' actress KiKi Layne, who will portray newest recruit Nile, a US Marine. A third role will be that of a French Renaissance thief, but their casting has not been revealed yet. According to The Hollywood Reporter, 'The Mummy' star Marwan will play part of the "long-lived squad", a man who was once a "moor warrior". 'The Old Guard' comics were produced by writer Greg Rucka and illustrator Leandro Fernandez and the authors have described their work as a "fairytale of blood and bullets". 'The Secret Life of Bees' filmmaker Gina Prince-Bythewood

will direct the movie, which is due to shoot this year in a number of locations, including Morocco and London. Kenzari can currently be seen in re-imagining of the beloved 1992 Disney animation 'Aladdin' alongside Will Smith as The Genie, Naomi Scott as Princess Jasmine and Mena Massoud as the titular street urchin. Former 'Saturday Night Live' star Nasim Pedrad has also been added to play new character Mara, a handmaiden and friend to Jasmine.

Clarke almost had Iron Man 3 role

Emilia Clarke almost appeared in 'Iron Man 3'. The 2012 superhero movie's co-writer Drew Pearce has revealed a behind the scenes shot from an early table read which shows he was reading for JARVIS, the role which was played by Paul Bettany before he became The Vision. However, fans were more intrigued by the caption which revealed the 'Game of Thrones' star has also been present alongside Don Cheadle and Robert Downey Jr. He wrote: "My finest hour: at an early Iron Man Three table read. 'Downey, Cheadle, Emilia Clarke (long story, the script changed)... all vaguely terrifying.' Pearce also poked fun at his own attempts at a 'British' accent, and apologized to Bettany for his display. He added: "Obviously this was in 2012 when everyone was more racist and thought all British people sounded the same. Still, belated apologies to @paulbettany and I hope I didn't let him down." Meanwhile, Clarke recently revealed she turned down the chance to appear in the 'Fifty Shades' franchise. The actress said she's been "pigeonholed for life" thanks to the brief nude scene she filmed for 'Game of Thrones', and turned down the 'Fifty Shades' role - where she was in talks to star as Anastasia Steele, a role which eventually went to Dakota Johnson - because she didn't want to be asked about "sensuality and sex" for the rest of her career. She explained: "So, that coming up, I was like, 'I can't.' I did a minimal amount and I'm pigeonholed for life, so me saying yes to that, where the entire thing is about sensuality and sex and being naked and all of that stuff, I was just like, 'No way am I going to voluntarily walk into that situation and then never be able to look someone in the eye and be like, 'No, you can't keep asking me this question.'"



Hemsworth almost 'pulled out' of Ghostbusters night before filming

Chris Hemsworth almost quit Paul Feig's 'Ghostbusters' film the night before he was due on set. The 'Avengers: Endgame' star has revealed he had real concerns about the part of Kevin, a dorky receptionist, in the 2016 movie as the role was largely ad-libbed, which made him "really scared" about his first day. However, the director was able to reassure him that it would be worthwhile taking on the job alongside the all-female ghost hunters played by Melissa McCarthy, Kate McKinnon, Kirstin Wiig and Leslie Jones. Hemsworth said: "The night before I was shooting, I almost pulled out. 'Three or four weeks prior, Paul [Feig, director] said to me, 'I'm going to write up the character. Don't worry.' And then I got the script and nothing had changed.'" He continued: "I was really scared walking onto that set. 'I had no real plan, so I was just feeding off of them, and I just felt ridiculous. So I used that.'" The '12 Strong' star - who is best known for playing Thor in the Marvel Cinematic Universe - says it was "unfortunate and disappointing" that the reboot of the 80s' classic faced harsh criticism. He added to Variety: "That whole period I was like, 'What ownership do you guys have over those characters?'" "Oh, you watched the film, therefore you should have a say over where it goes?" "I thought it was very unfortunate and kind of disappointing." And Hemsworth soon found himself enjoying the improvisation style, as he previously admitted: "It is quite liberating. If it didn't work, it was like 'well it's not my fault, you didn't give me a script.'" "There was something quite refreshing about that rather than being given the world's greatest script and going 'Don't mess it up'. 'It was nice to do that. That improvisation created such a spontaneity and organic feel.'"



Purnell to star in Army of the Dead

Ella Purnell is to star in Zack Snyder's 'Army of the Dead' for Netflix. The 22-year-old actress - who is best known for her roles as Emma Bloom Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children' and Tess in 'Sweetbitter' - has joined the upcoming thriller alongside 'Goliath' star Ana De La Reguera, 'Sons of Anarchy' actor Theo Rossi and Huma Qureshi, according to The Wrap. The plot will follow a young woman (Purnell) headed into a dangerous and quarantined Las Vegas where a zombie outbreak has happened in order to find what is causing the undead to rise up. When she becomes trapped her father (Dave Bautista) assembles a group of mercenaries to help rescue her, with the group "tempted by the chance to rob the casinos while they're there". Zack will also produce the project with his wife Deborah Snyder and looking forward to the challenge, the director previously said: "There are no handcuffs on me at all with this one." The movie is based on a script by Joby Harold, who previously penned the script for 'King Arthur: Legend of the Sword'. Netflix is renowned for giving filmmakers complete creative control, and Zack is excited to be working with the streaming service. He previously shared: "I love to honor canon and the works of art, but this is the opportunity to find a purely joyful way to express myself though a genre." Zack is keen to take some risks with the upcoming project, promising fans that 'Army of the Dead' will be a "kick-ass, self-aware" film. He said: "It will be the most kick-ass, self-aware - but not in a wink-to-the-camera way - balls-to-the-wall zombie freak show that anyone has ever seen. No one's ever let me completely loose [like this]." The movie is scheduled to begin shooting this summer and will have a budget that could hit the \$90 million mark.

Lopez wants 50th birthday tour to be a celebration



Jennifer Lopez wants her upcoming tour to be a celebration. The 'On The Floor' hitmaker turns 50 in July, and she wants her 'It's My Party' live shows - which kick off with a date in Los Angeles on June 7 - to be an "intimate" way for her to mark the milestone birthday with her fans. She told 'Entertainment Tonight': "There might be a cake. There might be several cakes. It's going to be a concert tour, but my aim is to make it feel like an intimate party as well. "We're all celebrating together. We're dancing, we're singing, we're having a good time. I want to create a different atmosphere than normal just watch me do my thing. I want it to be interactive. J-Lo is also in a celebratory mood after her man Alex Rodriguez proposed in March, and she is excited to bring everything together for the tour. Describing the show as a "perfect storm", she added: "This year's a really big year for me. I was like, 'We could all be together. We can have like, a special moment, and I can share that with my fans.' 'I've just been on this journey-my life has been about my work and my family, and to have all of that kind of converge on this big birthday of mine, I think was perfect. And I just feel like it's gonna be a really, really special time." Meanwhile, J-Lo previously explained she wanted to just do a relatively short run to mark her 50th. She said: "This summer I decided I wanted to do something big for my birthday, since it's a big birthday. 'I'm going on a US tour, it's called 'It's My Party'...' "We're only doing 25, 28 shows, something like that. It's just a small amount of shows, but we'll be out all through June and July."

Grande postpones two shows

Ariana Grande is "beyond devastated" after pulling out of two concerts. The 'Thank U, Next' hitmaker has postponed shows in Tampa and Orlando, Florida, which were due to take place on Tuesday and Wednesday after falling ill. She revealed on her Instagram Story: "i woke up incredibly sick today, ran to my doctor here and have been told to postpone these shows tonight and tomorrow. 'i'm so beyond devastated. 'i will make this up to you, i promise. please forgive me. i love you and i will be back and better than ever as soon as possible. love you.(sic)" And the 25-year-old singer reassured fans she would return to the cities later in the year to play the shows. She added: "will keep you posted as soon as possible on exact dates but we will be returning in November and you will be able to use the tickets you've already purchased. thank you so much for your understanding.(sic)" Promoters Live Nation later confirmed when the rescheduled shows will take place. They wrote on Twitter: "The new show dates will be 11/24 in Tampa & 11/25 in Orlando. Ariana is sorry to disappoint her fans." Although it's unclear what is wrong with the '7 Rings' hitmaker, she's planning to be back on stage later this week. Live Nation also tweeted: "Miami shows are still happening." Ariana recently admitted she finds performing her music "hell". Responding to a fan who wrote "Music is your therapy and I love seeing it heal you", she said in a now-deleted tweet: "Making it is healing. Performing it is like reliving it all over again and it is hell." Fans then rushed to social media to insist she didn't need to continue with her worldwide 'Sweetener' tour, however, whilst she admitted she was "confused and tired", she insisted she "won't do that." When asked by a fan if touring was good for her health, she replied: "I don't think it is."



Hilton invests in 'Uber for beauty' Glam App

Paris Hilton has invested in The Glam App as she believes it is going to be the "Uber for beauty". The 38-year-old socialite - who already has her own multiple businesses including her, perfume, skincare and make-up lines - has announced that she is the newest investor of the beauty platform, which is an application that allows users to book their grooming appointments at the push of a button and "deliver" them straight to your door. And Paris revealed that the partnership was a natural choice for her because she has been using the app, which is available in 23 cities worldwide, for "four years" and loves how "convenient" it is when it comes to booking her own beauty appointments. Speaking to Forbes, she said: "I've been a client and using The Glam App for four years now. I think it's the future of beauty services because just at the touch of a button, you can have an incredible hair, make-up, or nail stylist come to your front door and get you ready. It makes things so convenient and it's literally like the Uber for beauty and right now, I'm obviously running a huge business, but a big priority of mine for the past year has been investing in companies that I believe in." The Glam App was founded by A-list make-up guru and hair stylist Joey Maalouf alongside CEO Katrina Barton in 2015, and the brand is set to introduce a new option that allows its users to book longer appointment times with celebrity stylists at a higher price. Maalouf also insisted that he has created two signature looks for the app including the Hollywood, that will make user's red carpet ready, alongside the Paris, that is based on the DJ-turned-beauty investor and will reveal her signature ritu-

al. He added: "We work with stylists ranging from one year experience all the way up to those who have mastered their craft. Skill sets, professionalism, and creativity are just some of the characteristics we are looking for when accepting well-rounded stylists. "Even though we accept stylists at different levels, what's consistent across the board is that they're all driven towards similar goals of perfecting their craft, building a stable clientele, and being respected by their peers while upholding pillars of professionalism and talent within the beauty industry. "This is why we are launching a top level tier called VVIP with Paris ... with greater appointment times and the highest level of stylists who have been hand-selected by me. The Glam App is the future of beauty." And users will be able to rate their appointments and give them a five-star rating like the popular transport app, Uber. He added: "Our team truly prides themselves on the exceptional level of customer service we offer, proven by our 98 per cent five-star rating." — Bang Showbiz



Lifestyle | Features

Some risks as 'Sports Illustrated' expands its focus

For decades, "Sports Illustrated" has played a unique role in chronicling major competitions like the Olympics and the highs and lows of athletic icons from Muhammad Ali to Serena Williams. But the fortunes of the 65-year-old magazine-known also for its annual swimsuit issue-will now be tied to a sale of the Sports Illustrated name that envisions re-fashioning the enterprise into a "leader in lifestyle and entertainment," as its new owner put it. Under a transaction unveiled Monday, SI owner Meredith Corporation sold the brand's intellectual property to Authentic Brands Group for \$110 million.

