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New protests as Iran makes first arrests over downed jet



Pressure on Sainz as Peterhansel edges Attiyah in Dakar stage 9



Kuwait projects huge budget deficit for sixth year in a row

Govt to push for selective taxes • KD 16bn allocated for wages and subsidies



By B Izzak and Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Cabinet yesterday approved the 2020/2021 budget projecting yet another huge deficit for the sixth year in a row due to lower oil prices and production as Kuwait complies with the OPEC+ output cuts to support prices. The deficit is projected to reach KD 7.72 billion, even higher than the current 2019/2020 fiscal year, although the government kept spending unchanged at KD

The budget shortfall grows even higher to reach KD 9.2 billion after the compulsory 10 percent deduction from revenues - KD 1.48 billion this year - for the Future Generations Fund. Revenues are estimated at KD 14.8 billion, some 6.0 percent lower than projections in the current year. Over 87 percent of revenues come from oil, whose income is projected at KD 12.9 billion, around 7.0 percent below this year's estimates.

Revenue Kuwait earns from investments through the sovereign wealth fund is not included in the budget.

Finance Minister Mariam Al-Aqeel said the budget deficit is due to low oil prices and lower production due to Kuwait's commitment to the OPEC+ cuts. The minister said the government will likely draw from the state reserve fund to plug the deficit gap, because the National Assembly has refused to approve the public debt law.

Aqeel said the government plans to push for the approval of the debt law to allow the government to borrow to meet the budget deficit, because borrowing is cheaper than withdrawing from sovereign wealth funds. The state has a sovereign wealth fund worth more than \$600 billion, providing a cushion for state finances. The minister said the government also wants another reform bill passed by the Assembly to allow the government to impose selective taxes like other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

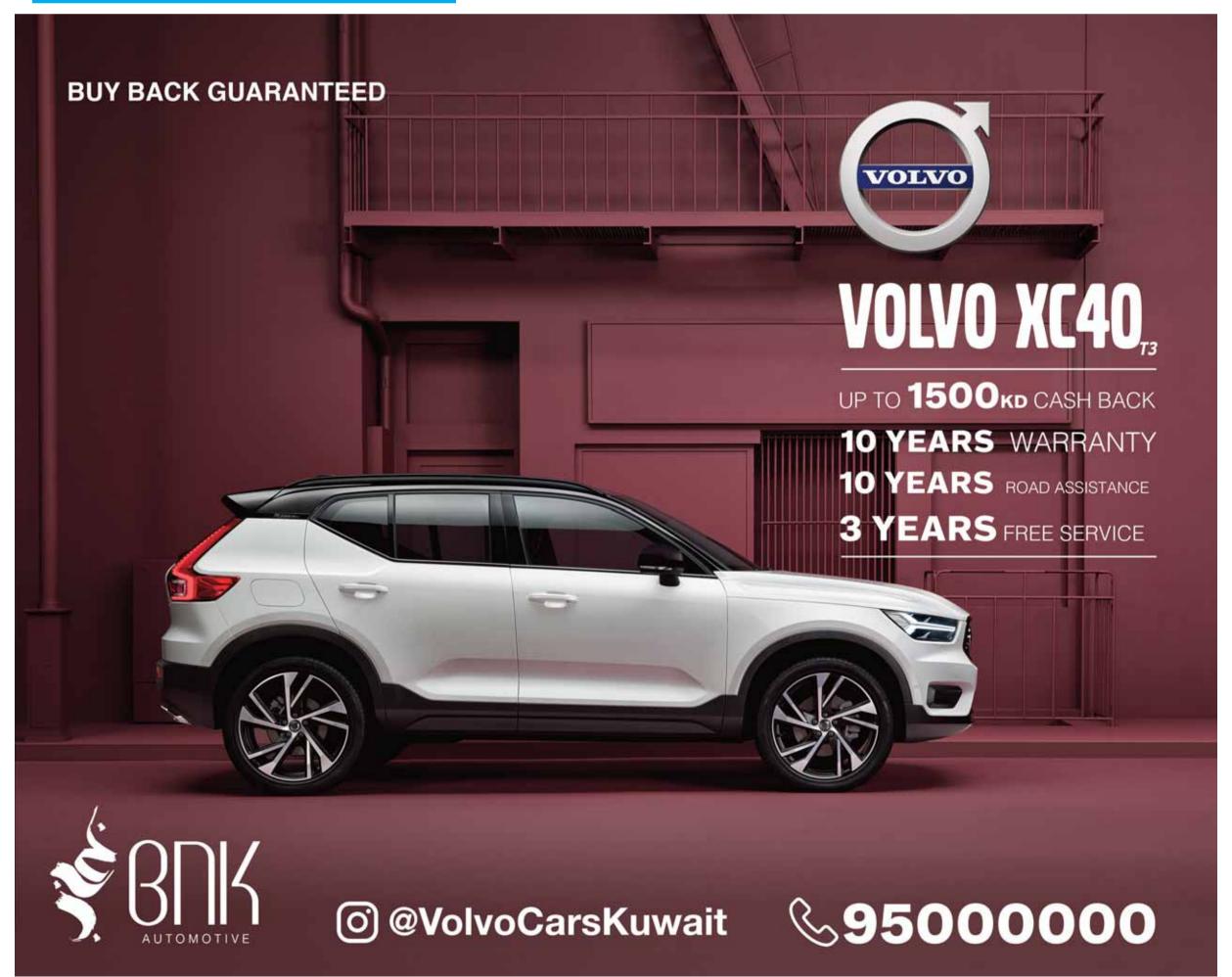
Kuwait has only increased the prices of fuel for all and electricity for expats in a bid to cut the budget deficit, but has been unable to impose other taxes due to strong opposition from MPs, who insist that they will not

allow the government to meet the budget deficit at the expense of citizens and want the government to stop squandering public funds first. The minister said over 71 percent or KD 16 billion is allocated for wages and subsidies, with the latter accounting for KD 4 billion half of it for fuel and power subsidies. The government also spends around KD 40 million for employing Kuwaitis in the private

Ageel said that oil revenues are estimated at KD 12.9 billion calculated on the basis of \$55 a barrel. Oil prices currently hover around \$65 a barrel. She said that the breakeven oil price required for Kuwait to post no deficit is \$81 a barrel and rises to \$86 a barrel if the deduction from revenues is counted. Although the government has kept a lid on spending, capital expenditures rose to 16 percent of total spending. The budget will become effective only after it is passed by the Assembly, most likely in June.

"We expect an increase in oil production after the OPEC decision ends, as it is

Continued on Page 24



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Kuwait Amir receives senior state officials, new governor





His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, and the newly appointed Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace vesterday. His Highness Sheikh Sabah also received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. Moreover, His Highness received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir then received Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court Justice Youssef Al-Mutawaa. His Highness Sheikh Sabah also received Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, who presented to His Highness the newly appointed Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah. Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah attended the

Separately, His Highness the Crown received yesterday at Bayan Palace Speaker Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Justice Youssef Al-Mutawaa, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Sabah, and Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah. Furthermore, His Highness Sheikh Nawaf received Anas Al-Saleh and the new Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Abdullah. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, and the newly appointed Governor of Farwaniya Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah



"But ah! thou soul at peace! Return unto the Lord, content in His good pleasure! Enter thou among My bondmen! Enter thou My Garden!"

> Chairman, Members of board and members of

KUWAIT JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION (KJA)

Announce the Sad Demise KJA general assembly member,

Dr. Mustafa Abbas Ma'rafi

Who Recently Passed Away

'May Allah Almighty bestow mercy on his soul'

Kuwait's security chief meets UK Ambassador

KUWAIT: Kuwait's (NSB) Chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah met yesterday with the United Kingdom's Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport and discussed with him issues of common interest. Both sides tackled means to bolster cooperation and bilateral ties in addition to issues of mutual interest. Regional and international developments were also discussed, NSB said in press statement. — KUNA



Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. — KUNA

Oil Minister holds talks with visiting Japanese official



KUWAIT: Minister of Oil, Minister of Electricity and Water Dr Khaled Al-Fadhel held talks yesterday with the visiting Japanese State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Makihara Hideki focusing on ties. The meeting also tackled issues of

common interests, including the MoU signed in 2015 on future projects and cooperation and its latest development. They also discussed cooperation in the oil and gas fields and recent and future partnerships. — KŪNA

Kuwait extends **KD 5 million** loan to Cameroon

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) sealed a loan agreement worth KD 5 million (around \$17 million) to Cameroon yesterday. KFAED's Deputy Director-General Nedhal Al-Olayan and Cameroonian Minister of Economic Alamine Ousmane Mey signed the agreement. The deal was signed in the Cameroonian capital of Yaounde, and the loan will be used in bankrolling a road project in this African country, the fund said in a press release. The project is intended to spur and

stimulate economic and social development in Cameroon by means of revamping the road network in central and southern provinces, it said.

The loan makes up roughly 19 percent of the project's total costs estimated at KD 26 million (\$88.4 million), according to the release. It is the eighth loan provided by the KFAED to Cameroon as it had offered seven loans valued at a total KD 33 million (\$78 million), it said, adding that the duration of the loan is 22 years with a grace of five years. Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) is the first institution in the Middle East that took an active role in the international development efforts. The Kuwait Fund extends Loans on concessionary term to finance development projects in the developing countries. The Fund also provides technical assistance to finance the costs of the feasibility studies of projects, as well as the training of nationals of the borrowing countries. — KUNA

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Panel mulls canceling jail penalty in the audiovisual and publication laws

Fatwa and Legislation Department approves postal sector's privatization

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Rapporteur of the parliamentary educational affairs committee MP Khalil Abul said the committee met to discuss a bill on protecting younger generations through the media and that it still awaits the government's response on that matter. Abul added that the committee also discussed proposed amendments on the penalties included in the audiovisual and publication laws. "The committee invited a number of media figures to attend its coming meeting to help reach a final decision on those amendments," Abul underlined. The proposed amendments include canceling the jail penalty for offenses mentioned in the audiovisual and publication laws, the lawmakers

In a different concern, Abul said the committee invited the minister of education and Civil Service Commission (CSC) representatives to discuss the student affairs staff's increments as well as some violations committed on appointing some senior education ministry officials. "It seems that some midterm exam papers were leaked," said Abul, referring to the recently concluded school midterm exams, noting that the committee decided calling for an urgent meeting to discuss the matter with education ministry officials. In the meantime, Education Minister Dr Saud Al-Harbi announced yesterday setting up an 'urgent' ad hoc committee to investigate suspected grade 12 exams' leak, and present its report within 30 days.

Bedoons' passports

High-ranking sources at the Ministry of Interior denied rumors about suspending article 17 passports, stressing they are still valid and can be used. Notably, some leaked reports mentioned suspending article 17 passports issued to bedoons until the law on the situation of illegal residents currently being reviewed by the parliament is passed. The sources added that article 17 passports are still being issued to bedoons travelling for study or treatment abroad, under the same previous rules that applicants hold valid security IDs issued by the central apparatus for illegal residents, explain why they need the passport and attach all needed documents with their applications.

Postal service

The Ministry of Services recently received a memo from the Fatwa and Legislation Department approving a project the ministry had prepared on privatizing the postal sector through establishing the Kuwait Post Company, said official sources, noting that the proposal had been referred to the department several months earlier pending referral to the parliament for voting.

"This project is part of the state development plan designed to improve governmental services," the sources added, pointing out that the fatwa department gave its legal opinion about the founding of the new company and transferring the postal services' assets and employees from the ministry to

work for it. The sources added that turning the postal sector into a government company run by the private sector will help develop postal services, avoid shortcomings and help get rid of bureaucracy.