The deal grants ABG access to more than two million images owned by the magazine and website, as well as the "Sports Illustrated" brand for purposes such as events and conferences, video production and sports gambling, the companies said in news releases. Editorial control for the magazine and website will rest with Meredith for "at least two years," with Meredith paying ABG an undisclosed licensing fee, according to a Meredith news release.

"As one of the most iconic brands in sports media, SI is a cultural centerpiece with massive opportunities for growth across its burgeoning digital, TV and social platforms and industry-leading print magazine," said Jamie Salter, founder and chief executive of ABG. "SI's trusted name and fiercely devoted following set the stage for the brand to become a leader in lifestyle and entertainment."

Tough business

The deal comes as magazines, as with newspapers, contend with diminishing readerships and advertising funds as more marketers commit dollars to online platforms. Such challenges have buffeted weekly publications such as Time, Fortune and Sports Illustrated, which were all sold to Meredith by Time in 2018. Sports Illustrated has long enjoyed unique cache in providing thoroughly reported and sharply-written accounts of just-completed games, as well as legacy-defining profiles of Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods and other stars. SI is also known for its sweeping narratives surrounding infamous figures such as Pete Rose, Mike Tyson and Tonya Harding.

With the ABG deal, Sports Illustrated sees a parallel to the strategy taken by publications such as the New York Times and Wall Street Journal, which have turned to conferences, travel seminars and podcasts as a means to raise funds for journalism. "We are now perfectly positioned, with the support and resources of ABG, to thrive in many other spaces: events and conferences, licensing, gambling and gaming, IP development, especially in video and TV, to name a few, all while continuing to benefit from Meredith's industry-leading track record in operating media companies," said SI Editor-in-Chief Chris Stone. Stone said the development of "independent, award-winning journalism and storytelling" remains the "heart of SI."

Gambling on gambling?

However, some in sports journalism expressed concern about the future of the publication. "Really hope my colleagues get to keep doing the in-depth, high-end work that they do so well. So much talent and tradition at SI," said New York Times tennis writer Christopher Clarey on Twitter. The announcement's mention of gambling also raised concerns for Kelly O'Keefe, a professor of brand management at Virginia Commonwealth University.

O'Keefe said monetizing the SI brand through quality sports programming was a logical extension for the company and could find a market with a company like Netflix that might want sports programming but has little direct expertise. But O'Keefe said SI's interest in sports gambling was "worrisome" and potentially detrimental to the brand's long-time value.

Seven US states have legalized sports gaming since a monumental US Supreme Court decision a year ago, but the venture remains controversial in many circles. Companies such as Disney have kept their distance. "The brand is reasonably untarnished," O'Keefe said. "There are many ways to put meat onto this brand without stepping into something so problematic." — AFP



Gotta catch some shuteye: Pokemon unveils 'sleep game'

Having trouble waking up in the morning? Not getting enough sleep? The company that brought you Pokemon Go may have a solution: a game "played" by sleeping. Pokemon Company said yesterday it would release a new smartphone game called "Pokemon Sleep" in 2020, turning sleep into entertainment. The firm created the wildly popular Pokemon Go app, a game that let players walking the real world hunt virtual Pokemon, in 2016. "Now we set our sights on sleeping," president Tsunekazu Ishihara told reporters. "It's a game with which you look forward to waking up," he said.

"Turning sleeping... into entertainment is our next goal." Ishihara offered little detail on the game, but Nintendo-which helped develop Pokemon Go-said during the press conference in Tokyo that they are rolling out a new device that can track players' sleep and send data to their smartphone. The announcement sparked a social media frenzy, and plenty of quips. "I can't wait to be an esports player now that sleeping is part of gaming," wrote one Twitter user. "Pokemon Sleep. At last, a valid excuse for that extra six hours in bed," wrote another. At the very least, the game seems unlikely to spark the sort of trouble caused by Pokemon Go, which saw players blamed for traffic accidents and other violations as they roamed the streets-buried in their phones-hunting "monsters". The free game uses satellite locations, graphics and camera capabilities to overlay cartoon characters on real-world settings, challenging players to capture and train the creatures. Pokemon, short for "pocket monsters", has been a constant in Japan since it was launched as software in 1996 for Nintendo's iconic Game Boy console. Its "Gotta Catch 'Em All" slogan has been turned into a song. The game has expanded into other media, most notably a hugely popular TV animation show and a recent film. — AFP

Virus-packed laptop sells as artwork for over \$1.3 million

For Chinese artist Guo O Dong, the simple black Samsung laptop computer, loaded with six potent viruses, symbolizes one of the world's most frightening threats. On Tuesday his creation "The Persistence of Chaos" rocked the art world, selling for more than \$1.3 million in a New York online auction. There's nothing special about the 2008 10-inch Netbook, running Microsoft's now-outdated Windows XP. But loaded onto its memory chips are the computing world's equivalents of the most deadly infectious diseases: "I LOVE YOU" from 2000, "Sobig" of 2003, "MyDoom" (2004), "DarkTequila" (2013), "BlackEnergy" (2015), and the most notorious of all, the "WannaCry" ransomware from two years ago.

It is a powerful symbol of the threat on simple laptop can pose to the entire world. The six trojans, worms and malware loaded on it have caused at least \$95 billion in damage around the world, according to Guo. Guo is an internet artist "whose work critiques modern day extremely online culture," the auction site, organized by cybersecurity group Deep Instinct, said. The computer, viewed via an online video stream, is harmless in its auction state-turned on, but not connected to any network or the internet. The auction site says it is "air-gapped"-its wireless and internet connections physically and electronically plugged.

But it comes with ominous warning to the buyer not to unleash its pathogenic programs-possible by unplugging its connection hardware, or by simply inserting a thumb drive. The site stresses that the artwork is for research use only, saying that anyone who submitted a bid contractually agreed that they "have no intention of disseminating any malware."

At the same time, the site appeared to acknowledge that the buyer might not heed the agreement. "Please remember that these are live and dangerous malware samples," it said. "Running them unconstrained means that you will infect yourself or others with vicious and dangerous malware." The buyer was not identified. — AFP

French court to hear lawsuit over Johnny Hallyday's will

A French court agreed Tuesday to hear a lawsuit over the inheritance of France's biggest rock star Johnny Hallyday, amid a bitter feud between the singer's widow and children. Hallyday's two biological children, Laura Smet and David Hallyday, are fighting his widow Laetitia for a stake in the singer's millions after they were written out of his will. Hallyday's death from lung cancer in 2017 triggered an outpouring of grief over France's answer to Elvis Presley, a star since the 1960s.

His estate, worth several tens of millions of dollars, includes multiple properties as well as luxury cars and the rights to his 1,160 songs. The court in Nanterre, a suburb west of Paris, ruled that the singer, whose real name was Jean-Philippe Smet, lived primarily in France, a decision hailed as a victory for his children, who have been fighting for more than a year after he left his fortune to Laetitia and their two adopted daughters. In France, the right of children to their parents' estate is protected, but Hallyday and his wife had been living in the US for years before his death, and his will had been rewritten under Californian law.

However the court determined that "up to the end he lived a bohemian and nomadic life, but above all a very French life that led him to live... usually in France." Laetitia

Hallyday is planning to appeal the decision, her lawyer said. "I will not try to hide my amazement and dismay at this decision," said the lawyer, Ardavan Amir-Aslani. "Indisputable factual elements have been ignored in favor of misleading arguments presented by the other party."

Hallyday's daughter Laura Smet was "extremely moved" by the decision, her lawyer Emmanuel Ravanan told reporters. "She's been fighting... for more than a year in very difficult circumstances," he said. "An American court would be completely unfit to rule on this case, which does not involve a single American. "The attempt by Laetitia Hallyday and her counsel to evade French jurisdiction over the settlement of this succession has clearly failed. It was a stalling tactic." Laetitia Hallyday had argued in March that she and her husband had lived in Los Angeles since 2007.

But the court said the rock star had left a will that year claiming he lived in Switzerland and that his inheritance should be "settled exclusively in accordance with Swiss law". The court also said he lived in France "for eight months before his death". The star's son also located his father through Instagram posts, claiming he spent 151 days in France in 2015, and 168 days in 2016. — AFP



This file photo taken on December 9, 2017 shows Laetitia Hallyday, (left), wife of late French singer Johnny Hallyday, son of Johnny Hallyday David Hallyday (right) and daughter Laura Smet (center) standing during the funeral ceremony for Johnny Hallyday at the Eglise de la Madeleine (La Madeleine Church) in Paris.



In this file photo taken on May 8, 2009 French singer Johnny Hallyday performs on stage at the Zenith in Saint-Etienne, eastern France, during what he announced to be his last career tour, "Tour 66". — AFP photos



In this file photo taken on December 9, 2017 son of late French singer Johnny Hallyday David Hallyday (first right), daughter Laura Smet (second right), Johnny's wife Laetitia (fourth right), their daughters Jade (fifth right) and Joy (third right) applaud by the coffin outside the Eglise de la Madeleine (La Madeleine Church) in Paris.

Word whiz kids compete for \$50,000 prize in US spelling bee

Nearly 500 word wizards were still in contention yesterday as the Scripps National Spelling Bee entered its second day, as the best young spellers strive for the top cash prize of \$50,000. Some 562 youngsters aged seven to 15 faced off at the start of the tournament in Maryland on Tuesday to tease out vocabulary in dictionary perfection for the three-day challenge.

D-U-O-M-O

The word means an Italian cathedral. Jackie Meador, 13, of Marbelton, Wyoming, got it right and advanced to the second day of competition. "It's kind of nerve-wracking," said Meador, who won his first spelling bee in third grade. "When I won the school bee and beat the fifth graders, I realized I might be good at it." "I just want to make it to the finals. That's my goal," he added. Spellers still competing had to ace common words, such as "intolerable" and "detrimental", along with more obscure words, such as "annus mirabilis" and "hibernaculum".

Brody Krause, 10, of Thornton, Colorado, did not fare as well on Tuesday, departing the stage after misspelling "parochialism". "I'm extremely disappointed," said Krause,

competing for the first time at the tournament, which began in 1925. Krause spent his own money on a dictionary to prepare for the bee, which this year drew spelling aces from all 50 US states, US territories and six other countries - the Bahamas, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea.

Standing at a mere 4 feet 4 inches tall, Akash Vukoti, 9, sparked smiles from fans on Tuesday afternoon when he commented on the microphone stand as it automatically lowered to match his height. "I like this mic!" he exclaimed, before successfully spelling ranunculus - a type of plants - with seconds to spare. Vukoti, a native of San Angelo, Texas, tied for 323rd place in last year's bee. He is competing this year alongside his sister, Amrita Vukoti, 11. "Even before kids come to this bee, they are already winners because they have acquired a lot of knowledge," said their father, Krishna Vukoti, who enrolled his son in his first spelling bee at age 2. "It's a lot of dedication from our side, combined with his talents," he said. The event, which concludes today, takes place at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Oxon Hill, Maryland. — Reuters



Sameer Tangirala of San Jose, California, celebrates after he correctly spelled his word during round three of the Scripps National Spelling Bee at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center. — AFP photos



Hundreds of children participate in the second round of the Scripps National Spelling Bee at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center.

Apple unveils first new iPod model in four years

Apple on Tuesday introduced its first new iPod model in four years, highlighting music and games as it continued to make a priority of serving up digital content. The new-generation iPod touch, essentially an iPhone without the phone calls, was available in more than two dozen countries at Apple's online shop starting at \$199. "We're making the most affordable iOS device even better with performance that is twice as fast as before, Group FaceTime and augmented reality," said Apple vice president of product marketing Greg Joswiak.

"The ultra-thin and lightweight design of iPod touch has always made it ideal for enjoying games, music and so much more wherever you go." The iPod touch evolved from the original iPod digital music player first launched by Apple in 2001. The iPod touch became popular with people, particu-

larly parents of internet-coveting children, who wanted mobile devices for getting online without the cost of telecommunications services. The mobile devices can connect to the internet using Wi-Fi hotspots.

Apple earlier this year unveiled streaming video plans along with news and game subscription offerings as part of an effort to shift its focus to digital content and services to break free of its reliance on iPhone sales. An Apple TV+ service, an on-demand, ad-free subscription service, will launch this year in 100 countries, the company said. Apple News+ was launched in the US and Canada in English and French and will be available later this year in Britain and Australia, the company said.

Separately, the company said it was launching a new game subscription service called Apple Arcade later this year with at least 100 titles at launch. "iOS is the world's largest gaming platform, and with three times faster graphics, games on the new iPod touch run even smoother and look even more beautiful," Apple said in a release. — AFP



Period costume ball brings France's Sun King back to life in Versailles



Nearly 700 people in period costume paraded through the sumptuous apartments of France's Louis XIV at his palace in Versailles just outside Paris late Monday for the fifth edition of the "Fetes Galantes". The annual fancy dress ball aims to re-create the baroque splendor of the Sun King's dazzling court feasts held to show off the wealth and power of France's longest-reigning monarch, who was born in 1638, ascended to the throne at the age of four and remained king until his death in 1715.

He and his husband, Bruno, who is dressed as a prince, are regulars of the event and also attend the annual carnival in Venice every year. For tickets costing several hundred euros, depending on category, guests can wander through the private apartments of the chateau, which is a World Heritage site and one of France's biggest tourist attractions—from the Hercules Salon, where a specialist dance company gives a demonstration of baroque era dance, to the world-famous Hall of Mirrors. "It's the only occasion in the year where you can come to Versailles in costume," says Laurent Brunner, head of the palace's Royal Opera house, where more than 600 of the costumed guests were photographed for the first time this year. In 2020, the Palace of Versailles will celebrate the 250th anniversary of both the Royal Opera, and the wedding of Marie-Antoinette and the future King Louis XVI.—AFP



People dressed in period costumes take part in the 'Fetes Galantes' fancy dress evening in the Chateau de Versailles. — AFP photos



Classifieds

Thursday, May 30, 2019

Kuwait Times
Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Very hot with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear with a slight chance for scattered light rain later on.

BY NIGHT: Relatively hot with light variable wind to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 28 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

| WEATHER WARNING | | | No Current Warnings | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------|--|--|
| STATION | MAX. EXP. | MIN. REC. | SFC. CHART 29/05/2019 0000 UTC | | |
| KUWAIT CITY | 47 °C | 34 °C | | | |
| KUWAIT AIRPORT | 47 °C | 27 °C | | | |
| ABDALY | 46 °C | 29 °C | | | |
| BUBYAN | - °C | - °C | | | |
| JAHRA | 47 °C | 31 °C | | | |
| FAILAKA ISLAND | 46 °C | 29 °C | | | |
| SALMIYAH | 42 °C | 31 °C | | | |
| AHMADI | 42 °C | 34 °C | | | |
| NUWAISIB | 46 °C | 30 °C | | | |
| WAFRA | 46 °C | 27 °C | | | |
| SALMY | 45 °C | 30 °C | | | |

| 4 DAYS FORECAST | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--|--------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| DAY | DATE | WEATHER | Temperatures | | Wind Direction | Wind Speed |
| | | | MAX. | MIN. | | |
| Thursday | 05/30 | Hot | 45 °C | 28 °C | NW | 12 - 38 km/h |
| Friday | 05/31 | Hot with a chance for blowing dust and some scattered clouds will appear | 45 °C | 28 °C | NW | 12 - 40 km/h |
| Saturday | 06/01 | Hot with a chance for blowing dust over open areas and some scattered clouds will appear | 45 °C | 29 °C | NW | 15 - 40 km/h |
| Sunday | 06/02 | Hot and some high clouds will appear | 45 °C | 29 °C | NW-SE | 12 - 40 km/h |

| PRAYER TIMES | |
|--------------|-------|
| Fajr | 03:16 |
| Sunrise | 04:49 |
| Zuhr | 11:45 |
| Asr | 15:20 |
| Sunset | 18:41 |
| Isha | 20:11 |

| RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| MAX. Temp. | 46 °C |
| MIN. Temp. | 27 °C |
| MAX. RH | 32 % |
| MIN. RH | 07 % |
| MAX. Wind | NE 39 km/h |
| TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR. | 0 mm |

Hospitals

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

Clinics

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

CHANGE OF NAME

I, George Vishnu, holder of Indian Passport No. 55764774 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 Omprakash & 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

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: joekarinholl36@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 |
| Jazeera Airways | 177 |
| Wataniya Airways | 22 066 536 |
| Turkish Airlines | 1884918 |
| American Airlines | 22087425 |
| | 22087426 |
| Jet Airways | 22924455 |
| FlyDubai | 22414400 |
| Qatar Airways | 22423888 |
| KLM | 22425747 |
| Royal Jordanian | 22418064/5/6 |
| British Airways | 22425635 |
| Air France | 22430224 |
| Emirates | 22921555 |
| Air India | 22456700 |
| Air India EXPRESS | 22438185/4 |
| Sri Lanka Airlines | 22424444 |
| Egypt Air | 22421578 |

Flight Schedule

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

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

| Arrival Flights on Thursday 30/5/2019 | | | | Departure Flights on Thursday 30/5/2019 | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------|-------------|-------|---|------|------------|-------|
| Airlines | Flt | Route | Time | Airlines | Flt | Route | Time |
| IGO | 1757 | Kochi | 00:10 | MSR | 611 | Cairo | 13:45 |
| THY | 772 | Istanbul | 00:20 | THY | 767 | Istanbul | 14:00 |
| DLH | 625 | Dammam | 00:50 | IRA | 600 | Tehran | 14:00 |
| KAC | 102 | London | 00:50 | AXB | 394 | Kozhikode | 14:10 |
| JZR | 722 | Alexandria | 01:00 | UAE | 872 | Dubai | 14:15 |
| JZR | 734 | Cairo | 01:00 | KAC | 673 | Dubai | 15:00 |
| KAC | 504 | Beirut | 01:00 | KNE | 382 | Taif | 15:00 |
| RJA | 642 | Amman | 01:20 | GFA | 222 | Bahrain | 15:00 |
| UAE | 853 | Dubai | 01:40 | FDB | 5060 | Dubai | 15:05 |
| KLM | 446 | Bahrain | 01:45 | JZR | 103 | Bahrain | 15:15 |
| PGT | 858 | Istanbul | 01:50 | QTR | 1079 | Doha | 15:15 |
| KKK | 1268 | Istanbul | 01:55 | SVA | 501 | Jeddah | 15:45 |
| PGT | 828 | Istanbul | 02:00 | KNE | 530 | Jeddah | 15:55 |
| ETH | 620 | Addis Ababa | 02:15 | KAC | 563 | Amman | 16:00 |
| GFA | 211 | Bahrain | 02:15 | KAC | 743 | Dammam | 16:05 |
| QTR | 1086 | Doha | 02:30 | KAC | 775 | Riyadh | 16:05 |
| KAC | 156 | Istanbul | 02:35 | KAC | 615 | Bahrain | 16:10 |
| OMA | 643 | Muscat | 03:05 | ABY | 128 | Sharjah | 16:15 |
| ETD | 305 | Abu Dhabi | 03:05 | KAC | 785 | Jeddah | 16:20 |
| JZR | 406 | Kochi | 03:05 | ETD | 304 | Abu Dhabi | 16:20 |
| MSR | 612 | Cairo | 03:15 | OMA | 646 | Muscat | 16:20 |
| KAC | 418 | Manila | 03:20 | JZR | 1233 | Taif | 16:25 |
| QTR | 1076 | Doha | 03:30 | KAC | 619 | Doha | 16:25 |
| LMU | 510 | Cairo | 04:00 | KNE | 532 | Jeddah | 16:55 |
| KAC | 382 | Delhi | 04:05 | FDB | 052 | Dubai | 17:10 |
| IGO | 1751 | Chennai | 04:10 | QTR | 1073 | Doha | 17:25 |
| KAC | 784 | Jeddah | 04:25 | KAC | 151 | Istanbul | 17:35 |
| MSR | 0516 | Cairo | 04:25 | KAC | 503 | Beirut | 17:40 |
| DHX | 170 | Bahrain | 04:30 | KAC | 283 | Dhaka | 17:40 |
| JZR | 404 | Hyderabad | 04:30 | UAE | 858 | Dubai | 17:40 |
| THY | 770 | Istanbul | 05:20 | FEG | 242 | Alexandria | 17:45 |
| JZR | 402 | Mumbai | 05:25 | KAC | 343 | Chennai | 17:50 |
| KAC | 344 | Chennai | 05:30 | KAC | 381 | Delhi | 17:55 |
| KAC | 552 | Cairo | 05:50 | JZR | 253 | Amman | 18:00 |
| JZR | 112 | Doha | 05:50 | SAW | 706 | Damascus | 18:00 |
| KAC | 362 | Colombo | 06:05 | SVA | 511 | Riyadh | 18:15 |
| BAW | 157 | London | 06:10 | GFA | 216 | Bahrain | 18:20 |
| KAC | 284 | Dhaka | 06:15 | JZR | 403 | Hyderabad | 18:25 |
| JZR | 714 | Sohag | 06:20 | JZR | 723 | Cairo | 18:35 |
| KAC | 678 | Dubai | 06:40 | JZR | 721 | Alexandria | 18:40 |
| KAC | 206 | Islamabad | 06:50 | QTR | 1081 | Doha | 19:20 |
| KAC | 302 | Mumbai | 07:00 | MSR | 621 | Cairo | 19:30 |
| QTR | 8511 | Doha | 07:05 | KAC | 691 | Muscat | 19:35 |
| JZR | 408 | Ahmedabad | 07:05 | GFA | 218 | Bahrain | 19:50 |
| IGO | 1755 | CNN | 07:10 | ABY | 124 | Sharjah | 20:00 |
| KAC | 354 | Bengaluru | 08:00 | RJA | 641 | Amman | 20:05 |
| KAC | 332 | Trivandrum | 08:05 | KAC | 357 | Kochi | 20:05 |
| KAC | 352 | Kochi | 08:05 | JZR | 401 | Mumbai | 20:30 |
| IRA | 601 | Tehran | 08:10 | NIA | 162 | Cairo | 20:30 |
| JZR | 702 | Asyut | 08:25 | KAC | 353 | Bengaluru | 20:50 |
| ETD | 301 | Abu Dhabi | 08:50 | KNE | 232 | Riyadh | 20:50 |
| ABY | 125 | Sharjah | 09:00 | FDB | 058 | Dubai | 20:50 |
| QTR | 1070 | Doha | 09:30 | DLH | 624 | Dammam | 20:55 |
| IGO | 1753 | Ahmedabad | 09:40 | KAC | 333 | Trivandrum | 21:05 |
| KAC | 384 | Delhi | 09:45 | OMA | 648 | Muscat | 21:05 |
| SVA | 512 | Riyadh | 10:00 | RBG | 214 | Sohag | 21:10 |
| IAW | 157A | Al Najaf | 10:00 | MEA | 403 | Beirut | 21:15 |
| GFA | 213 | Bahrain | 10:40 | KAC | 301 | Mumbai | 21:25 |
| MEA | 404 | Beirut | 10:55 | QTR | 1089 | Doha | 21:50 |
| JZR | 1220 | Jeddah | 10:55 | DHX | 171 | Bahrain | 21:50 |
| QTR | 1074 | Doha | 11:00 | KAC | 203 | Lahore | 22:00 |
| SYR | 341 | Damascus | 11:00 | KLM | 445 | Bahrain | 22:10 |
| JZR | 410 | Delhi | 11:50 | ETD | 308 | Abu Dhabi | 22:15 |
| IAW | 157 | Al Najaf | 12:00 | ALK | 230 | Colombo | 22:20 |
| SAW | 701 | Damascus | 12:30 | KAC | 383 | Delhi | 22:35 |
| THY | 766 | Istanbul | 12:30 | UAE | 860 | Dubai | 22:35 |
| KAC | 614 | Bahrain | 12:30 | GFA | 220 | Bahrain | 22:50 |
| KAC | 871 | Dubai | 12:45 | KAC | 783 | Jeddah | 22:55 |
| MSR | 610 | Cairo | 12:45 | KAC | 551 | Cairo | 23:00 |
| IRA | 667 | Esfahan | 13:00 | ETD | 310 | Abu Dhabi | 23:05 |
| AXB | 393 | Kozhikode | 13:10 | RBG | 556 | Alexandria | 23:10 |
| KAC | 774 | Riyadh | 13:35 | QTR | 1083 | Doha | 23:20 |