Fighting corruption

Minister of State for Services and Minister of State for Assembly Affairs Mubarak Al-Harees announced working on taking the measures needed to fight corruption and limiting it by activating the role played by the auditing and inspection department. "This step comes in response to the instructions of HH the Amir and HH the Prime Minister and moves by the Cabinet to achieve reform and fight corruption in various government establishments," Harees said.

He noted that the Cabinet had issued resolution number 283 that urged all government bodies to establish auditing and inspection departments to follow up and supervise all work related to financial and administrative affairs and coordinate with relative audit bodies with the ultimate goal of protecting public funds.

"Although the resolution was made years ago, it was not activated," Harees noted, adding that he will be directly responsible for the department and that it will submit periodic reports to him on the progress of various development projects, achievements and remarks of the State Audit Bureau so that those responsible for any shortcomings could be held accountable.

Ministry ordered to pay KD 375,000 to subcontractor

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The comprehensive court yesterday ordered the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) to pay a subcontractor the sum of KD 375,000 for the work he had executed in one of its projects. Lawyer Fahd Mubarak Al-Basman said the court issued its verdict in case number 5039/2015 filed against MPW and a contracting company and finally mandated MPW to pay the amount to the subcontractor as his share of a KD 1.8 million contract signed with the main

Waste-to-fuel workshop

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) organized yesterday a joint workshop on 'Producing Fuel from Solid Plastic Waste.' The event took place under the auspices of KISR Director Dr Samira Ahmed Al-Sayyed Omar and in collaboration with representatives of British universities and the British Cultural Council in Kuwait. The workshop aims at exchanging expertise on how to use waste to produce clean fuel and use it as an effective sustainable substance, as well as reach decisive solutions to limit the accumulation of

Omar said KISR is keen on implementing HH the Amir's vision towards achieving sustainable development goals, and thus gives due care to managing waste, namely solid plastic waste. British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport pointed out that the British government always supports such activities to enhance bilateral relations in waste management. He noted that KISR and its environmental research center play a significant role in developing governmental initiatives on limiting plastic waste through cooperation with Birmingham and Aston universities to produce bio-oil from municipal solid and plastic waste.

KISR's acting environmental research center manager Dr Mohammed Al-Rashid said the workshop tackled one of the most important climate and environmental pollution research dealing with safe disposal of wastes. Program Manager Dr Sultan Al-Salem said the workshop focused on the significance of recycling solid waste and development in related research projects, taking into consideration that daily per capita municipal solid waste production is 1.55 kg.

KUNA twitter hacking referred to prosecution

KUWAIT: State-run Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) has referred the case of its Twitter account being hacked to the public prosecution, the agency's Director General and Chairman Sheikh Mubarak Duaij Al-Sabah said yesterday. Prosecutors will thoroughly investigate the act that aimed to tarnish KUNA's image and undermine its credibility, he said in a press release, emphasizing that

the state-run news agency will continue to thrust Kuwait's accomplishments into the limelight. On a KUNA-issued roundup over the killing of a top Iranian general, which caused an uproar, he said a higher committee was assembled to investigate the matter. The results of the probe were forwarded to Kuwait's Information Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri, he added. — KUNA



Customs foils second attempt to smuggle drugs by sea

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The border security of the coastguard was able to foil a second attempt to smuggle in drugs into Kuwait for the second straight day, when two persons were arrested yesterday after submerging 29 pieces of drugs and four bags containing suspicious substances into the Gulf waters. The coastguard received a tip about a boat with two Arabs on board that had malfunctioned at sea. Patrols went to the area and tugged the boat to Subbiya coastal center, and the two persons onboard were referred to marine security. When they were asked what happened with the boat, officers became suspicious. It was later found that they brought in drugs and hid it underwater. Separately, customs officers at Terminal 5 (T5) of Kuwait International Airport foiled an Asian man's attempt to smuggle in hashish, after inspectors found 159 small pieces of the drug hidden between other things. The suspect and the hashish were sent to concerned authorities.

Advanced techniques course

The human resources department of Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) began a training course on advanced firefighting techniques held in cooperation with the security and safety college in Malta. The course aims at developing and enhancing the readiness level of firemen in the field of firefighting, including in basements and high-rises. Meanwhile, KFSD Director General Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad asked all sectors to comply with and carry on procedures to get the ISO9001-2015 certification in order to develop and improve performance. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate said Capital and Hilali fire centers responded to a call about a fire in a Mubarakiya building. The fire was located in the basement and was put out without any

Accident

Two persons were injured in an accident that took place on Salmy road yesterday near the low-cost buildings project. Firemen freed a trapped man, who was taken by paramedics.



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Kuwait commemorates 14th anniversary of late Amir Sheikh Jaber's passing

Kuwait's 13th ruler led country to a new phase of progress and prosperity

KUWAIT: Kuwait commemorates today the 14th anniversary of the passing away of former Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad came to power on December 31, 1977 after the death of his predecessor Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. He was the third son of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the 13th monarch of Kuwait since its foundation more than two centuries ago. Sheikh Jaber assumed his administrative and political duties in the country in 1949, when his father appointed him as his deputy of Ahmadi city. Soon after his appointment, his interest in distinctive urban planning of the city had emerged, as well as his interest in preserving security and establishing relations with oil companies. Throughout the ten years of his work in Ahmadi Governorate, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad developed a comprehensive economic vision for the development of Kuwait, which he worked hard to achieve throughout his life.

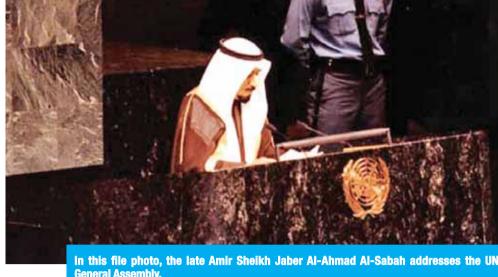
Future outlook

The rulers of Kuwait who preceded him realized the distinction of this young man's thinking especially in the economic field, and his future outlook on matters that stem from his love for Kuwait and its people. In 1959, he was entrusted with the task of managing the state's public finance and property department in addition to his responsibility for oil and housing affairs. In the same year, Sheikh Jaber was also appointed as president of Kuwait monetary council. He contributed significantly in the issuance of the first Kuwaiti currency after independence, issued on April 1, 1961 and bearing the Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah's picture. Moreover, Sheikh Jaber was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister and minister of finance and industry in the first ministerial formation following the independence, held on January 28, 1963.

Sheikh Jaber's will and determination led the country to a new phase of progress and prosperity in all fields, especially in economy. He founded a number of projects including Shuwaikh Port, Sea Water Desalination Plant and Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC). He was also a pioneer in Kuwaiti investment, investing in the surpluses of the country's oil revenues, while putting into consideration other sources of income. From this standpoint, Kuwait Investment Office was established in 1950, turning into Kuwait Investment Authority in 1965. The authority safeguards the General Reserve Fund (GRF), Future Generations Fun (FGF) and the country's investments abroad. The establishment of the State Audit Bureau is one of the significant achievements of Sheikh Jaber that indicated his efforts to develop different sectors in the country. He was keen to follow up on all the tasks that fall under his responsibilities in accordance with constitutional principles from the first moments of establishing the Bureau in 1964, especially Kuwaiti investments abroad.

Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad continued in his position as minister of finance until November 30, 1965 when he was chosen





Sheikh Jaber led idea to establish GCC

by Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, ruler of Kuwait, to become the Prime Minister. On May 31, 1966, he was formally chosen as Crown Prince after a parliamentary session allocated for pledging alliance. In 1976, Sheikh Jaber issued a decree creating the Future Generations Fund (FGF) as the intergenerational saving platform for Kuwait, by allocating a minimum of ten percent of the state's annual revenues to the fund. Meanwhile, Sheikh Jaber also established the Generations Reserve Fund (GRF) to support Kuwaitis during the Iraqi Invasion, financing the war to liberate Kuwait in 1990 and the reconstruction of the country. As part of his efforts to provide his people with a prosperous life, the late Amir issued law No 61 of 1976, regulating social securities and providing a retirement salary for all employees in government, private and oil sectors. While serving as minister of finance, Sheikh Jaber Al-

Ahmed sought to establish the Central Bank of Kuwait to regulate and manage the Kuwaiti fund policies. His vision was fulfilled by opening the headquarter of the bank in April 1977, creating a new era of building a stable and firm economy.

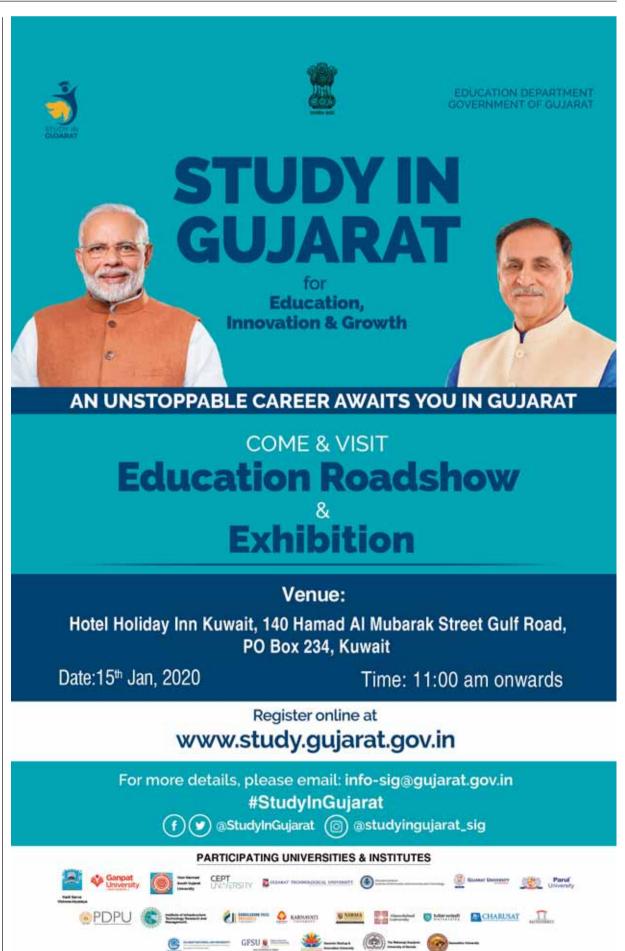
Great growth

Since his reign as Amir of Kuwait in 1977, the country has witnessed a great growth in all aspects and achievements became greater and wider to include the Gulf, Arab World and worldwide. He led the idea to establish the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and in the Doha Summit in 1996, he suggested establishing a consultancy council, consisting of 30 members of the six member-states. The council is tasked with offering advice, consultancies and opinion for the supreme council, the highest authority in the GCC. As for his efforts in the Arab World, Sheikh Jaber founded the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in December 31st, 1961 to provide financial aid to support development projects for countries in need. The fund provides loans and grants exceeding eight percent of Kuwait's GDP. In 1988, Sheikh Jaber presented an initiative during a UN meeting to drop the due debt interests on poor countries and decrease the debt principle on the severely poor countries. Also, the late Amir stood once more in the UN on September 27, 1990 during the Iraqi Invasion, to declare that Kuwait decided to rescind all interests on loans and will study the debt principle with the poorest countries in order to decrease the debt burdens on such nations. - KUNA



KUWIT: The late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah with Kuwaiti martyrs' daughters. — KUNA photos





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Kuwait's Cabinet announces 'unconventional' work program

Facing corruption, enhancing integrity and digital transformation of govt services

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Cabinet announced its work program during its weekly meeting yesterday held under the chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. "In implementation of Article 98 of the constitution, the government presents its work program, and in compliance with the deadline set by His Highness the Prime Minister to present this program to the National Assembly, the Minister of Finance and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Mariam Al-Aqeel provided a detailed explanation of the program's themes," Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said after the meeting.