BAGHDAD: Iraqi children learn to read from the Quran at the shrine of the Sunni Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani in Baghdad during the holy Muslim month of Ramadan. — AFP

Johnson faces court hearing for Brexit 'lies'

LONDON: Boris Johnson, the frontrunner to become Britain's next prime minister, must attend court over allegations that he knowingly lied during the Brexit referendum campaign, a judge announced yesterday. Johnson, the former foreign secretary, will be summoned to appear before a court over allegations of misconduct in public office, judge Margot Coleman said in a written decision, without specifying the date.

The case is over the claim that Britain sends £350 million (\$440 million, 400 million euros) a week to the

European Union. The exact amount of Britain's net and gross EU contributions was one of the biggest issues during the 2016 referendum campaign. Businessman Marcus Ball has crowd-funded the private prosecution.

Coleman's decision follows a hearing last week at Westminster Magistrates Court in London. "The allegations which have been made are unproven accusations and I do not make any findings of fact," the judge said. "Having considered all the relevant factors I am satisfied that this is a proper case to issue the summons as requested," she wrote. Referring to Johnson as the "proposed defendant", Coleman said he would be required to attend a preliminary hearing that could then result in a trial.

Johnson 'repeatedly lied'

Johnson is considered the favourite among the 11 candidates vying to replace the outgoing Theresa May

as leader of the governing Conservative Party, and therefore prime minister, by the end of July. The summons application made by Ball's lawyers alleges that Johnson "repeatedly lied and misled the British public as to the cost of EU membership" and "knew that such comments were false or misleading". "Lying on a national and international platform undermines public confidence in politics." The maximum penalty for misconduct in public office is life imprisonment.

The elements of the offence are that a public officer, acting as such, wilfully neglects to perform their duty or wilfully commits misconduct to such a degree as to amount to an abuse of the public's trust in the officeholder, and does so without reasonable excuse or justification. Johnson was not present at last week's hearing, but his lawyer Adrian Darbishire said the pro-Brexit figurehead staunchly denied acting in an improper or dishonest manner.

Coleman considered whether the case had been brought purely to annoy Johnson. The former London mayor's position is that the application is a politically-motivated stunt as part of a campaign to undermine the referendum result, and/or to prevent its consequences. Britain is due to leave the EU on October 31. "I accept the defense submission that when the applicant commenced his consideration of whether to bring a private prosecution against the proposed defendant, some three years ago, there may have been a political purpose to these proceedings," Coleman said.

"However, the information for the summons was laid on February 28, 2019 and that argument in my view is no longer pertinent. "I do not accept the application is vexatious." In her 14-page decision, the judge said: "This is an unusual and exceptional application with a considerable public interest and it is right that full reasons are provided." — AFP

Global pact to fight workplace violence and harassment

GENEVA: A global treaty aimed at protecting workers from violence and harassment is expected to be agreed next month, though some "tricky" issues remain, the International Labour Organization (ILO) said yesterday. The unresolved issues are focused on the extent to which employers should be held responsible for such behavior and on whether to include specific reference to protecting LGBTI people, ILO director-general Guy Ryder said.

African states in particular are opposed to including LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) people among groups deemed vulnerable to violence or

harassment in the workplace, sources close to the talks told Reuters. The UN labor agency, which will hold its centenary annual conference on June 10-21, began negotiations on the treaty a year ago as the #MeToo global movement against sexual harassment shone a spotlight on the issue.

"In the light of the progress previously made, in light of the importance of the subject matter, I am very confident that the conference will adopt a convention and recommendation," Ryder told a news briefing hosted by ACANU, the UN correspondents' association in Geneva.

"And this will form the basis, I hope, of intensified activity in the ILO but also at member-state level to combat what remains a very, very prevalent problem at work, the issues of violence and of harassment," he said. Member states, employer groups and workers' representatives take part in negotiations for ILO Conventions, which are legally binding on ratification, and recommendations that give guidance on good practices. — Reuters

'Case is closed,' says Trump on...

Continued from Page 1

"Charging the president with a crime was therefore not an option we could consider," the former FBI director said. "The Constitution requires a process other than the criminal justice system to formally accuse a sitting President of wrongdoing," Mueller added, in what appeared to be a suggestion that any further action would lie with Congress.

At the same time, Mueller reiterated that his report into Russian interference in the 2016 election and potential obstruction of justice did not exonerate the president. "It would be unfair to potentially accuse somebody of a crime when there can be no court resolution of the actual charge," he said. "Those were the principles under which

we operated, and from them we concluded that we would not reach a determination one way or the other about whether the president committed a crime.

"If we had had confidence that the president clearly did not commit a crime, we would have said so," Mueller said. "We did not, however, make a determination as to whether the president did commit a crime." Mueller also said that if he was called to testify before Congress - as some Democrats are demanding - he would say no more than what is already in report.

"I hope and expect this to be the only time that I will speak about this matter," he said. "I am making that decision myself - no one has told me whether I can or should testify or speak further about this matter." Mueller ended by reiterating what he called "the central allegation of our indictments - that there were multiple, systematic efforts to interfere in our election." "That allegation deserves the attention of every American," Mueller said that with the completion of the investigation he was resigning from the Justice Department to return to private life. — Agencies

take the time to read it! If we truly want God to answer hear our prayers and answer our call, we must also heed His words and answer His call. If you would like a translation of the Quran, contact any branch of IPC or the TIES Center.

Courtesy of the TIES Center, whose mission is to 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, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.

When God spoke...

Continued from Page 1

forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (3:31) "There has certainly been for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often." (33:21)

It is really miraculous that our Creator has answered our prayers with an entire book dedicated to us, and sent us a messenger to guide our way in applying its teachings. After such a grand gesture, it is only polite to

Iranian mines 'likely caused'...

Continued from Page 1

the kingdom's Gulf coast to the Red Sea, was shut for two days as a result of the attack. Bolton said that there has also been "an unsuccessful attack on the Saudi port of Yanbu a couple of days before the attack on tankers." Yanbu is Saudi Arabia's largest oil terminal on the Red Sea and is home to oil refineries and export facilities.

'Trying to be prudent'

Bolton said he would meet Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan as well as his UAE counterpart, Sheikh Tahnoun Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, to discuss relations and regional tensions. "We are responding and consulting more closely with our allies in the region to discuss what to do next," he said.

"We are trying to be prudent and responsible. We gathered evidence about the nature of attacks on the

tankers and the east-west pipeline, and sent additional forces to act as a deterrent." Bolton was due to leave the UAE later for London as part of preparations for a visit there by US President Donald Trump.

Fujairah, where the attacks took place, is a key oil export terminal on the Sea of Oman that spares tankers the need to enter the Gulf through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has repeatedly threatened to close. Regional tensions have spiked since Trump's administration reimposed sanctions against Iran after Washington unilaterally pulled out of a multilateral 2015 nuclear accord signed with the Islamic republic. The Trump administration has ordered non-essential diplomatic staff out of Iraq, citing threats from Iranian-backed Iraqi armed groups.

But Trump appeared to soften his hawkish tone towards Tehran, saying during a visit to Japan on Monday that his government does not seek "regime change". Bolton said Washington wants to prevent the Islamic republic from producing nuclear weapons, downplaying differences in the US administration on the issue. "There's no mistake here. That we all have the same objective of keeping Iran from getting deliverable nuclear weapons." — AFP

Lebanese bubble with anger over...

Continued from Page 1

university for 1,000 LBP," he adds. After decades of civil war, corruption and political crises made Lebanon one of the world's most indebted countries, the government adopted a new austerity budget on Monday to combat a ballooning budget deficit.

It reduced benefits and pensions in the public sector and introduced a series of tax hikes, including on personal firearm licences and permits for tinted windows. For some, the new levy on water pipes has provoked particular ire. Taxes should not be raised "on something most people use to just relax", Nasreddine says. "We smoke to calm our minds because we are sick of the situation in this country."

The World Health Organisation has warned that a full hookah is equivalent to smoking 20 to 30 cigarettes at once, and has linked the practice to lung damage and cancer. But in much of the Middle East, sharing a water pipe - also called shisha or nargileh - is often conceived as a social occasion during which smokers spend hours in cafes chatting and passing the hose around.

'They're ruining us'

This is especially the case in Lebanon. Lebanon has the highest rate of shisha smokers in the region among teenagers, according to a 2016 study in the medical

journal Ethnicity & Disease, which found that roughly a third of 13 to 15-year-olds it surveyed had smoked at least once in the past month.

Hussam Shuman, 28, sits outside a bustling cafe in the southern suburbs of Beirut, a hookah complete with apple-flavored tobacco burning at his side. The young accountant says he smokes more than once a day, "out of boredom" and "mainly after work". But now, leisure is set to become more costly. "Let them get money from somewhere else. Why are they targeting us water pipe smokers?" he says, trying to calculate how much more he will now be spending on shisha every month. "They're ruining us."