The government applied an unconventional work program that aimed to focus on the elements of embodying the high order of His Highness the Amir in facing corruption and securing its requirements through three main axes, which are enhancing integrity and digital transformation of government services. Furthermore, developing government performance in accordance with specific time programs and clear practical procedures without prejudice to the implementation of projects associated with the smooth functioning of public facilities, implementation of development plan policies, annual plan projects, and others. The Integrity Enhancement Axis was based on the implementation of Kuwait's strategy to enhance integrity and combat corruption, including strengthening cooperation between oversight bodies.

The program also included ways to support institutional governance by spreading awareness in the state's administrative apparatus and employing behavioral approaches to achieve the required change as the national framework for governance was prepared and



taking the necessary steps in preparing a guide for each government agency and training requirements to accomplish it. It included measures that were taken to establish and launch the government digital services platform that includes all state services and that would reduce corruption, achieve justice and equality, develop and facilitate services and the interests of citizens and residents and enhance transparency in government transactions. The Cabinet approved the draft work program of the government and instructed the Minister of State for Economic Affairs to refer it to the National Assembly.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet reviewed the recommendations contained in the minutes of the meeting of the Legal Affairs Committee regarding a draft MoU between the government of Kuwait and the government of France regarding bilateral cooperation in the areas of preventing and combating corruption. The Cabinet also reviewed a draft decree approving a memorandum of understanding between the government of Kuwait and the government of Greece in the field of developing industrial exports as well as a draft decree approving the agreement to establish a joint committee for cooperation between the government of Kuwait and the government of Niger. The Cabinet

decided to approve the draft decrees and submit them to His Highness the Amir. Furthermore, the cabinet discussed the draft budget of ministries and government departments for the fiscal year 2020-2021, and in this regard reviewed the directive of the Economic Affairs Committee regarding the draft law and the main tables of revenues and expenditures, and the cabinet decided to approve the draft law and submit it to His Highness the Amir. The Cabinet expressed sincere and heartfelt condolences to Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky over the victims of a Ukrainian plane crash in south Tehran, which claimed the lives of all passengers on board. —KUNA

Kuwait's Central Bank receives membership invitation from BIS

KUWAIT: The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) announced yesterday that its Board of Directors has decided to invite the Central Bank of Kuwait to become a member of the BIS in order to expand its central bank membership base and to increase collaboration. The BIS is regarded as a forum for international cooperation and as a collaboration hub for central banks and other financial

authorities. In a statement, Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait Dr Mohammad Y Al-Hashel said: "We are very pleased with this announcement and the Central Bank of Kuwait has accepted the invitation and aims to become an effective member of this prestigious organization."

"The BIS underscores international cooperation between central banks and financial authorities around the world and works towards collectively pursuing global monetary and financial stability," he said. Meanwhile, Chair of the BIS Board Jens Weidmann welcomed the expansion and said: "Reviewing membership at regular intervals ensures that the membership base remains in keeping with the bank's global profile and its mandate to promote global monetary and financial stability." This is the first such expansion since 2011 and will take the number of members up to 63. BIS members, a group of prime central banks and monetary

authorities, lead global financial policymaking and set global regulatory and supervision standards for banks in order to achieve global financial stability, he said. The BIS is currently owned by member central banks, it strives to promote international cooperation, conducts economic research and analysis on policy issues, and provides banking services to the central bank community. The BIS head office is in Basel, Switzerland, and it has a representative office in both Hong Kong and Mexico City.

Established in 1930, BIS members include both advanced and developed economies that represent around 30 percent of countries from around the world but together account for approximately 95 percent of the world's GDP. Members include the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (United States), People's Bank of China, Bank of Japan, Deutsche Bundesbank (Germany),

Reserve Bank of India and Bank of England, the aforementioned, alone, account for more than half of global GDP. Notably, Members of the BIS have equal rights of voting and representation at General Meetings. The Basel Committee on Banking Committee, an arm of the BIS, is focused on the elopement of global regulatory standards for banks and seeks to strengthen micro and macro prudential supervision. With 90 years of history, the Bank for International Settlements is the oldest international financial institution. At its inception, it was initially tasked to settle reparation payments imposed on Germany following the First World War. Soon after its creation, and as a consequence of the Great Depression, the BIS focused its activities on the technical cooperation between central banks and on providing a forum for regular meetings of central bank governors and officials. —KUNA



Kuwaiti official attends int'l meeting on renewable energy

ABU DHABI: Undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Electricity and Water Mohamad Bushehri stressed yesterday the importance of renewable energy in achieving goals of sustainable development. This came in a statement to the press at the conclusion of the tenth session of the General Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), held on the sidelines of Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week with the participation of 161

countries, including Kuwait. Bushehri, who headed the Kuwaiti delegation, said that the meetings recommended increasing and developing investments in the renewable energy sector because of its role in reducing carbon emissions, pollution and tackling climate change. On the sidelines of the meeting, the Kuwaiti delegation held a side meeting with the UAE permanent representative at IRENA Nawal Al-Hossini, on bilateral cooperation. A similar meeting also was held with the regional director for the Middle East and Africa at IRENA Zuhair Hamidi about the possibility of preparing a research project and a roadmap to Kuwait for investing in renewable energy within four or five years. At the field level, the Kuwaiti delegation visited the city of 'Masdar in Abu Dhabi, the first carbon neutral and waste free city in the world that is completely dependent on renewable energy. —KUNA



CONDOLENCES

THUWAINY FAMILY

and The Management & Staff Members of M/s. Thuwainy Trading Co.

Deeply mourn the Sad Demise of our General Manager,



MR. SAM ALPHONSO (SALVADORE RUZARIO ALPHONSO)

Born: 27/10/1930 – Died: 12/01/2020
We convey our Heartfelt Sympathies to the Bereaved Family.
MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE

Funeral will be on Saturday, 18th January 2020, at 2:30 PM at The Holy Family Cathedral Church, Kuwait City, for the Eucharistic celebration followed by burial at Sulaibikhat.

Relatives and friends kindly accept this as the only Intimation





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Family of Canadian who died in Iran-downed jet shares grief

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weather hits Pakistan, Afghanistan, India

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triggers dispute mechanism in Iran N-deal

Policy Federica Mogherini, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Iran's ambassador to IAEA, Ali Akbar Salehi, as they meet at Palais Coburg Hotel, where the Iran nuclear talks meetings were being held, in Vienna. —AFP

Tehran warns Europeans of 'consequences' in nuclear dispute

PARIS: Three EU countries yesterday launched a process charging Iran with failing to observe the terms of the 2015 deal curtailing its nuclear program, a move that sparked anger and threats from Tehran at a time of intensifying tensions. Britain, France and Germany insisted they remained committed to the agreement, which has already been severely tested by the US exit from the accord in 2018.

But even as their statement was released, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson indicated he might prefer a comprehensive accord negotiated with US President Donald Trump instead of the 2015 deal.

The decision to begin the so-called dispute mechanism process comes as tensions soar between the West and Iran following the killing of top commander Qasem Soleimani in a US strike, and the admission by Tehran days later that it had accidentally shot down a Ukrainian airliner. The foreign ministers of the three European nations said Iran had been progressively scaling back its commitments under the deal since May last year.

Consequences

Iran warned Britain, France and Germany yesterday about "the consequences" of their decision to launch a dispute mechanism against Tehran under the 2015 nuclear deal. "Of course, if the Europeans... seek to abuse (this process), they must also be prepared to accept the consequences," Iran's foreign

ministry said in a statement.

Tehran suggested it had little faith in the declaration by the Europeans that they were determined "to work with all participants to preserve" the landmark deal. "On the contrary, it once again signals to everyone, in particular to the three European state parties to the agreement, that it will respond seriously and firmly to any disloyalty, ill will or unconstructive action," the Iranian statement added.

'Accept the consequences'

The 2015 nuclear deal signed in Vienna-known as The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) — has a provision that allows a party to claim significant non-compliance by another party before a joint commission. If the issue is not resolved by the commission, it then goes to an advisory board and eventually to the UN Security Council, which could reimpose sanctions.

The first meeting of the process-set to include the European nations, Iran and the other parties to the deal, China and Russia-would take place in Austria by the end of the month, a diplomatic source told AFP in Vienna.

Iran had intensified sensitive activities to enrich uranium, which can be used to make a nuclear weapon, in response to Trump's pulling out of the deal. Its latest step in January to forgo the limit on the number of centrifuges used in uranium enrichment prompted the Europeans to trigger the mechanism.

But Tehran lashed out at the European countries and appeared to threatened unspecified retaliation. "Of course, if the Europeans... seek to abuse (this process), they must also be prepared to accept the consequences," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

'Back to full compliance'

But the three powers said they "once again express our commitment" to the deal and expressed "determination to work with all participants to preserve it." "Our hope is to bring Iran back into full compliance with its commitments under the JCPoA," they said. The accord aimed to restrict Iran's nuclear ambitions, which Western powers feared were aimed at developing weapons, in return for sanctions relief.

The three countries said they would not join "a campaign to implement maximum pressure against Iran" championed by US Trump. But Johnson said he would be willing to work on a "Trump deal" to replace the JCPoA, which was negotiated by the administration of former president Barack Obama. "That's what we need to see. I think that would be a great way forward," Johnson said, noting that "from the American perspective it (the 2015 deal) is a flawed agreement."

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab denied that Johnson's remarks represented a shift, saying London backed the nuclear deal while also wanting a wider deal that would go beyond Iran's atomic drive to cover all contentious issues.

'Resume diplomatic effort'

The EU's diplomatic chief Josep Borrell said it was "more important than ever" to save the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal "in light of the ongoing dangerous escalations in the Middle East." He emphasised that the aim of the dispute mechanism was not to reimpose sanctions. Tensions between Iran and the United States last week climbed to their highest levels since the hostage crisis at the US embassy in Tehran that followed the 1979 Islamic Revolution that ousted the pro-American shah.

Iran has vowed retribution over the United States' killing of Soleimani in a drone strike in Baghdad. And while Iran's attack on Iraqi bases housing US troops was seen as a relatively measured retaliation, Iranian forces mistakenly shot down over a Tehran a Ukrainian plane killing all 176 passengers and crew on board.

Analysts said launching the deal's dispute resolution mechanism gave Europe the advantage of taking control of the process, but warned that the move could also backfire. Ellie Geranmayeh, senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, told AFP that the triggering of the process "set in motion a new phase."

The greatest risk now was that Iran could respond to this "pressure tactic" by speeding up its nuclear program or even leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which would be a "major turning point", Geranmayeh said. —AFP

Top India court confirms death for four men in bus rape case

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court yesterday dismissed pleas for a review of the death sentence handed down to four men in the rape and murder of a young woman on a New Delhi bus, leaving an appeal to the president as their only possible recourse.

The 2012 attack on the 23-year old physiotherapy student on the moving bus shocked India and led to tough new laws against sexual violence, including the death penalty for rape in some cases.