Shuman and many Lebanese are disillusioned with the ruling class, whom they accuse of nepotism and graft, and the latest austerity measures have compounded this situation. The government has been criticized for raising prices and limiting benefits and pensions rather than fighting corruption, tax evasion and smuggling to reduce the deficit. On a nearby table, Fayyad Mustafa shuffles a deck of playing cards, a water pipe gurgling beneath him.

The 24-year-old technician says the shisha tax is not the only problem. "We are living in a state that wants to make everything more expensive," he says. "They started with water pipes but we don't know what other things will become more costly later on." He believes that not reacting to the hookah tax would encourage the government to raise other goods. "If we are silent when they raise the price of a water pipe, we will have to be silent when they raise the price of a loaf of bread... or a sack of potatoes." — AFP

Sports

Cincinnati Reds' Dietrich hits 3 homers, Smeltzer dazzles as Twins top Brewers

Ohtani helps Angels snap Athletics' 10-game win streak

CINCINNATI: Derek Dietrich had a career-high three home runs and drove in six to lead the Cincinnati Reds to an 11-6 win against the visiting Pittsburgh Pirates on Tuesday night. Dietrich blasted two-run homers in the fourth, fifth and seventh innings. The run support was more than enough for Cincinnati starter Lucas Sims in his season debut. Sims, who was recalled from Triple-A Louisville earlier in the day, was working on a shutout before giving up a grand slam to Kevin Newman in the eighth. Sims went 7 1/3 innings, the longest outing of the season by a Cincinnati starter, allowing four runs and six hits, striking out nine and walking one. Tucker Barnhart drove in three runs, Jose Iglesias had two hits and scored twice, and Jose Peraza homered for the Reds. Elias Diaz had two hits for the Pirates, including a two-run double in the ninth inning, and Starling Marte also had two hits.

ANGELS 6, A'S 4

Shohei Ohtani lined a two-out, two-run single to break a ninth-inning tie, allowing visiting Los Angeles to snap Oakland's 10-game winning streak. A two-out single by Tommy La Stella, a walk to Mike Trout and a wild pitch put two Angels in scoring position in the ninth. Ohtani then smacked his difference-making hit to right field, sending Los Angeles to its third win in four games. The loss was the Athletics' first since May 14 and came despite home runs by Marcus Semien, Ramon Laureano and Matt Olson.

TWINS 5, BREWERS 3

Eddie Rosario hit a two-run homer and Max Kepler had a two-run double to highlight a five-run seventh inning and lead Minnesota past Milwaukee in Minneapolis. Matt Magill (1-0) picked up the win in relief of Devin Smeltzer, who pitched six shutout innings in his major league debut. Ryne Harper got Herman Perez to pop out to end the game and earn his first major league save as Minnesota improved to 14-3 following a loss this season. Smeltzer, obtained from the Dodgers at the trade deadline last season as part of the deal that sent Brian Dozier to Los Angeles, allowed three hits and didn't walk a batter while striking out seven, including Lorenzo Cain three times.

INDIANS 7, RED SOX 5

Jordan Luplow hit a two-run double to complete a

five-run, ninth-inning rally as Cleveland stunned host Boston. The Indians trailed 5-2 entering the frame and appeared headed to their eighth loss in their last nine games before Roberto Perez greeted Red Sox reliever Ryan Brasier with a solo home run. After Jake Bauers walked, Greg Allen roped a two-run homer to right to knot the score. Travis Lakins (0-1) took over for the Red Sox and hit the first man he faced before walking two more to load the bases for Luplow, who crushed a ball that just eluded Mookie Betts in right for the game-winning hit.

RAYS 3, BLUE JAYS 1

Avisail Garcia hit an inside-the-park homer, Austin Meadows also homered, five Tampa Bay pitchers combined on a six-hitter, and the Rays defeated Toronto in St. Petersburg, Fla. Ryne Stanek, employed as an opener for the 15th time this season, allowed only a hit and a walk in his two scoreless innings. He struck out one. Ryan Yarbrough (4-1) took over in the third inning and held Toronto to two hits and a walk while striking out one in 3 2/3 shutout innings. Diego Castillo allowed a single, a double and Brandon Drury's sacrifice fly in the ninth while picking up his sixth save of the season.

ASTROS 9, CUBS 6

Alex Bregman recorded his fourth career multi-homer game, and Houston used a balanced attack to top visiting Chicago. Astros manager A.J. Hinch recorded his 500th career victory as Houston overcame a pair of three-run innings from the Cubs, who slugged five home runs. Houston did so despite fielding a lineup loaded with replacements, including a trio of starters who were in the minor leagues just last week. Bregman set a club record with 12 homers this month, bypassing the mark of 11 set by Jimmy Wynn in May 1969.

WHITE SOX 2, ROYALS 1 (COMPLETION OF SUSPENDED GAME)

Yolmer Sanchez ripped a walk-off RBI single with one out in the ninth inning as host Chicago beat Kansas City in the completion of a game that was suspended Monday in the fifth inning due to rain. James McCann highlighted his fifth three-hit performance of the season with a double in the ninth. Sanchez, who had an RBI single in the fifth inning before the game was suspended on Monday, deposited a pitch from Kevin McCarthy



CINCINNATI: Gregory Polanco #25 of the Pittsburgh Pirates hits a single in the eighth inning against the Cincinnati Reds at Great American Ball Park in Cincinnati, Ohio. — AFP

PADRES 5, YANKEES 4

Eric Hosmer capped a four-run first inning by hitting a three-run homer, and San Diego held on for a victory at New York. The Padres took a four-run lead four batters in after New York third baseman DJ LeMahieu misplayed a grounder by leadoff man Greg Garcia for an error. Franmil Reyes singled, and Manny Machado hit a bloop RBI single. Hosmer then hit his ninth home run. Gary Sanchez homered for the Yankees, who lost for only the third time in their past 15 games.

WHITE SOX 4, ROYALS 3

Lucas Giolito pitched eight strong innings, and Charlie Tilson drove in the go-ahead run with a fourth-inning single to boost host Chicago over Kansas City in the teams' regularly scheduled game. Bidding for his third successive complete game, Giolito came within one inning of that feat while allowing three runs on three hits and one walk with 10 strikeouts. Colome struck out two in a perfect ninth in the nightcap to earn his 10th save in as many opportunities. The White Sox had 12 hits, all singles. Leury Garcia went 3-for-4 with an RBI while James McCann also had three hits. Tilson and Jose Rondon both added two hits for Chicago.

TIGERS 3, ORIOLES 0

Niko Goodrum homered, and Matthew Boyd threw six-plus solid innings as Detroit won at Baltimore. The Tigers scored runs in the first and second innings, and that gave Boyd all the support that he needed. Detroit won for just the second time in the past 14 games. Boyd (5-4) scattered six hits and fanned eight while walking just one and throwing 66 strikes on 96 pitches. Detroit eventually used four relief pitchers over the final three innings, and Shane Greene closed it in the ninth for his 17th save. — Reuters

Wilder announces Ortiz rematch

LOS ANGELES: World Boxing Council heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder announced a rematch with Cuba's Luis Ortiz on Tuesday, dealing a fresh blow to hopes of a unification bout with rival Anthony Joshua.

In an announcement on Twitter, Wilder said he had signed a deal to face Ortiz once more following a bruising first battle in March 2018. Wilder won his first encounter with the Cuban nicknamed "King Kong" with a 10th round stoppage, but not before the 40-year-old had badly shaken the undefeated champion.

"To all my fans, I want to announce that Luis Ortiz and I have signed for a rematch, with the date and site to be announced shortly," Wilder wrote on Twitter. "All my controversial fights must get dealt with ASAP," he added.

While no date or venue was announced, US media reports said the two men would face off in Las Vegas on September 28. Wilder, 33, defended his title for the ninth time on May 18 after demolishing Dominic Breazeale with a first round knockout.

The WBC champion is unbeaten in 41 fights, including 40 inside the difference, with the lone blemish on an otherwise perfect record a draw with Britain's Tyson Fury last December. Wilder's decision to fight Ortiz makes it unlikely he will meet rival Joshua in a much-anticipated unification fight this year.



Deontay Wilder

Wilder has not fought more than two fights in a calendar year since 2015, and would realistically face a short two-month turnaround to squeeze in a bout with Joshua before the end of the year after his bout against Ortiz.

Speaking after his recent win against Breazeale,

mental focus and accept the challenge," Leonard said. "We're in the finals and we're not done yet." Golden State's five consecutive NBA Finals appearances is the second-best run in history trailing only Boston's epic run from 1957-66.

"It hasn't been done for a reason. It's really difficult," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "I can't say enough about the competitive drive of these players and the culture they have built. This group has a fiber about them. When guys go down, they find a way to play harder and win. The experience of having won titles helps you come through."

The Warriors have proven that during the NBA playoffs since forward Kevin Durant went down with a right calf injury three weeks ago. Center DeMarcus Cousins is also sidelined with a torn right quadriceps muscle suffered in the first round of the playoffs.

WARRIORS OK WITHOUT KD

Golden State has risen to the challenge of losing two stars with a return to the style that made them a force before Durant arrived in 2016 — scrappy defensive work and pinpoint 3-point shooting courtesy of Curry and Klay Thompson plus expanded roles for Draymond Green and Andre Iguodala as well as other reserves.

"We set that culture from the beginning and it manifested itself during the season," Curry said. "You've got to have guys step up. Everybody with a jersey on is going to help out." Green says Golden State's well prepared reserve role players are a major reason the Warriors went 5-0 in the playoffs without Durant.

"We have a bunch of guys committed to winning," he said. "No matter what bump in the road we hit, we

Wilder said he was ready to face Joshua but called for patience from fans. "This fight will happen," Wilder said. "The big fight will happen, I promise you that. I just want you guys to have patience and give us a little time to make this thing happen so we all benefit from it, not only just you fans." — AFP

know what the goal is. When you have that kind of commitment, great things happen." Kerr calls Green "a wrecking ball out there, destroying everything in his path" and has praised the efforts of 23-year-old backup center Kevon Looney as a "foundational piece" and "cornerstone" for the Warriors in the playoffs since Durant absent.

Looney has averaged 7.5 points and 4.9 rebounds and provided solid minutes inside, where he will test Spanish stars Marc Gasol and Serge Ibaka for Toronto in the finals. "We're going to rely on him in the finals," Kerr said. "He's a hell of a player."

KAWHI IGNITES RAPTORS

The Raptors picked up Leonard after he sat out most of last season with a sore right quad and watched the 2014 NBA Finals Most Valuable Player revive the excitement for himself and the passionate Raptors fans who pack their arena and thousands who stand outside watching on giant televisions in "Jurassic Park."

"He's just so good," Raptors coach Nick Nurse said. "I'm seeing a level of competitive greatness out of him. It's just competitive desire... it's just his willing to win." Iguodala figures to lead a team-based defensive effort against Leonard.

"He can create a shot out of nothing," Gasol warned. "He's a mismatch all around." The Raptors will counter against Curry with Kyle Lowry and two-time NBA Defensive Player of the Year Leonard unless Durant returns to change the dynamics for Golden State.