The victim died from her injuries two weeks later in hospital in Singapore. The court said that there were no grounds to review its decision upholding the death sentence for the four men, all from working class neighborhood in the Indian capital. "We have gone through the curative petitions and relevant documents. In our opinion, no case is made out within the parameters indicated in the decision of this court," the court said its order. The men were convicted in 2013 and lost all appeals in a higher court. Last week, a Delhi court said they would be hanged on Jan. 22. The family of the victim welcomed the court ruling.

"I am feeling good. We want to see them hanged. Only then will justice be served to our daughter who died in pain," said her father. Sexual violence against women is a huge problem in India where a rape occurs every 20 minutes. Many of the cases have drawn revulsion and anger across the country. A P Singh, a lawyer for the four defendants, said that he would read the written order of the court and decide the next course of action. —Reuters

Arrests in Indian town after clash sparked by bikers

NEW DELHI: Police arrested dozens of people in a south Indian town after a tour by rowdy bikers through the streets sparked clashes between Hindus and Muslims, an officer said yesterday.

More than a dozen people were injured after locals objected to motorcyclists taking silencers off their bikes and riding loudly through a slum in Bhainsa, Telangana state. Police said three Muslim bikers were allegedly beaten up before members from rival groups joined in and properties were set

of fire. Forty people were arrested over the arson and hours of fighting that went into the early hours of Monday when authorities clamped restrictions on public movement, police added.

Authorities also cut mobile internet services to control "rumors" and "incitement" in the region that is due to hold municipal elections next week. Nearly two dozen homes and more than 24 motorbikes and vehicles were gutted in the blaze as the rival communities fought. "Forty accused have been arrested and more are wanted for the violence," C Shashidhar Raju, regional police chief, told AFP.

He said the situation remained tense yesterday with a large police deployment in the area. The town witnessed deadly religious violence in 2008 over the desecration of a mosque that triggered clashes that left 10 dead, including six members of a Muslim family burned to death in their home. —AFP



Gunfire erupts as Sudan security agents reject compensation plan

Streets leading to two bases cordoned off

KHARTOUM: Heavy gunfire erupted in the Sudanese capital yesterday as agents of the country's long-feared security agency rejected financial compensation offered as part of a restructuring plan proposed by the new authorities.

Shooting broke out at some bases of the Directorate of General Intelligence Service, formerly known as the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), the powerful security arm of longtime Islamist autocrat Omar Al-Bashir. NISS agents were at the forefront of a crackdown against protesters during the nationwide uprising that erupted against Bashir in December 2018 and led to his ouster by the army in April.

Witnesses and an AFP correspondent reported that gunfire broke out at the agency's bases in Riyadh and Khartoum North. All streets leading to the two bases were cordoned off, causing traffic jams, witnesses said. The AFP correspondent also said several vehicles carrying soldiers and troops from the country's Rapid Support Forces had headed towards the bases.

A statement issued by the security agency said it was "assessing the situation".

"In the process of restructuring NISS there are some members who have rejected the financial compensation offered for retirement," it said. A security source told AFP that the first shooting broke out in the city of Al-Obeid after which gunfire erupted in the agency's bases in

"Negotiations are now on to solve the issue as they have financial demands," the source said on condition of anonymity. Authorities also closed the capital's airport, the civil aviation authority said.

"Khartoum airport has been closed for five hours until 8 pm local time (1800 GMT) for security reasons," spokesman Abdelhafiz Abdelrahim told AFP.

South Sudan, the world's youngest country, descended into civil war in 2013, when President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy and fellow former rebel leader Riek Machar of plotting a coup. About 380,000 people have died in the conflict and some four million have fled their homes. Fears have grown in recent weeks that a fragile peace deal will not hold after delays in implementing a unity government and ongoing disagreements. While peace has largely held across the country, fighting has continued in the Central Equatoria region between government troops and the National Salvation Front, whose leader Thomas Cirillo Swaka signed the agreement in Rome.

'We are ashamed'

"We are ashamed this peace has eluded us," Pa'Gan Amum Okiech, a member of SSOMA's leadership council and interim chairman of another rebel group, the Real-APLM group, said Monday. "We agree to begin this process of dialogue to reach comprehensive solutions to the crisis," Amum Okiech told journalists, stressing that those solutions would be "inclusive." Progress on a more recent agreement in September 2018 calling for Kiir to form a transitional unity government with Machar has been delayed over a host of unresolved issues.

Rebel groups within the SSOMA refused to sign it because it did not address "root causes" of the war, Amum Okiech said. Sticking points include the return of refugees, the integration of rebel forces into the army, and land issues, such as compensation for the destruction of property during the conflict.

Machar was due in Juba vesterday for another round of talks with Kiir. The ceasefire signed on Sunday was mediated by the Community of Sant'Egidio, a lay Catholic organization with ties to the Vatican.

It engages in diplomatic and peace efforts, including organizing the safe passage to Europe of refugees from war-torn areas like Syria. Both Amum Okiech and the head of the government delegation, Barnaba Marial Benjamin, praised Pope Francis for his efforts in pushing for a diplomatic solution to South Sudan's conflict. "This credit goes to his Holiness Pope Francis," said Marial Benjamin, who cited the pontiff's



MABAN, Sudan: Members of the local host community wait in line for the distribution of emergency household items like soap, blankets and wash basins following intense flooding in Maban, South Sudan. Heavy gunfire erupted in the Sudanese capital yesterday as agents of the country's long-feared security agency rejected financial compensation offered as part of a restructuring plan proposed by the new authorities. — AFF

organization of a meeting between Kiir and Machar in ling to South Sudan and a trip could be announced April at the Vatican, in which Francis knelt to kiss their feet, imploring for peace. "Your kneeling in front of our leaders has brought peace to South Sudan," he said. Pope Francis has expressed an interest in travel- ity" to South Sudan. —AFP

soon. During a Papal Mass in November, he exhorted the faithful to pray for the country, and in his Christmas address, sent wishes of "peace and prosper-

US sends home 21 Saudis as probe finds shooting was 'terrorism'

WASHINGTON: The United States will send home 21 Saudi military trainees after an investigation into the "jihadist" killing of three American sailors last month, the Justice Department announced Monday. Attorney General Bill Barr said the December 6 shootings by Royal Saudi Air Force 2nd Lieutenant Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani at the US Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida was an "act of terrorism." "The evidence shows that the shooter was motivated by jihadist ideology," he told reporters.

There was no evidence that Alshamrani had colluded with others, although Barr said FBI investigators had been unable to unlock his two phones to determine whom he had contacted.

"We have asked Apple for their help in unlocking the shooter's iPhones. So far Apple has not given us any substantive assistance," Barr said. The attorney general said 21 of Alshamrani's colleagues were being expelled from the base's flight school after the probe found many of them had jihadist material and child porn. While the material didn't rise to the level of criminal prosecution, Barr said Riyadh had "determined that this material demonstrated conduct unbecoming an officer in the Saudi Royal Air Force and Royal Navy and the 21 cadets have been dis-enrolled from their training curriculum."

They were to return to Saudi Arabia later Monday, Barr said. He added that the Saudi government had vowed to review each case under its code of military justice and criminal code. "Further, the kingdom has assured us that, if we later decide to charge any of those being sent back to Saudi Arabia in connection with this counterterrorism investigation, it will return them for trial," Barr said.

US denounces 'avoidable' citizen death in Egypt custody

WASHINGTON: An American citizen whose case was raised by top US leaders died Monday after more than six years in custody in Egypt, his representatives said, drawing criticism by Washington of its authoritarian ally. Mustafa Kassem, a New York taxi driver originally from Egypt who was arrested on a home visit in 2013, had been on a liquid-only hunger strike since last fall and four days ago ceased drinking fluids.

The Egyptian interior ministry said he was transferred to the prison medic wing for treatment for his diabetes. "His condition deteriorated...and he died on January 13," it said in a statement. The top US diplomat for the Middle East, David Schenker, described Kassem's death in custody as "needless, tragic and avoidable" and offered his "sincere condolences" to his family.

"I'll continue to raise our serious con-

Jihadist messages

Alshamrani gunned down three US sailors and wounded eight other people in a classroom block, in what Barr described as a premeditated assault, before police shot the gunman dead. He had posted a message on social media on September 11, 2019 saying "the countdown has begun," in addition to several other anti-US, anti-Israel and jihadist messages, the investigation revealed.

The shooting threatened a decades-old military training program crucial to the US-Saudi relationship, which involves billions of dollars of military sales to the kingdom. There are around 850 Saudis among the 5,000 foreign military personnel undergoing training in the United States. Many, such as the Saudis in Pensacola, are trained in flying and maintenance of US-made military aircraft their countries are purchasing. "These military partnerships are critically important to our country," Barr said.

'Hard reset'

Florida Senator Rick Scott, however, called for the suspension of the Saudi program for further review by the Department of Defense. "This was an act of terrorism. Given the FBI's confirmation that a number of Saudi nationals engaged in troubling conduct, it's clear we need a hard reset, Scott tweeted. "I'm calling on the Saudi gov't to recall all Saudi nationals training in the US until DOD can conduct a full review." FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich said Alshamrani undertook the attack with a legally-bought semi-automatic pistol. Normally non-residents are not permitted to buy firearms in the US, but Alshamrani exploited an exception that allows foreigners to buy guns for "hunting."

Bowditch said Alshamrani had 180 rounds of ammunition and multiple magazines, including a high-capacity magazine, which some states have sought to ban or tightly control in the wake of mass shootings. Barr said the shooting "perfectly illustrates" why US law enforcement should be able to demand cellphone makers' cooperation to unlock phones in appropriate circumstances. "We call on Apple and other technology companies to help us find a solution so that we can better protect the lives of Americans and prevent future attacks," he said. — AFP

cerns about human rights and Americans detained in Egypt at every opportunity, as will the entire team at the Department of State," he said. Schenker, however, did not specify any repercussions for Egypt, where President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has closely aligned himself with US President Donald Trump in their opposition to Islamists.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had raised Kassem's case last month in a meeting in Washington with Egypt's foreign minister, and Vice President Mike Pence said he raised his case directly with Sisi on a 2018 visit to Cairo. The 64-year-old father of two, who most recently ran an auto-parts business on Long Island, New York was detained as part of a major crackdown in 2013 on protests against Sisi, who had seized power in a coup.

Kassem denied he had joined the protests, saying that he had gone out to exchange money and had shown his US passport to police. He was nonetheless sentenced in 2018 in a mass trial with hundreds of defendants to 15 years in prison on charges of trying to overthrow the government, according to his lawyers. "No individualized evidence was ever presented against him," Pretrial Rights International and The Freedom Initiative, which represented him, said in a statement. — AFP

Japan's Abe wraps up Gulf tour in Oman

MUSCAT: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met Oman's new sultan vesterday on his last leg of a Gulf tour amid regional tensions after the US killing of a top Iranian general. Abe and Haitham bin Tareq, who took office last week following the death of long-serving Sultan Qaboos, agreed to cooperate for regional stability and to develop their bilateral relations, said a Japanese foreign ministry statement

Abe also offered his condolences for the death of Sultan Qaboos, who died Friday aged 79. Under Qaboos, Muscat acted as a regional and international go-between, including during a discreet dialogue between Tehran and Washington that led to a 2015 deal over Iran's

US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018, reimposing sanctions and a campaign of "maximum pressure" against Tehran. Abe's Gulf trip had initially been thrown into doubt after the US drones killed the head of Iran's Quds Force, Qasem Soleimani. Iran responded by launching a barrage of missiles at bases hosting American troops in Iraq.

But the Japanese premier's five-day tour went ahead, including talks with top officials in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Abe has warned that military confrontation with Iran will impact global peace and stability. His comments came at the start of a five-



day Gulf tour that had been thrown into doubt after Tehran responded to the attack on Qasem Soleimani by launching a barrage of missiles at bases hosting American troops in Iraq, prompting fears of all-out war.

But as those concerns receded, the Japanese premier decided to go ahead with the visit and on Sunday discussed regional tensions during an hour-long meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in northwestern Al-Ula province, according to foreign ministry spokesman Masato Ohtaka.

"Any military confrontation in the region that includes a country like Iran will have an impact not only on peace and stability in the region but the peace and stability of the whole

world," Abe said, according to Ohtaka. Abe called "on all relevant countries to engage in diplomatic efforts to defuse tensions", Ohtaka added. The spokesman said the two leaders agreed on working closely on maritime security in the region and discussed Tokyo's decision to send a destroyer for intelligence activities along with two P-3C patrol aircraft to the Middle East. Japan, however, will not join a US-led coalition in the region.

Tokyo has walked a fine line in balancing its key alliance with Washington and its longstanding relations and interests with Tehran. Ohtaka said that Abe stressed the importance of a continuous and stable Saudi oil supply to

CONDOLENCE

We express our heartfelt and deepest condolences

to Thuwainy Trading Company and Family for sudden demise of

Mr Sam Alphonso

(General Manager) on 12th January 2020.

From

Kalpataru Power Transmission Ltd.





Condolences

The Management and Staff of **EQUATE Petrochemical Company** Offer their heartfelt condolences to

Atif Siddique Peshimam

Procurement Department On the sad demise of his

Father

May his soul rest in peace and God grant comfort and strength to the bereaved family members during this time International

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

British premier says 'Trump deal' could replace Iran nuclear pact

Foreign secretary denies policy shift

LONDON: Britain emphasized its commitment to the Iranian nuclear deal yesterday even as Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he would favor replacing it with an accord that Washington could support.

Johnson's proposal for a "Trump deal" came just hours before Britain, France and Germany triggered a dispute mechanism against Iran for violating the 2015 accord. "If we are going to get rid of it (the nuclear deal), let's replace it and let's replace it with the Trump deal," the prime minister told BBC television in an

"I think that would be a great way forward," he said, without giving further details on this would entail.

European powers have been trying to salvage the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) following the 2018 decision by President Donald Trump to pull the United States out.

But Tehran has wound down its compliance since then, prompting the three European parties to the deal to trigger a provision intended to hold Iran to account. Britain, France and Germany all emphasized that despite this action, they remained committed to the agreement.

'Broader deal'

Answering an emergency question in the House of Commons, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab denied Johnson's remarks represented a policy shift, as critics jumped on the apparent discrepancy. Raab told MPs that the whole government-including the prime minister-still believed the 2015 agreement was the best solution, saying: "We want Iran to come back into full compliance." But he noted that Britain, the US and European powers had discussed at the G7 summit in Biarritz last year the possibility of a "broader deal" that had Washington's support. "It's not just President Trump but also President Macron (of France) who have argued for a broader deal with Iran," he said.

He said this would address some of the defects in the JCPOA, "which is not a perfect deal", and wider concerns "about Iran's broader destabilizing activities in the region". "The US and our European partners want us to be ambitious in our diplomatic approach with Iran and that is something I fully subscribe to," Raab said.

Trump last week called on signatories to the JCPOA to withdraw from the agreement, and Johnson said he understood Washington's concerns. "From the American perspective it's a flawed agreement, it expires, plus it was negotiated by (former) President Obama," the premier said.

"President Trump is a great deal-maker-by his own account and many others. Let's work together to replace the JCPOA and get the Trump deal instead." Britain's smaller opposition Liberal Democrats said Johnson's support for Trump undermined the existing deal and urged the prime minister to remind the US president of the high stakes. "The UK is best served by working with our allies in Europe and the wider world to reinvigorate the Iran nuclear deal as a means to deescalate the current crisis," acting leader Ed Davey said. "The prime minister is sending a clear message to Donald Trump: your wish is my command." —AFP



water reactor of Arak, south of capital Tehran, during a visit by the head of the organization Ali Akbar Salehi (unseen). —AFP

Trump set to return to Davos as Iran's Zarif cancels visit

GENEVA: US President Donald Trump is set to attend the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos next week, but Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has cancelled, organizers of the gathering of political and business leaders said.

The United States killed Iran's most powerful military commander in a drone strike this month after tit-for-tat exchanges between Washington and Tehran that began with the killing of an American contractor on a base in Iraq.

Although Trump attended the WEF event held in the Swiss mountain resort in 2018, he did not participate last year and his return comes amid moves for him to face impeachment charges.

Iran's Zarif, who had been scheduled to attend, is no longer on the list of nearly 3,000 people due at the event, which is being held under the banner "Stakeholders for a Sustainable and Cohesive World".

"We have to understand the cancellation from Iran foreign minister Zarif against the backdrop of uncertainty in the region and what is unfolding in Iran," Borge Brende, WEF president, said at a news conference on Tuesday ahead of the 50th anniversary meeting.

No other Iranian officials are on the WEF list of attendees, which includes the presidents of Iraq and Afghanistan. Some 53 heads of state are due to make the trip into the Alps, including Germany's Angela Merkel, as well as 35 finance ministers and some 30 trade ministers, WEF organizers said.

Other attendees include US Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin and US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, while Ivanka Trump and her husband Jared Kushner are also on the US delegation, the WEF list of participants showed. Greta Thunberg, the 17-year-old Swedish climate activist who has sparked the #FridaysforFuture global protest movement, will return to Davos for the second year and participate in a session on 'Averting a Climate Apocalypse".

The world is in a state of emergency and the window to act is closing fast," Klaus Schwab, WEF founder and executive chairman told reporters, adding that a public private initiative will be launched at Davos with the aim of "planting 1 trillion trees by the end of this decade". —Reuters

34 killed in Ghana bus crash

ACCRA: Thirty-four people died yesterday when two buses collided in central Ghana, officials said.

Police and the fire brigade said the accident occurred early yesterday in the town of Dompoase, about 200 kilometres (125 miles) from the Ghanaian capital Accra. "Several people sustained injuries and have been rushed to the hospital. Twenty-nine died on the spot while five others died at the hospital," Fire service spokesman Abdul Hudu Wasiu told AFP.

The victims included 20 men, 11 women and three children, one of whom was only a year old.

Around 40 survivors are being treated in hospital. There were 13,877 road accidents in Ghana last year, resulting in 2,284 deaths and 14,397 injuries, according

to official statistics. They are mainly caused by human error or due to bad and often unlit roads and malfunctioning traffic

Crisis Pristina: Poll winners struggle to form coalition govt

PRISTINA: Kosovans voted for change last October but are still waiting to see it-the politicians who were supposed to oust the old guard have been unable to forge a coalition, raising fears of fresh, destabilizing elections.

The victory of two opposition parties on October 6 was hailed as a turning point for small Kosovo, with the winners meant to turf out the former guerillas who have dominated politics since the former Serbian province declared independence in 2008. But months of horsetrading over how to divvy up government posts have yet to produce a handshake between the two camps.

Vetevendosje, a nationalist-leftist party born from a protest movement, came first with 29 seats in the 120-seat legislature, followed by the centerright Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) on 28.

Together with ethnic minority MPs, they have the numbers to override the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), the

establishment party stacked with former rebel fighters who are blamed for snaring Kosovo in a web of poverty and corruption. Yet analysts say the election winners are at risk of squandering their opportunity, with the political paralysis increasingly untenable.

Social unrest "and even a financial collapse" could be on the horizon if there is no government in place to approve the 2020 budget by March, warned Naim Gashi, an economics lecturer at ISPE College in Pristina. "Either they have to finally agree on a coalition agreement or they have to go to the polls again, because the system can no longer be blocked as it is now," said analyst Arton Demjaha from the anti-corruption NGO Cohu (Stand Up). Others, however, warn that new polls would only add a fresh delay. "New elections would not be just the worst option but a fatal one," said political analyst Ardian Kastrati.

He proposed that all parties agree to a temporary governing arrangement "to move forward with the important processes that await the country this year".

'Kosovo deserves better'

Brussels and Washington also want the parties to unite and start tackling urgent economic, social and legal reforms. They are especially eager to see a revival of stalled negotiations with Belgrade-a lingering source of tension in the war-scarred Balkans.

Kosovo, a former province of Serbia with an ethnic Albanian majority, broke away in a 1998-99 war and declared independence a decade later-a split Belgrade has never accepted.

EU-led talks to normalize their ties, which is a prerequisite for either to make progress on dreams of joining the EU,

have been frozen for well over a year. Vetevendosje and LDK do not have a natural ideological overlap but at this stage they are stuck on how to hand out government jobs.

PRISTINA: Female activists perform a choreography originated in Chile, and inspired by the Chilean feminist group Las Tesis, to protest against gender

violence and patriarchy in front of the Kosovo government building in Pristina

The Prime Minister role belongs to the largest party, Vetevendosje, who nominated its leader Albin Kurti. LDK has insisted they should be able to name a candidate for President once the office is up for grabs in 2021. —AFP

Family of Canadian who died in Iran-downed jet shares grief

TORONTO: Pain mixed with anger-an Iranian-Canadian student who lost his mother when Iran shot down a Ukrainian jetliner with 57 Canadian nationals onboard shares his grief.

"Once you start to cope with the sorrow a little bit, then came the tragic news that it was downed by a missile, and it was almost as if she died again," Amirali Alavi told AFP. "Thinking how it could have been avoided, how somebody's responsible for it," the 27-year-old Toronto law student said it made him furious and inconsolable.

His mother, Neda Sadighi, a 50-yearold optometrist, had gone to visit family over the holidays in Tehran. She had left the Iranian capital ten years ago with her husband Farzad, a doctor, and her son to settle in Canada. "I spoke with her before she was going to the airport in Tehran, I told her I was worried with everything that was going on in Iran, between Iran and the US. She told me, 'Don't worry, I'll be fine, I'll be there tomorrow." A few hours later, the Ukraine International Airlines Boeing 737 was shot down by an Iranian missile-in what Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called a "human error"killing all 176 passengers and crew onboard.

"All deaths are saddening, but some deaths are tragic and wrench your heart," said Alavi at a memorial ceremony in Toronto on Sunday. "It wasn't just a regular tragedy, it was the fault of those who seek war at the expense of the people's life," he added, pointing to the escalating tensions between the United States and Iran which led in his view led to the crash.

Alavi says he went through "a rollercoaster of emotions" including shock, sadness and then misunderstanding and anger when Iran, under pressure, finally admitted that one of its missiles had shot down the plane by mistake. "It was almost as if she died again. It's almost like it's for no reason."

The accident was a deep blow to the Iranian community in Canada, which is



his side at the University of Toronto, Canada. —AFP

home to North America's largest Iranian were 210,000 Canadians of Iranian origin diaspora. According to the last census, there living in this country in 2016. —AFP

Microsoft CEO critical of India citizenship law

NEW DELHI: Microsoft's chief executive hit out at the government of his native India and joined criticism of a new citizenship law that opponents of Prime Minister Narendra Modi say is anti-Muslim.

The legislation makes it easier for persecuted religious minorities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to gain citizenship, but Muslims are excluded because Modi says they do not qualify as such. The law has sparked nationwide protests that have left at least 27 people dead, and stoked fears that India's 200 million Muslims will be marginalized.