No matter how the series concludes, it could be the end of an era for both clubs with Durant and Leonard likely to be the top prizes on the free agent market by the end of June. — AFP

Warriors seek more NBA history as Raptors hunt first title

TORONTO: While the Golden State Warriors try to cement their legacy as the NBA's greatest dynasty in half a century, the upstart Toronto Raptors made history just reaching the NBA Finals. Today's opener in the best-of-seven championship showdown will be the first NBA Finals game played outside the United States, the Canadian contest coming in the same city where the first league game was played in 1946.

Three-point sharpshooter Stephen Curry attempts to lead the injury-hit Warriors to their third consecutive NBA title, a feat last achieved by the Los Angeles Lakers in 2002, and Golden State could become the first team to win four crowns in five seasons since the 1969 Boston Celtics.

"Four more wins defines your season and brings you a championship," Curry said. "We have to stay locked in." Blocking their path is a Raptors team powered by Kawhi Leonard, obtained in a trade with San Antonio last July. He has sparked a squad that was ousted by Cleveland in the playoffs each of the past three years, creating a breakthrough campaign.

"They are the champions. We've got to go in with

Lee eyes top spot, end to Aussie drought at US Women's Open

MIAMI: Minjee Lee will bid to end Australia's 13-year wait for a major at the US Women's Open today as she targets a maiden victory that could vault her to the top of the world rankings. The 23-year-old from Perth heads into this week's second major of 2019 fresh from her fifth LPGA Tour victory, a dazzling four-shot win at the Los Angeles Open last month.

That triumph saw Lee move up to second in the world rankings, and within striking distance of South Korea's world number one Ko Jin-young. A victory at the Country Club of Charleston in South Carolina this week would see Lee supplant Ko at the top of the rankings.

It would also earn Lee the largest winner's cheque in the history of women's golf after the United States Golf Association confirmed this week that the champion will pocket a prize of \$1 million. Lee heads into the tournament after a remarkably consistent start to the season which has yielded five top 10 finishes including her win in Los Angeles in April.

She will tee off today in arguably the star group of the opening rounds, alongside world number one Ko and South Korea's seven-time major winner Park In-bee. Park, a two-time winner of the US Women's Open who is chasing a first major since 2015, has spent this year attempting to iron out problems with her putting game.

"I haven't been really putting well this year at all," she said. "I have been striking the ball really, really good this year, probably better than any other years on Tour. Just the putter wasn't really there. That's really been the disappointing part of my game this year. Other than that, it has been really, really good."

The strength of the women's game is reflected in the fact that no single player has been able to establish dominance this year. The first 12 tournaments of the year have produced 11 different winners, with only world number one Ko winning more than title in 2019.

The last eight women's majors meanwhile have had eight different winners, while the US Women's Open has not had a back-to-back champion since Australia's Karrie Webb won in 2000 and 2001.

That fact would suggest the odds are stacked against Thailand's defending champion Ariya Jutanugarn. The 23-year-old from Bangkok won her second career major at the US Women's Open 12 months ago, and is likely to be at home in temperatures this week which are expected to hover above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) for most of the tournament. — AFP

Sports

India's batting great Gavaskar tips England for World Cup glory

Second-ranked India's chances depend to a large extent on captain Kohli

LONDON: Batting great Sunil Gavaskar says Eoin Morgan's England will be the team to beat at the World Cup, with home advantage giving them a vital edge over his native India. Top-ranked England recently outplayed Pakistan 4-0 in a one-day series to underline their supremacy in the 50-over format.

The home side, who have never won one-day cricket's biggest prize despite making three finals, in 1979, 1987 and 1992, open their campaign against South Africa today at the Oval in London. "England, not India, are the favourites for this World Cup," Gavaskar told AFP.

"They have been playing outstanding cricket over the last few years and in familiar home conditions will be hard to beat," said the former India captain. Home advantage has been a big factor in recent editions of the showpiece event, with hosts India winning the 2011 trophy and Australia emerging victorious in Melbourne in 2015.

Since the start of 2018 England, who switched to a more aggressive brand of cricket after their humiliating first-round exit four years ago, have come out on top in ODI series against Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and India.

Second-ranked India's chances depend to a large extent on captain Virat Kohli. Kohli, the number one batsman in Test and ODIs, last year defied critics who questioned his poor performance on the 2014 tour of England by hitting 593 runs in the 2018 Test series even though India lost 4-1.

KOHLI CRITICISM

But he has often received criticism over his captaincy, with pundits saying the 30-year-old leader often needs the experience of Mahendra Singh Dhoni behind the stumps.

Kohli recently scored 464 runs in the Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament but his side Royal Challengers Bangalore ended bottom of the eight-team table. "On an individual level he certainly can be as successful (in England) as he was last year for sure," said Gavaskar, who scored more than 10,000 Test runs.

"But a captain is only as good as his team and Dhoni's presence takes a big load off Kohli, especially after the first power play," said Gavaskar, who was part of India's World Cup-winning team in 1983 under Kapil Dev.

Gavaskar, 69, also weighed in on the Indian team's much-debated number four slot, saying Lokesh Rahul should fill the position. He was unwilling to be drawn into the debate of whether India should boycott their round-robin match against Pakistan amid political tensions between the two hostile nations.

Doubts were cast over the much-anticipated match in Manchester on June 16 after calls from many former India players and officials to forfeit their match to their arch-rivals. Relations between the two nuclear-armed South Asian countries nose-dived after a suicide bombing in Indian-administered Kashmir in February killed 40 Indian security personnel and was later claimed by the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad.

India has long accused Islamabad of harbouring mil-



LONDON: England's Joe Root (L) and England's captain Eoin Morgan (R) take part in a nets practice session on the eve of their opening match of the ICC Cricket World Cup against South Africa, at The Oval in London yesterday. — AFP

itants who launch attacks on its soil but Pakistan has denied any role in the Pulwama attack, and Prime Minister Imran Khan offered cooperation in investiga-

tions if credible evidence were provided by India. "In a World Cup there is no option but to play all teams," said a guarded Gavaskar. — AFP

England launch World Cup bid against S Africa

LONDON: England will put four years of planning to the test when they face South Africa in the opening match of the 2019 World Cup at the Oval today. So embarrassing was England's first-round exit at the 2015 edition in Australia and New Zealand it prompted a major rethink of their attitude to the white-ball game.

The transformation has been remarkable, with Eoin Morgan's men climbing to the top of the one-day international rankings and twice setting a new record for the highest one-day international total, which now stands at 481 for six.

Batting has been the basis of England's ODI rejuvenation, with Jason Roy, Jonny Bairstow, Joe Root, Morgan and the dynamic Jos Buttler among a top seven who can all change the course of an innings in the blink of an eye. "It's an exciting feeling being in this team as you have world-class players all around you and the opposition might get 370, but there's a belief in the dressing room we can chase it down," said England leg-spinner Adil Rashid.

"There is no hesitation or someone going 'I don't know about this'. We all have that belief and confidence we can do it," added Rashid, whose ability to take wickets at key stages has also been an important part of England's white-ball revival.

"We will hopefully stick to what we've been doing the past four years and hopefully the World Cup will work out well for us."

SOUTH AFRICA PAIN

South Africa have suffered plenty of World Cup heartache but having been losing semi-finalists four



LONDON: South Africa's Lungi Ngidi (C) and teammates take part in a training session on the eve of their opening match of the ICC Cricket World Cup against England, at The Oval in London yesterday. — AFP

years there is a sense the Proteas are going under the radar this time around. South Africa coach Oltis Gibson is convinced the pressure is all on the tournament hosts and cited comments by England quicks Stuart Broad and James Anderson—both of whom no longer play ODI cricket—as an example.

"I heard somewhere that my two very good friends Broad and Anderson had said that England will have to do something really bad not to win this World Cup," recalled Gibson, who knows the pair well from his time as England bowling coach.

"As far as they are concerned England have won it already." Former West Indies fast bowler Gibson added: "To play the hosts, the number one team, is the

best way to start, because it gives us a real sense of where we are and what we need to do going forward.

"But you don't have to be number one to win the tournament and sometimes you can win the tournament and you don't even go to number one." South Africa, captained by Faf du Plessis, are without retired star batsman AB de Villiers but their top order includes the talented Quinton de Kock. They will be without Dale Steyn today as the outstanding fast bowler nurses a shoulder injury but South Africa have become used to his absence in recent times. Of arguably greater importance for Thursday's match is that Kagiso Rabada, arguably the leading paceman in world cricket today, has been passed fit following a back injury. — AFP

Morgan says W Cup win for hosts could have huge impact on English cricket

LONDON: England captain Eoin Morgan says winning a home World Cup could do wonders for cricket in the sport's birthplace as he prepares to lead his team in their tournament opener against South Africa.

England are top of the one-day international rankings and favourites to lift a trophy they have never yet won in its 44-year-history—a far cry from their woeful first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. Television coverage of cricket in Britain has been largely hidden behind a payroll since England won the 2005 Ashes but Morgan believes a World Cup win would break through to a new audience.

"It would mean a huge amount. The World Cup alone raises the profile of the game and is a platform for every young kid in this country to have a hero or have the inspiration to pick up a ball or a bat," Morgan told reporters at the Oval yesterday. "To go on and win it, I couldn't imagine what that would do," the former Ireland batsman added.

'BRILLIANT' SOUTHGATE

The England cricket squad and backroom staff have spent time with England football manager Gareth Southgate, whose side revitalised interest and affection in the national team on their way to the semi-finals of last year's soccer World Cup in Russia.

"We did do a session with Gareth, it was brilliant," recalled Morgan. "He got up and talked about his journey with the team in and around the World Cup, but in the build-up, as well, and how they built bigger expectations and came together more as a group."

"I think everybody within the room listening who has been involved with our team over the last four years recognised that—we started exactly where they did. Recognised what had happened in the past, drawn a line under it, tried to do things differently and move forward and enjoyed the challenge of that." But the expectations surrounding England's men's football and cricket teams are wide apart, with Morgan saying his side had received a very different reaction when they were beaten by Pakistan in the 2017 semi-finals of the one-day Champions Trophy in Cardiff.

"It's amazing. He (Southgate) did brilliantly. Got to the semi-final and everybody says it's great. We got knocked out of the Champions Trophy semi-final, and we're crap," added Morgan to laughter from the assembled media. — AFP



Eoin Morgan

Cricket World Cup: A potted history

LONDON: The Cricket World Cup starts in England today with 10 teams vying to be crowned champions in the 12th edition of the tournament. AFP Sports takes a look back at the history of one-day showpiece.

1975: Windies wonders

A West Indies side including several players who had experience of limited-overs competitions in county cricket swept all before them in England before beating Australia in the final at a sun-drenched Lord's. Clive Lloyd, the West Indies captain, led from the front with a brilliant 102 and despite a rearguard action from Australia, the Caribbean side completed a 17-run victory.

1979: West Indies dominance

West Indies were arguably even more formidable than four years previously, with the Caribbean side fielding a fast-bowling attack of Andy Roberts, Michael Holding, Joel Garner and Colin Croft. Viv Richards made a commanding 138 in the final against hosts England, although it was Collis King who initially upped the tempo with a blistering 86. England, set 287 for victory, lost by 92 runs.