Speaking at an event in New York, Microsoft boss Satya Nadella implied the law could stop a talented immigrant from making a mark India, as he had done as a new arrival in the United States, according to a transcript of his remarks tweeted by BuzzFeed editor-inchief Ben Smith. "I would love to see a Bangladeshi immigrant who comes to India and creates the next unicorn in India or becomes the next CEO of Infosys," Nadella said, referring to an Indian IT giant.

"If I had to sort of mirror what happens to me in the US, I hope that's what happens in India." Nadella was born and educated in Hyderabad before moving to the US to do a Masters degree. He joined Microsoft in 1992 and later became a US citizen. Nadella's comments sparked social media storm in India.

Ramachandra Guha, a renowned historian detained at a recent protest, tweeted: "I am glad Satya Nadella has said what he has. I wish that one of our own IT czars had the courage and wisdom to say this first. Or



to say it even now." But Meenakshi Lekhi, a lawmaker from Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, said Nadella's comments were a "perfect example" of how the "literate need to be educated". —AFP

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

International

Over 130 dead as severe weather hits Pakistan, Afghanistan, India

Army helps locate people stuck in multiple avalanches

ISLAMABAD: Avalanches, flooding and harsh winter weather has killed more than 130 people across Pakistan and Afghanistan in recent days, officials said yesterday, as authorities struggled to reach people stranded by heavy snowfall.

At least 75 people died and 64 were injured across Pakistan, with several still missing, while a further 39 people were killed in Afghanistan, according to officials in both countries. In neighboring India, at least 10 people were killed after several avalanches hit the northern-part of Indian-administered Kashmir.

Forecasts suggest more harsh weather is on the way. Pakistani Kashmir was the worst-hit area, with 55 people killed and 10 others missing, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said in a statement.

Two Pakistani officials said many villagers were still stranded by the avalanches in the Neelum valley area following heavy rain that also triggered landslides. Many people were reported missing and feared dead as rescue efforts got under way, one of the officials said.

Meanwhile in western Pakistan, heavy snowfall in southwestern Balochistan destroyed several houses in the mountainous region, killing 17 people. The disaster management authority declared an emergency in seven districts of the mineral-rich province and sought the army's help for relief and rescue operations.

Key highways connecting Pakistan and Afghanistan were blocked due to heavy snow, forcing officials to suspend transportation of essential goods into Afghanistan.

Severe cold and heavy snow led to the death of 39 people in six provinces of Afghanistan in the past two weeks said Tamim Azimi, a spokesman for Afghanistan's Natural Disaster Management Authority in Kabul. "We are distributing emergency assistance, including cash to families of the victims," said Azimi, adding that heavy rain and snow have hampered for rescuers. The area is one of the world's most militarily tense frontiers, where the neighboring armies have confronted each other over disputed territory for decades. Kashmir has been divided between Indian and Pakistan since their independence in 1947.

In 2012, an avalanche engulfed a Pakistani army battalion headquarters near the Indian border, killing at least 124 soldiers and 11 civilians. "An avalanche hit their village, 10 people are still missing," the NDMA said. Frequent avalanches and landslides occur in Kashmir during the winter, often blocking roads and leaving communities isolated.

Authorities have shuttered schools, while several highways and roads were closed across the country's northern mountainous areas, according to officials.

"Most of those who died were women and children," said Mohammad Younus, an official with the provincial disaster management authority, adding that hundreds remained stranded. Across the border in Afghanistan, more than 300 houses were either destroyed or partially damaged throughout the country, said Ahmad Tamim Azimi a spokesman for the Natural Disaster Management Authority. "A cold snap, heavy snowfall and rains that started two weeks ago have caused damage," he said, adding that most casualties were caused after roofs collapsed under thick snow. Hardest hit were southern Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and western Herat provinces.

In Herat, seven people — all members of the same family and including children-died when their roof caved in, Azimi added. Harsh winters often take a heavy toll in mountainous Afghanistan, and the country remains poor despite billions of dollars in aid from the international community. — Agencies



NEELUM VALLEY: Local residents remove debris of a collapsed house following heavy snowfall that triggered an avalanche in Neelum Valley, in Pakistan-administered Kashmir yesterday. — AFP

Billionaire Maezawa tops Japan's most followed Twitter rankings

TOKYO: Fashion billionaire Yusaku Maezawa has become Japan's most followed Twitter account, the social network said, boosted by a \$9 million giveaway to his followers. Maezawa's 7.2 million followers puts his account narrowly ahead of acid-tongued comedian Hiroiki Ariyoshi, who has 7.19 million followers.



Yusaku Maezawa

The entrepreneur, who last year sold his online fashion his follower numbers by offering 1 million yen (\$9,000) business Zozo Inc to SoftBank Group Corp, has driven up each to 1,000 Twitter followers selected at random from

among those who retweeted a Jan 1st post. As of Monday, that tweet has been shared 4.1 million times. The deadline was Jan 7. Maezawa already holds the record for the most retweeted post globally, Twitter said, with a tweet from last year promoting a smaller, \$900,000 giveaway shared 4.3 million times.

As CEO of Zozo, Maezawa stood out in Japan's conservative business culture in part through his off-the-cuff remarks on the social network, with the entrepreneur also active on Instagram and recently starting a YouTube channel. Japanese celebrities have been slow to embrace new media, in part because the country's network of powerful talent agencies have remained focused on television and its lucrative advertisement revenues.

However with ad spending shifting online, Japanese talent is eyeing online media, drawn by the sense of connection with fans it can engender, with recent examples including model Nicole Fujita launching a YouTube

Indonesia rights body slams LGBT raids after UK rapist case

JAKARTA: Indonesia's human rights body yesterday slammed a crackdown on the LGBT community in a city that was once home to a man described as Britain's most prolific rapist.

Last week, a judge in Manchester sentenced Indonesian doctoral student Reynhard Sinaga, 36, to life in prison and called him an "evil sexual predator" who preyed on drunken young men on nights out.

The court heard he may have attacked as many as 195 men, luring them into his flat with the offer of a place to stay or alcohol. The lurid case sparked revulsion in Sinaga's native Indonesia and the mayor of Depok, where he lived before going to Britain, has ordered raids against the city's small LGBT community.

Indonesia's rights commission yesterday hit out at mayor Mohammad Idris's plans as contravening domestic and international rights laws. "Komnas HAM are also concerned about the obligation of state institutions to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all citizens, including sexual and gender identity minority groups," it said in a statement yesterday.

The mayor's office did not immediately comment. Homosexuality is legal in Muslim majority Indonesia, except in Aceh province where it is banned under local

But the country's LGBT community has increasingly been targeted in recent years on the back of a broader shift towards religious conservatism. Idris has previously launched anti-LGBT measures since taking office several years ago. But he cited the Sinaga case for the latest policy, which was aimed at "strengthening the family, especially the protection of children", according to a statement on the city's website. Sinaga lived in Depok, near Jakarta, before moving to Manchester on a student visa more than a decade ago. He was found guilty of 159 offences, including 136 rapes and eight attempted rapes, at four separate trials, according to the Crown Prosecution Service, making him "the most prolific rapist in British legal history". — AFP

Malaysia says no sex assault case against

Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's solicitor general yesterday ruled out new charges against prime-minister-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim over allegations that he sexually assaulted a former male aide, saying there was not enough evidence to proceed. The former aide accused the former deputy premier last month of trying to force him to have sex in September 2018. Anwar denied the accusation, describing it as "politics at its worst".

Solicitor general Engku Nor Faizah Engku Atek said that the investigation would be closed.

'Upon careful evaluation of all the evidence gathered in the investigation papers submitted by the (police), we found contradictions of material facts which could not support the prosecution

of any person," she said in a statement. Engku Nor Faizah also said there was insufficient evidence to prosecute. The solicitor general's statement did not name Anwar or the accuser, but referred to allegations against a "political personality" in early December. Anwar and Muhammed Yusoff's lawyer did not have an immediate comment. Anwar spent nearly a decade in jail on two separate counts of sodomy and for corruption, charges that he and his supporters maintain were aimed at ending his political career. He was first jailed in 1999.

Same-sex acts are illegal in Muslimmajority Malaysia and carry penalties of up to 20 years in jail. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, 94, has promised to hand over power to Anwar despite the allegations. Anwar was first jailed during Mahathir's first 1981-2003 tenure as premier. The pair joined forces to lead the opposition to an unexpected election victory last year.

Last week, Malaysia's attorney general declined to prosecute anyone linked to a series of leaked videos purportedly showing a senior cabinet minister having sex with a man. The minister, Azmin Ali, had denied links to the videos, saying they were a plot to end his political career. Azmin has been regarded as a possible challenger for the premiership promised to Anwar. — Reuters

5.000 camels culled in drought-hit Australia

SYDNEY: Helicopter-borne marksmen killed more than 5,000 camels in a fiveday cull of feral herds that were threatening indigenous communities in drought-stricken areas of southern Australia, officials said yesterday. Aboriginal leaders in South Australia state said extremely large herds of the non-native camels had been driven towards rural communities by drought and extreme heat, threatening scarce food and drinking water, damaging infrastructure, and creating a dangerous hazard for drivers.

The cull in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands-home to about 2,300 indigenous people in the arid northwest of South Australia-ended on Sunday, said APY general manager Richard King. "We appreciate the concerns of animal rights activists, but there is significant misinformation about the realities of life for non-native feral animals, in what is among the most arid and remote places on Earth," King said in a statement yesterday.

"As custodians of the land, we need to deal with an introduced pest in a way that protects valuable water supplies for communities and puts the lives of everyone, including our young children, the elderly, and native flora and fauna first."

King said weakened camels frequently became stuck and died in water holes, contaminating water sources needed by locals and native animals and birds. "The prolonged dry period, while not difficult for native wildlife, leads to extreme distress for feral camels," he said.

APY officials said the operation had removed more than 5,000 camels. The cull came as Australia experienced its hottest and driest year on record in 2019, with the severe drought causing some towns to run out of water and fuelling deadly bushfires that have devastated the country's southeast.

Camels were first introduced to Australia in the 1840s to aid in the exploration of the continent's vast interior, with up to 20,000 imported from India in the six decades that followed. Australia is now thought to have the largest wild camel population in the world, with official estimates suggesting more than one million are roaming the country's inland deserts.

The animals are considered a pest, as they foul water sources and trample native flora while foraging for food over vast distances each day. Traditional owners in the APY Lands have for years mustered and sold off feral camels. But more recently they have been unable to manage the scale and number of camels that congregate in dry conditions", according to the environment department. — AFP

Rain offers Australian bushfire hope

SYDNEY: Hopes of containing Australia's months-long bushfire crisis rose yesterday with heavy rain forecast, but toxic smoke in Melbourne disrupted warm-up events for the year's first tennis Grand Slam. Cool weather over recent days had already given some respite for exhausted firefighters spread out across vast swathes of the country, allowing some of the biggest blazes to be brought under control. Optimism was further boosted yester-

day with heavy rain forecast for some of the hotspots in the most populated eastern states of New South Wales and Victoria.

"It's some pretty good news," New South Wales Rural Fire Service commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said. "We've been talking about it for months now, that January might see the first fall of decent rain, and that looks like what's coming along over the next few days."

The rain was set to begin across eastern Australia on Wednesday and last through the weekend, according to government meteorologist Sarah Scully. "Hopefully some of this heavy rainfall will fall over some of the fire sites and help control or even extinguish some of those fires," Scully

said. However dozens of fires remained out of control and, with many weeks of hot weather still expected throughout the rest of Australia's summer, there was no suggestion the crisis would completely end soon.

Toxic smoke

Toxic smoke from the blazes also blew overnight into the Victorian capital of Melbourne, which is due to stage the Australian Open tennis tournament beginning next week. Pollution in Melbourne, which is normally ranked as among the world's most liveable cities, was rated "hazardous", and health authorities warned people to stay indoors.

World number one Rafael Nadal and other stars abandoned outdoor practice sessions and hit indoors. But Australian Open qualifying rounds went ahead after a twohour delay in the morning, causing anger and confusion for some players who said matches should have been cancelled for the day.

Slovenian Dalila Jakupovic, ranked 201 in the world, had to retire from her match after suffering a coughing fit, and she later blamed the smoke. "I was really scared that I would collapse... it's not healthy for us," she told reporters. "I was surprised, I thought we would not be playing today but we don't have much choice." Mandy Minella, the world number 140 from Luxembourg, also voiced her opposition on Twitter. "Shocked to see that qualifying matches have started @Australian Open, What about the health of all the people that have to work out there, especially the ballkids?" she tweeted. — AFP



Four detained over Kyrgyz journalist beating

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan: Police in Kyrgyzstan said they were holding four suspects yesterday over the beating of a journalist known for investigating corruption, an incident that triggered international condemnation. Bolot Temirov, 40, was attacked outside his media outlet's office in the capital Bishkek last Thursday and had his telephone stolen.

The interior ministry said it was holding four residents of the southern Jalal-Abad region over the attack, which was condemned by the United States and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Temiroveditor-in-chief of investigative website Factcheck.kg-was photographed with injuries to his face and said he damaged a tooth in the attack.

He called the incident "an attempt to frighten" him. The US embassy in Bishkek called for a "prompt investigation", adding: "Press can only be free when journalists are able to work without intimidation and threats." The OSCE's media freedom chief Harlem Desir also condemned the attack and said that "no intimidation of journalists should be tolerated".

Factcheck.kg was briefly disabled by a cyberattack last month after it published an article about the expensive tastes of the wife of Rayimbek Matraimov, a powerful former official. Matraimov has been the target of two anticorruption rallies and is widely believed to be one of the ex-Soviet republic's most influential men, despite no longer holding an official position. He is at the centre of media claims that hundreds of millions of dollars were spirited out of the country by an "underground cargo empire" and funneled into foreign companies. — AFP

Analysis

COMMERCIAL



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In next war, soldiers will leave their smartphones at home

s the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the US 82nd Airborne Division departed for the Middle East Airborne Division departed for the Di commander gave a simple order. All personnel entering the region were told to leave smartphones and personal devices in the United States. It was a clear sign of growing official nervousness over the potential vulnerability of items that had become an unquestioned fact of life for soldiers and civilians alike, but which Washington fears potential foes could track, exploit and use for targeting.

Such concerns are far from new, but were regarded less seriously when America's primary enemies were seen as non-state groups such as Islamic State, the Taleban and Al-Qaeda. Now Washington is worried about other nations - not just Iran, but Russia and China - which are seen as a much more existential threat. It also points to a much greater trend.

Across the board, the communications revolution and the vast sea of data it produces - has made surveillance much easier, a trend likely to be magnified by the growth of artificial intelligence. It has also facilitated the mass leaking of phenomenal amounts of information, as demonstrated by NSA contractor Edward Snowden. And simultaneously, it has overturned decades of tradecraft in espionage and associated fields, where despite the rise in "fake news" and online trickery, spy agencies like the CIA now reportedly find it almost impossible to maintain the multiple false identities on which they once relied.

"The foundations of the business of espionage have been shattered," former CIA official Duyane Norman said in a Yahoo news report, which outlined how foreign governments have become much better at tracking real and covert US identities through phone and bank records, facial recognition and even the records of off-the-shelf DNA tests. "The debate [within the intelligence community] is like the one surrounding climate change. Anyone

Options limited

For military commanders, the options are also becoming limited. In Russia's war with Ukraine, Moscow's forces have shown remarkable skill in targeting counterparts on the battlefield as soon as they use their phones or radios. According to the US-based Military Times, the US Marine Corps already bans troops from taking personal devices on Middle East combat deployments. The US Navy says it is reconsidering its rules, while the Army says such decisions - as with the 82nd Airborne - are at the personal discretion of commanders. Decisions are inevitably compromises. Taking away devices reduces the ability of personnel not just to talk to their families, but can complicate communications and organization. But concerns are growing fast. This month, the Pentagon also demanded personnel stop using the Chinese-owned TikTok application, with other similar platforms including WhatsApp also added to some blacklists.

Reducing "careless talk" and unnecessary radio and other emissions is hardly new. As far back as World War One, British commanders discovered telephone systems in forward trenches had often been compromised by German signallers and did everything they could to ensure the most sensitive messages were instead carried by hand or word-of-mouth. Naval vessels, military aircraft and particularly submarines have long done everything possible to mask their signatures, particularly near enemy territory. Recent years, however, have seen growing lapses, including from those who might have been expected to know better.

Fitness app
In early 2018, data released by fitness app Strava identified assorted US, Russian and even Iranian secret bases in Syria where military personnel and contractors appeared to have recorded their exercise runs without realizing they would be highlighted and widely shared. The US military has now gone so far as to incorporate such mistakes into training exercises, killing off an entire unit in one drill after a soldier posted a selfie whose geo-tagging gave away their position.

Authorities are also nervous about non-accidental release of information. This November, White House and military staff removed smartphones from reporters and presidential aides for the duration of President Donald Trump's unannounced Thanksgiving trip to Afghanistan, which appeared as much about ensuring the news did not leak as worries the phones themselves might be tracked. In terms of the latter, the greatest threat will come when artificial intelligence and voice recognition software reach the point where phones can be used to monitor nearby conversations without use of a human analyst or translator. That may come sooner rather than later - one reason why some security experts are extremely nervous about Chinese firm Huawei being at the heart of 5G phone networks in several European countries. — Reuters

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Models suggest Paris goals may be out of reach

ew climate models show carbon dioxide is a more potent greenhouse gas than previously understood, a finding that could push the Paris treaty goals for capping global warming out of reach, scientists have told AFP. Developed in parallel by separate teams in half-a-dozen countries, the models - which will underpin revised UN temperature projections next year - suggest scientists have for decades consistently underestimated the warming potential of CO2.

Vastly more data and computing power has become available since the current Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projections were finalized in 2013. We have better models now," Olivier Boucher, head of the Institut Pierre Simon Laplace Climate Modelling Centre in Paris, told AFP, adding that they "represent current climate trends more accurately

The most influential projections from governmentbacked teams in the US, Britain, France and Canada point o a future in which CO2 concentrations that have long been equated with a 3C world would more likely heat the planet's surface by four or five degrees.

"If you think the new models give a more realistic picture, then it will, of course, be harder to achieve the Paris targets, whether it is 1.5 or two degrees Celsius," scientist Mark Zelinka told AFP. Zelinka, from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, is the lead author of the first peer-reviewed assessment of the new generation of models, published earlier this month in Geophysical Research Letters.

'Holy grail' for scientists

For more than a century, scientists have puzzled over a deceptively simple question: if the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere doubles, how much will Earth's surface warm over time? The resulting temperature increase is known as Earth's "climate sensitivity". That number has been hard to pin down due to a host of elusive variables. Whether oceans and forests, for example, will continue to absorb more than half of the CO2 emitted by humanity is

But the biggest wild card has always been clouds. "How clouds evolve in a warmer climate and whether they will exert a tempering or amplifying effect has long been a major source of uncertainty," explained Imperial College London researcher Joeri Rogelj, the lead IPCC author on

the global carbon budget - the amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted without exceeding a given temperature cap.

The new models reflect a better understanding of cloud dynamics in at least two ways that reinforce the warming impact of CO2. Zelinka said new research had confirmed high clouds in the bottom layer of Earth's atmosphere boost the Sun's radiation - and global heating accentuates that dynamic. "Another big uncertainty has been how low clouds will change, such as stratocumulus decks of the west coast of continents," he said. "That has been the holy grail of climate modellers for a long time.'

Recent observations suggest this type of cloud cover decreases with warming, which means less of the Sun's energy gets bounced back into space by white surfaces. For most of the last 10,000 years - during which time humanity's numbers swelled from a few million to 7.6 billion - the concentration of CO2 in the atmosphere was a nearly constant 280 parts per million (ppm). But at the start of the 19th century as the industrial revolution kicked into high gear, fuelled by oil, gas and especially coal, the number of CO2 molecules in the air shot up.

Shifting perceptions

Today the concentration stands at 412 ppm, a 45 percent rise - half of it in the last three decades. Last year alone, human activity injected more than 41 billion tons of CO2 into the atmosphere, some five million tons per hour. With one degree Celsius of warming so far, the world is coping with increasingly deadly heatwaves, droughts, floods and tropical cyclones made more destructive by ris-

In the 1890s, Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius calculated that doubling CO2 would eventually lift Earth's average surface temperature five or six degrees Celsius, though he later revised the figure to 4C. Remarkably, he recognized that burning fossil fuels could one day drive such a change. By the late 1970s, scientists settled on a climate sensitivity of 3C (plus-or-minus 1.5C), corresponding to about 560 ppm of CO2 in the atmosphere.

That assessment remained largely unchanged - until now. The IPCC, the UN's climate advisory body, posits four scenarios for future warming, depending on how aggressively humanity works to reduce greenhouse gases. The most ambitious - in line with the Paris goal of capping temperature rise to "well below" 2C - would require slashing CO2 emissions by more than 10 percent per year, starting now.

At the other extreme, a so-called "business-as-usual" trajectory of increased fossil fuel use would leave large swathes of the planet uninhabitable by century's end. The first scenario has become wishful thinking, according to many scientists, while the worst-case is unlikely unless Earth itself begins releasing natural stores of greenhouse gases from, say, melting permafrost. That leaves two middle-of-the-road scenarios - known as RCP4.5 and RCP6.0 that more likely reflect our climate future. According to the IPCC, the first would correspond to 538 ppm of CO2 in the atmosphere, while a RCP6.0 pathway would see an increase in CO2 concentration to 670 ppm.

'Heated debate'

A doubling of 1850's CO2 levels to about 570 ppm falls between the two, and thus takes on a real-world importance that probably would have startled Arrhenius, the late 19th-century Swedish chemist. "Right now, there is an enormously heated debate within the climate modelling community," said Earth system scientist Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. "You have 12 or 13 models showing sensitivity which is no longer 3C, but rather 5C or 6C with a doubling of CO2," he told AFP. "What is particularly worrying is that hese are not the outliers.

Models from France, the US Department of Energy, Britain's Met Office and Canada show climate sensitivity of 4.9C, 5.3C, 5.5C and 5.6C respectively, Zelinka said. "You have to take these models seriously - they are highly developed, state-of-the-art." Among the 27 new models examined in Zelinka's study, these were also among the ones that best matched climate change over the last 75 years, a further validation of their accuracy.

That said, other models that will feed into the IPCC's next major Assessment Report found significantly smaller increases, though almost all came in higher than prior estimates. Scientists are also still poring over the results to look for methodological glitches or inconsistencies. "The jury is still out, but it is worrying," said Rockstrom. 'Climate sensitivity has been in the range of 1.5C to 4.5C for more than 30 years. If it is now moving to between 3C and 7C, that would be tremendously dangerous." — AFP

From grassroots to govt: Podemos comes of age

pain's radical leftwing Podemos took its seat at the cabinet table for the first time yesterday, nearly a decade after the emergence of the anti-austerity protest movement from which it emerged. Following almost a year of political deadlock, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's new coalition government was holding its first meeting on Tuesday, a day after being

The ruling alliance, Spain's first coalition government since the 1930s, brings together Sanchez's Socialists and Podemos, whose leader Pablo Iglesias, a pony-tailed former professor of political science, takes up his position as one of four deputy prime ministers. Iglesias, who holds the social rights portfolio, is one of five hard-left ministers in the new government, all drawn from Podemos and its political allies.