1983: India shock the world

Few were betting against Lloyd's men making it three in a row ahead of the 1983 World Cup and even fewer would have backed India to be the side to dethrone them. India had beaten the West Indies in a group game but their chance of victory in a Lord's final seemed to have disappeared when they were dismissed for just 183. But captain Kapil Dev made the decisive contribution when he held a brilliant catch to dismiss Richards and send the West Indies spiralling to a 43-run defeat.

1987: Australia star in Asia

The first World Cup in the subcontinent looked like it could produce an India-Pakistan final but instead this

edition saw Australia vanquishing arch-rivals England by seven runs in the final at Kolkata's Eden Gardens. England appeared to be on course to reach a target of 254 until captain Mike Gatting tried to reverse sweep Australia captain Allan Border, an occasional spinner, only to give wicket-keeper Greg Dyer a simple catch.

1992: Pakistan roar

A World Cup in Australia and New Zealand marked the first appearance in the competition of South Africa after decades of apartheid-enforced isolation. Pakistan, who had been on the brink of elimination, rode their luck before finding their form late on under the inspirational captaincy of Imran Khan, who had urged his players to "fight like cornered tigers". All-rounder Imran topscored for Pakistan in the final with 72 in a total of 249 for six against England, who were dismissed for 227.

1996: Sri Lanka come of age

Sri Lanka changed the face of the of the game even before they won this World Cup as openers Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana capitalised on fielding restrictions with their aggressive strokeplay. But the tournament was also notable for boycotts and riots, Sri Lanka winning two matches without bowling a ball when both Australia and West Indies refused to play on the island because of security concerns. In the final, Sri Lanka held Australia to a total of 241 and Aravinda de Silva hit a superb century as his side won by seven wickets.

1999: Australia hold their nerve

Australia came through several tense matches to win a second World Cup as hosts England exited early. Australia met South Africa in a semi-final that ended in a remarkable tie when South Africa's Allan Donald was run out with two balls remaining. The result meant Australia went through to the final because of their better net run-rate in the Super Six. The final was a let-down as a contest, with Australia thrashing Pakistan by eight wickets at Lord's as leg-spin great Shane Warne took four wickets.

2003: Australia triumph despite Warne drama

Australia suffered a setback on the eve of the tour-

namment when it was announced that Warne had failed a drugs test but they were so strong that his absence made little difference. Main hosts South Africa suffered yet more heartache when they bowled out in bizarre fashion during a rain-hit match against Sri Lanka. They thought they had won but in fact they needed one more run by the time the match was stopped. The final at Johannesburg's Wanderers ground was dominated by Ponting's majestic unbeaten 140 as Australia beat India by 125 runs.

2007: Woolmer death overshadows World Cup

The tournament was overshadowed by the death of Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer. India made an early exit during a tournament at which Australia were rarely challenged. Nothing summed up their dominance quite like Adam Gilchrist's dashing hundred during the final against Sri Lanka in Barbados.

2011: Tendulkar triumphs at last

As the tournament returned to the subcontinent, the question on the minds of many India fans was: Could Sachin Tendulkar win the World Cup at the sixth time of asking? India beat Australia in the quarter-finals and Pakistan in the semi-finals. The final was played at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. Tendulkar's home ground. Sri Lanka's Mahela Jayawardene scored a majestic hundred in a total of 274 and there were gasps when Tendulkar, the World Cup's all-time leading run-scorer, was out for just 18. But Gautam Gambhir's composed 97 and a captain's innings of 91 not out from MS Dhoni, that ended with a straight six, saw India to a six-wicket win.

2015: Australia back on top

A tournament staged in Australia and New Zealand saw both co-hosts make it into the final. Australia had made their intentions clear from the start with a 111-run thrashing of England. New Zealand's bold play won them many admirers but a total of 183 in the final never looked like winning a final and their near-neighbours catered to victory by seven wickets. — AFP

Sports

Van Dijk lays the foundations for Liverpool's return to the top

Liverpool are still capable of blowing opponents away

LONDON: Liverpool's long wait for a major trophy could come to an end on Saturday with a sixth European Cup, but the foundations for a return to the pinnacle of Europe were laid last January in trusting Jurgen Klopp's judgement to make Virgil van Dijk the world's most expensive defender.

The towering Dutchman arrived for £75 million (\$95 million), six months after Liverpool publicly stated they had "ended any interest in the player" as Southampton threatened to report the Reds for an illegal approach.

Klopp, though, would not settle for second best and insisted the club make the deal happen. A season-and-a-half later the talismanic centre-back has led Liverpool to two Champions League finals and become the first defender in 14 years to be crowned the PFA Player of the Year as the Reds narrowly missed out on a first Premier League title since 1990 despite posting a club record 97 points.

"Nobody thinks about it (the price) anymore. That's good because in this market at the moment he is worth it, or is too cheap," said Klopp. During the German's first two years at Anfield, Liverpool were capable of the spectacular, but always undermined by defensive disorganisation.

QUALITY COMES AT A PRICE

Van Dijk has restored order thanks to his power, pace and poise, but also with his leadership that has helped foster rapid improvement in the emerging talents of Andy Robertson, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Joe Gomez.

"That's what you hope for when a new player is

coming in—that he makes the whole team better," added Klopp. "Of course he's a very good player, he makes players around him better. He is so important to us. Not only as a player but as a person as well, he's a brilliant boy. I could not say a bad word about him."

Liverpool are still capable of blowing opponents away, as a 4-0 win over Barcelona to reach the Champions League final demonstrated. But there is also now a controlled approach, exemplified by the 21 clean sheets Klopp's men kept in the Premier League to run champions Manchester City so close.

"Liverpool have grown hugely as a team recently and a lot of that is thanks to Van Dijk," legendary Italian centre-back Franco Baresi recently told AFP. Tottenham now stand in the way of Liverpool rounding off the vast improvement made since Van Dijk's arrival with their first trophy in seven years. And it was a meeting with Spurs in late March that best encapsulated his abilities as the all-round defender. With Liverpool needing to win to remain on City's coattails, the score was level at 1-1 with five minutes to go at Anfield as Moussa Sissoko led a two-on-one counter-attack.

Most mortal defenders would be attracted to the ball, but Van Dijk stood his ground, marking Son Heung-min to prevent an easy pass to the on-form South Korean and forcing Sissoko, who has not scored this season, to take a shot with his weaker left foot.

The Frenchman's strike flew well over and Liverpool made full use of their lifeline moments later when Toby Alderweireld's own goal sent Anfield wild. "That shows why Liverpool paid more than £70m for Van Dijk," said Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino.



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp speaks during a press conference at the Melwood Training ground in Liverpool, northwest England. —AFP

"Quality costs a specific price. Cars are like that, a lot of things are like that and players as well. That's why we paid it," Klopp said. Should he lift the Champions

League on Saturday, Liverpool's Rolls Royce centre-back will forever be remembered for what he has achieved rather than what he cost. —AFP

Mane has eyes on Champions League not Real Madrid links

LIVERPOOL: Sadio Mane admits he is flattered by suggested interest from Real Madrid but insists he is happy at Liverpool and fully focused on trying to help them win the Champions League.

Reports from Spain in recent weeks have suggested that Real want to bring the Senegal forward and Manchester United's French midfielder Paul Pogba to the Bernabeu. Mane will be in action across the city on Saturday, at Atletico Madrid's Wanda Metropolitano home, which will host the Champions League final between Liverpool and Tottenham.

The 27-year-old has scored 17 goals in 24 matches for his club since the turn of the year, and is expected to lead his country's attack in Egypt at the Africa Cup of Nations, which starts in late June.

As he prepared for Saturday's European final, Mane was asked about interest from Real Madrid, and did not dismiss it altogether. He did, though, insist that Liverpool's progress to the Champions League final—which has seen them knock out Napoli, Bayern Munich, Porto and Barcelona—is a sign of their standing in the European game.

"This is part of football, so we have to deal with it," said Mane. "But for me, the more important thing is that I am with Liverpool and I am very happy here, and I am preparing for one of the club's biggest games."

"Let's focus on this first, and on winning it. 'It's always a pleasure for this kind of team to want you, but Liverpool, don't forget, we beat big teams.' Mane scored for Liverpool in last season's Champions League final, which ended in the disappointment of a 3-1 defeat by Real Madrid in Kiev.

This time, they go to the final attempting to bounce back from the disappointment of a first English league title since 1990, having finished one point adrift of Manchester City despite dropping only 17 points all season.

Liverpool's total of 97 points is the highest ever



Sadio Mane

accrued by an English top-flight team without winning the league, but Mane says that near-miss has not dampened their spirits.

"We're so positive in our way. We have our targets, of course. We wanted to win the league, and the Champions League. 'We didn't win the league but we still have one trophy to go so we are going to try to give everything to win it.'"

Mane remembers well the mood of dejection among the players as they waited at the airport in Kiev to fly home after last season's Champions League final defeat, and suggested that drove them on to reach this year's final.

"Yeah, of course," he said. "We were a little bit disappointed last year because we wanted to win it. But it wasn't the case. That's part of football. But at the same time, it's important to be positive. 'Many people,

even you (the media), didn't expect us to play in this final, and we did it."

"So now I think we have learned a lot from this, and I hope we're going to use our experience this season to get to where we want to be." Liverpool face a Tottenham side who finished 26 points behind them in the Premier League, but Mane is wary of opponents who knocked domestic champions Manchester City out of Europe at the quarter-final stage in April.

He is looking for Liverpool to use their previous experience of playing in the Champions League final to give them an advantage. "Every time it makes it easier," he said. "But we expect a very difficult game because Tottenham are a very good team."

"We are also very good, so let's see an exciting game, and let's see what's going to happen. I'm sure we will give everything to get what we want." —AFP

Kenya embarks on French boot camp ahead of Africa Cup

NAIROBI: Kenya's national footballers depart Friday for a boot camp in France, where coach Sebastien Migne plans for a distraction-free training blitz before their first Africa Cup of Nations appearance in 15 years.

Migne, a Frenchman, has designed the three-week programme to prepare the Kenyans-ranked 108th in the FIFA world rankings—for their grueling group phase with Algeria, Senegal and Tanzania.

Migne said the squad he handpicked for the tournament, starting June 21 in Egypt, would benefit from the change in scenery and intensity of the regimen in Marcoussis, France's national rugby training facility just outside Paris.

His selection early May of the 30-man preliminary squad for the Cup—an Africa-wide tournament held every two years—attracted considerable attention from Kenyan football pundits and fans, not all of it positive.

The head coach said it was "difficult to stay in the country" and focus with these dis-

tractions weighing on his players. "There were a lot of comments at that time, and we need some peace and quiet to prepare for this competition," Migne told AFP after a training session in Nairobi ahead of their departure for France.

"And the weather was very important to me. During this preparation, we will have many sessions, sometimes three times a day and you can't do that in a hot country. The 46-year-old Migne added he was "really proud" to bring the team to his home turf for preparation.

Football is hugely popular in Kenya but the Harambee Stars, the national team, have often been found wanting. They enter the Cup as underdogs, having only qualified six times since its inception in 1957. They have only ever won one game and never reached the knock-out stages.

Their passage to Egypt for this edition was capped with a surprise victory on home soil over Ghana, one of the continent's top performers. But Migne has urged his men not to dwell on the past, and focus instead on emerging from the group phase for the first time ever.

Last year is the past. What is important now is to confirm (our performance)... we're not going to go to Egypt as tourists," he said. He is banking in part on star Victor Wanyama, the Tottenham midfielder and Kenyan captain, who could play in the Champions League final against Liverpool just days before training for the Cup is to begin. —AFP

Milan great Maldini lined up for new role after Leonardo, Gattuso exit

MILAN: AC Milan legend Paolo Maldini could be set for a new role in the club after chief executive Ivan Gazidis said yesterday he wanted to convince the former Italy defender to become technical director.

Brazilian Leonardo stepped down as sporting director on Tuesday, along with head coach Gennaro Gattuso, amid reports of financial cutbacks at the seven-time European champions.

The former European heavyweights finished one point behind Inter Milan in Serie A in the battle for the fourth and final qualifying spot.

Gazidis said in an interview with Gazzetta Dello Sport, that with the help of Maldini, they could "bring Milan back to the top".

Maldini retired in 2009 after a glittering 24-year career during which he won seven Serie A titles and five Champions League crowns. The defender was also Milan's record appearance holder with 902 matches.

The 50-year-old returned to the club last August as their sporting strategy and development director. "I want Maldini as the technical director. I admire him very much," former Arsenal chief executive Gazidis told Gazzetta.

"He represents the values and the culture of the club. 'I would really like Paolo to stay with us and help me in this great challenge with an increasingly central and important role. He is ideal for managing the technical area."

"Paolo asked for time to reflect and understand if he has the right energy to start over with this difficult and arduous project, which requires his utmost commitment and which he must totally buy into. He must feel 100 percent." Maldini would also have a role in the choice of a replacement for Gattuso, another emblematic former player who took over in November 2017 and was under contract for another two years. —AFP

Six appeal: Euro glory would ease Premier pain for Liverpool

LONDON: Fuelled by the pain of their failed Premier League title bid, Liverpool's stars admit they are desperate to win the club's sixth European Cup when they face Tottenham in Saturday's Champions League final.

Jurgen Klopp's side will be motivated by a burning sense of injustice in the all-Premier League clash at the Wanda Metropolitano.

A win against Tottenham in Madrid would give Liverpool their first Champions League crown since Rafael Benitez's underdogs stunned AC Milan in 2005 with one of the all-time great comebacks.

From their first European Cup coronation against Borussia Monchengladbach in 1977 to hard-fought wins over Bruges, Real Madrid and Roma in 1978, 1981 and 1984, all of Liverpool's continental final victories have a special place in the hearts of their fans.

But the 'Miracle of Istanbul' will forever be etched in Liverpool history as arguably the club's most memorable moment in the competition.

Nothing will surpass that incredible night at the Ataturk Stadium when Steven Gerrard inspired Liverpool's recovery from three goals down at half-time.

Yet, just three weeks after the conclusion of their painful near-miss in the Premier League title race, beating Tottenham in the club's ninth European Cup final would be the most euphoric consolation prize for Liverpool fans across the world. When Klopp's team held a seven-point lead at the top of the table in mid-January, the Kop faithful dreamt that Liverpool's 29-year wait to win the English title was about to reach a glorious end.

That three-decade barren period has been a source of constant frustration at Anfield.

But Liverpool's hearts were broken again as Manchester City reeled off a remarkable 14-game winning run that brought them a second successive title and left Klopp still looking for the first trophy of his four-year reign.

GREAT PROMISE

It was even more galling than their narrow failure in 2014 when Gerrard's untimely slip against Chelsea gifted the title to City in the final weeks of the season.

This time, Liverpool were beaten just once in the league all season, amassed 97 points—the third highest total in the Premier League era—and sprinted to the finish line with nine consecutive victories.

Even that wasn't enough to finish above an historically great City side, leaving the Champions League final as Liverpool's last hope to turn a season of great promise into tangible reward.

It would be cruel for such a dynamic side to finish empty-handed, especially after they authored an escape act for the ages with a 4-0 semi-final win over Barcelona that overturned a 3-0 first leg deficit.

After watching helplessly as City took the title on the last day of the season, Reds midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum says Liverpool are taking heart from having their destiny in their own hands in Madrid. —AFP

25 Wilder announces Ortiz rematch



26 Morgan says World Cup win for hosts could have huge impact on English cricket



27 Mane has eyes on Champions League not Real Madrid links



PARIS: Spain's Garbine Muguruza returns the ball to Sweden's Johanna Larsson during their women's singles second round match on day four of The Roland Garros 2019 French Open tennis tournament in Paris yesterday. —AFP

Nadal powers on, Tsitsipas battles through

Svitolina to face 2016 champion Muguruza in the women's third round

PARIS: Rafael Nadal continued the strong start to his bid for a record-extending 12th French Open title yesterday with a comfortable victory over German qualifier Yannick Maden, while Stefanos Tsitsipas had to dig deep to reach round three.

The 32-year-old Nadal was in near total control against world number 114 Maden bar some nervy moments in the third set, winning 6-1, 6-2, 6-4. The 17-time Grand Slam champion will play Belgian 27th seed David Goffin in the last 32.

"He (Maden) is a good player. He had already won four matches so was full of confidence," said Nadal, whose Roland Garros win-loss record now reads an incredible 88-2. "For me it was an important victory."

The Spaniard wasted little time in wrapping up the first two sets on Court Suzanne Lenglen. Maden may have briefly allowed himself to dream of an out-

rageous upset when he twice broke to level at 3-3 and then 4-4 in the third set, but Nadal put him back in his place with two quick games to seal victory.

Nadal appears to be hitting form at just the right time, after following three consecutive semi-final defeats on clay with the Italian Open title before arriving in Paris. He finished the match with 43 winners against just 23 unforced errors.

Greek star Tsitsipas did not have things all his own way against Bolivia's Hugo Dellien on Court Simonne Mathieu, but managed to grind out a 4-6, 6-0, 6-3, 7-5 victory. The sixth seed, who beat Roger Federer en route to the Australian Open semi-finals earlier this year, will take on either Spaniard Roberto Carballes Baena or Serbia's Filip Krajinovic in his maiden appearance in the third round.

The 20-year-old started strongly with an early break, but appeared unsettled following a medical

timeout for Dellien after the world number 86 appeared to twist his ankle. Dellien quickly sealed the opening set, but Tsitsipas raced through the next two sets and seemingly towards victory.

Despite letting a 4-2 lead in the fourth set slip, the 25-year-old Dellien just would not go away, saving three match points from 0-40 down in the 10th game to level at 5-5. But Tsitsipas did secure the win in his opponent's next service game, curling a forehand up the line on his fourth match point.

Later yesterday, 20-time Grand Slam title winner Federer continues his Roland Garros return after a four-year absence against German lucky loser Oscar Otte.

SVITOLINA TO FACE MUGURUZA

Ukrainian Elina Svitolina will face 2016 champion Garbine Muguruza in the women's third round after

the ninth seed's compatriot Kateryna Kozlova pulled out of the tournament before their match with a viral infection.

Spain's Muguruza, seeded 19th this year, eased to a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Swede Johanna Larsson to advance. Svitolina, a two-time French Open quarter-finalist, had beaten seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams in her opening tie.

Last year's runner-up Sloane Stephens also eased through with a 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) win over Sara Sorribes Tormo on Court Philippe Chatrier. The former US Open champion, who lost to Simona Halep in the 2018 French Open final, will play Slovenia's Polona Herczeg next after she edged out American Jennifer Brady 6-3, 6-7 (8/10), 6-4.

Seventh seed Stephens has now reached at least the third round at Roland Garros on each of her last seven visits to the French capital. —AFP

'Bye Niki': Austria says farewell to F1 icon Lauda

VIENNA: Thousands thronged Vienna's landmark cathedral yesterday to mourn Formula One legend and Austrian national hero Niki Lauda at a ceremony to be attended by a host of F1 stars including world champion Lewis Hamilton.

The casket arrived at St. Stephen's Cathedral in the city's historic centre with a police motorcade. Pallbearers, followed by Lauda's family, carried the coffin inside as bells rang out and thousands gathered in pouring rain outside.

The three-time F1 world champion, who came back from a horrific crash and founded several airlines, died on May 20 at the age of 70. "The whole world says today: Bye, Niki!" tabloid Oesterreich said on its front page.

Lauda's widow Birgit along with two of his sons put his helmet on top of the brown casket, which

stood next to flower wreaths and a portrait of the Austrian sporting his signature cap hiding scars from the 1976 crash.

Mourners then slowly filed past to bid a final farewell, taking photos and laying flowers, with the queue stretching well out of the cathedral into nearby streets.

A public mass will take place later. The funeral itself is private and details for it have been kept under wraps. Some 500 VIP guests are expected to attend the mass, including Hamilton and other Formula One heavyweights such as German driver Sebastian Vettel and Mercedes chief Toto Wolff.

There will also be hundreds more seats and 3,000 standing places open to the general public. It is the first time a sports star has received such an honour at the Gothic Roman Catholic cathedral, a distinction previously accorded only to prominent personalities like the archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Franz Koenig, and the former crown prince of the Austrian-Hungarian empire, Otto von Habsburg.

Among the thousands of mourners, some sporting Ferrari caps, was Roland, a 41-year-old technician from Vienna. Waiting in line outside the cathedral, he told AFP that Lauda was "an example for Austria".

"Even though he faced very difficult circumstances, he never complained," he said. Many had travelled from across the country and even further afield abroad to attend the funeral. Johann, a 70-year-old retiree from Burgenland state who used to work as a Lauda Air technician, described Lauda as a "strict but fair" employer.

Imre Varga, 63, came all the way from Hungary for the ceremony. She said she would watch Lauda on Austrian television, which people in the western part of her country had been "lucky" to receive in Communist times.

"During the Iron Curtain he was always a role model for us... He was unreachable, like a God, to us," she told AFP. Lauda won the drivers' world championship in 1975 and 1977 with Ferrari and in 1984 with McLaren.

Even after retiring as a race driver, Lauda remained a fixture on the circuit. Most recently, as non-executive chairman at Mercedes F1 since 2012, he was instrumental in bringing in Hamilton, sparking a run of success for the team. The Briton won the Monaco Grand Prix Sunday, which he described as the "hardest race I think I've ever had".

Former F1 drivers Gerhard Berger of Austria and

France's Alain Prost are expected to speak, as is Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and former California governor and Austrian-born actor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

During the mass, songs, reportedly Lauda's favourites, including "Amazing Grace", "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman and John Lennon's "Imagine" will be played. Lauda died at the University Hospital Zurich in Switzerland, nine months after he underwent a lung transplant.

He had struggled with health issues since miraculously surviving the 1976 crash that saw his car engulfed in flames at the Nuerburgring in Germany. Lauda also underwent kidney transplants.

One of the kidneys was donated by his last wife. Lauda married the former flight attendant in 2008 and they had twins, a boy and a girl, in 2009. Lauda also has three other sons from previous relationships.

Besides racing, Lauda's second passion was aviation. He founded and then sold several airlines with his latest, Laudamotion, going to Ryanair in 2018. It is not clear where Lauda will be laid to rest. The family reportedly has turned down an offer by the city of Vienna to receive a "grave of honour" in the city's vast Central Cemetery. —AFP