Born of crisis

In the spring of 2011, as Spain was gripped by a severe economic crisis, hundreds of thousands of young demonstrators gathered in Puerta del Sol in central Madrid and in cities across the country to protest at the government's drastic antiausterity measures. Among the protesters, who stayed there for weeks, was a group of university professors, one of them Iglesias who in January 2014 set up Podemos, whose name means: "We Can."

The group initially adopted a fighting

by internal disputes.

stance against cronyism and corruption, advocating a redistribution of wealth and an end to the monarchy. But it has mellowed over the years, while remaining to the left of Sanchez's Socialists. "Podemos was kind of a utopia that was needed," recalled supporter Nacho Pelaez, sitting at a bar in Lavapies, a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood of Madrid that is the party's

Several months later, Podemos secured around eight percent of the vote in the European Parliament election of May 2014, earning it five seats. The party's 35year-old leader and newly elected MEP pledged to work for an end to the policies of "austerity and financial totalitarianism" being enforced across Europe. Within a year, Podemos had managed to seize control of town halls in Madrid and Barcelona and galvanized by the victory of its hardleft Syriza allies in Greece, it went on to become Spain's third-largest party following elections in Dec 2015 and June 2016.

Its unconventional lawmakers - who did not bat an eyelid about turning up to parliament in jeans and dreadlocks alongside fellow upstarts from liberal Ciudadanos, managed to disrupt the traditional two-party dominance of the Socialists and the conservative Popular Party (PP). But despite its advances, Podemos never managed to achieve its stated objective of outgunning the Socialists, instead finding itself weakened

Iglesias saw off his number three, Sergio Pascual, and also quarrelled with his friend and deputy Inigo Errejon, who ended up leaving and forming his own party. And he was also hit by a controversy that erupted after he and his partner Irene Montero - also a fellow minister in



the new government -purchased a luxury villa in 2018.

Sleepless nights

In 2016, the party refused to back a proposed coalition between the Socialists and Ciudadanos, but two years later threw its weight behind Sanchez, enabling him to topple PP premier Mariano Rajoy. But since then, the relationship between the two parties has been uneasy, souring rapidly last summer as they engaged in ultimately fruitless coalition talks. In September, as Sanchez said yet another election was necessary - the fourth in as many years - he defended his decision not to form a coalition with Podemos arguing that their lack of experience would have kept him awake at night.

But both the Socialists and Podemos

emerged weaker from the November vote, which propelled the far-right Vox party into third place, forcing Sanchez and Iglesias to ink the very deal that had eluded them for months - in the space of just a few days. And this week they take office offering a programme with a marked social agenda.

Podemos "needs to be in government to stop hemorrhaging votes, to put down electoral roots and to try and rebuild the party", said Jose Ignacio Torreblanca of the European Council on Foreign Relations think tank. But its entry into government has divided those supporters who have been there since the start. "It's disappointing," Ramon Alonso told AFP at a bar in Lavapies, pointing to the politicization of a party that emerged from a grassroots protest movement. "The basis for the whole project has been lost." — AFP

Business

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2020

Gulf Bank shines across social media in 2019



Nissan rules out reported plans to split with Renault



KIB awarded 'Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA' 2019





US lifts currency manipulator label on China

China's trade surplus with US dropped 8.5% to \$296bn in 2019

WASHINGTON: The United States on Monday removed the currency manipulator label it imposed on China last summer, in a sign of easing tensions between the economic powers after nearly two years of conflict. Just two days before President Donald Trump is set to sign a "phase one" trade agreement with China, the US Treasury said in its semi-annual report to Congress that the yuan has strengthened and Beijing is no longer considered a currency manipulator.

Although Treasury refrained from slapping the label on China in its report last May, Trump in August angrily accused Beijing of weakening its currency "to steal our business and factories," re-stating a long-standing grievance. Chinese authorities in August allowed the yuan to fall below 7 to the dollar, sending shudders through stock markets at the time and stoking Trump's ire.

"Over the summer, China took concrete steps to devalue its currency," also known as the renminbi (RMB), and those moves "left the RMB at its weakest level against the dollar in over 11 years," Treasury said.

However, more recently it strengthened to 6.93 to the dollar. Treasury said the new trade pact addresses currency issues. "In this agreement, China has made enforceable commitments to refrain from competitive devaluation and not target its exchange rate for competitive purposes," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement. However that commitment is identical to the one Beijing has long made as part of the Group of 20 major global economies.

China's foreign ministry yesterday said it had "never been a currency manipulator," and that the United States' decision was "in line with the facts."

"We have not and never will use currency exchange rate as a tool to address trade conflict," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a regular press briefing, adding that the International Monetary Fund had found the yuan's exchange rate "in line with the economy's fundamentals."

Symbolic move

Though the semi-annual currency report always gains attention as a key sign of relations between the powers, the currency manipulator designation was largely symbolic. The label calls for the US Treasury committed to work with the IMF to "eliminate the unfair competitive advantage" created by China's alleged actions and to consult with Beijing about the matter.

As part of the trade deal, "China has also agreed to publish relevant information related to exchange rates and external balances." However, many economists questioned the decision to label China a manipulator in the first place. "China shouldn't have been designated to start with. Small current account surplus/GDP; scant intervention," Mark Sobel, a former Treasury official, said on Twitter.

While he acknowledged the large trade surplus, he said "economists disregard those."

"RMB fell in response to Trump's tariffs. Designation

was blatant/errant political act," Sobel tweeted.

And China expert Martin Chorzempa said the announcement was getting "way more attention than it should, because it matters only on the most superficial symbolic level."

Mnuchin said the phase one deal is significant and "will lead to greater economic growth and opportunity for American workers and businesses." However, Treasury said Beijing still needs to take steps "to stimulate domestic demand and reduce the Chinese economy's reliance on investment and exports." Top Chinese trade envoy Liu He arrived Monday in Washington on Monday ahead of Wednesday's expected signing of the agreement. After multiple rounds of tariffs, the US trade deficit in goods through November 2019 was running at over \$320 billion, which is about \$62 billion below the same period of 2018.

Chinese customs data showed yesterday that China's surplus had dropped 8.5 percent in 2019 to \$296 billion. "Treasury remains disturbed by the persistent and excessive trade and current account imbalances that mark the global economy," the report said. The US Trade Representative's Office announced over the weekend that as part of the initial trade deal, Washington and Beijing will hold "at least bi-annual" meetings-something that previous administrations did for years but that Trump scrapped in favor of a more aggressive approach.

Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Governor Jerome

Powell are also will conduct macro-economic meetings with top Chinese officials "on a regular basis," USTR said. The currency report had eight other countries on the "monitoring list" due to concerns about their currency practices: Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, and Vietnam.

Trade surplus

China's trade surplus with the United States narrowed last year as the world's two biggest economies exchanged punitive tariffs in a bruising trade war, official data showed yesterday.

The figures were released just a day before the US and China are expected to sign a "phase one" agreement that marks a de-escalation in their two-year conflict. The perennial US trade deficit with China has been a major source of anger for President Donald Trump, who has slapped tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of Chinese goods, triggering tit-for-tat responses from Beijing.

China's surplus came in at around \$295.8 billion in 2019, down 8.5 percent from the previous year's record \$323.3 billion, according to customs data.

In December, its surplus with the US was around \$23.2 billion, down from \$24.6 billion the month before. As part of the interim trade deal, Beijing will buy an extra \$200 billion of US products over a two-year period, according to Washington officials. China has yet to publicly confirm the figures. — AFP

Germany vows 62bn-euro injection into railways

BERLIN: The German government yesterday agreed to pump 62 billion euros (\$69 billion) into its rail network as part of a wider plan to promote greener transport.

"We've just signed the biggest program of modernization ever in Germany," said Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer, adding that "this is the decade for railway". Besides the massive sum stumped up by the state, German rail operator Deutsche Bahn will also plough an additional 24 billion euros into the renewal program.

The investments will go towards "replacing obsolete installations", improving access for disabled passengers as well as renovating rail bridges,



BERLIN: (Right to left) Richard Lutz, chairman of German railway operator Deutsche Bahn (DB), German Finance Minister and Vice-Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer, and DB board member Ronald Pofalla pose after signing an agreement on railway modernizations yesterday in Berlin. — AFP

said Scheuer.

Deutsche Bahn chief Richard Lutz called the unprecedented cash injection the "biggest investment and growth program in the railway's 180 years' history". He vowed to improve punctuality-a major turn-off for commuters-but also

called for patience as the upgrade will undoubtedly bring disruption.

Getting more people to switch from cars and plains to trains is central to a package aimed at helping Germany ensure its 2030 emissions are 55 percent lower than 1990 levels. — AFP

Saudis pledge to maintain oil market stability

RIYADH: Saudi Oil Minister Prince Abdulaziz Ben Salman said Monday the kingdom has taken every step to secure its oil facilities and guarantee market stability amid rising regional tensions.

The US drone strike that killed Iranian general Qassem Soleimani on January 3 has exacerbated fears of broader conflict in a region that has seen attacks on ships and Saudi oil facilities in the last year.

"We have taken all the possible precautions," Prince Abdelaziz told the opening of the 2020 International Petroleum Technology Conference in the eastern Saudi city of Dhahran. The minister said Saudi Arabia's oil production would hit 9.77 million barrels per day in January and

In December, in the presence of the OPEC cartel and 10 other oil producing countries, the kingdom announced it would cut its production in order to support prices. Just before Saudi oil facilities were attacked in September, Saudi

Arabia was pumping 9.9 million barrels per day, or nearly 10 percent of world demand.

"There exists no other surer and more responsible source (of oil) than the kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Prince Abdelaziz said. "When the kingdom's oil facilities were attacked several months ago, we acted quickly and have maintained stability of oil supplies and that's what counts for consumers," the minister said.

"We protected the world economy," he added. Drone and missile attacks on Saudi Aramco oil facilities in September, blamed on Iran, slashed crude production from the world's top oil exporter by almost half. And a string of attacks on vessels in the troubled waters of the Gulf last year, which Washington and its allies blamed on Iran, also stoked fears for the security of global supply.

Prince Abdelaziz said the September crisis "showed the Saudi oil sector's flexibility and the Saudi leadership's long-term strategic vision, as well as Aramco's quality and strength." Saudi Aramco last month floated its shares on the stock exchange for the first time but was hit more than a week ago by a panicky sell off amid Iranian vows of retaliation for Soleimani's killing. "Faced with tensions that persist in our region, Saudi Arabia will continue to do what it can to guarantee the stability of oil markets," the minister said. — AFP

Wednesday, January 15, 2020 Business

Gulf Bank shines across social media in 2019

Bank launches several initiatives in the health, economic, nutritional, personal well-being and technological fields



240% INCREASE NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank wrapped up 2019 as its most socially active year to date - both in terms of its communication efforts with the general public and initiatives that aimed to give back to the local community. As one of the largest banks in the region, Gulf Bank prides itself on its unwavering line of communication with the public it serves, particularly across its various social media channels. Throughout the year, Gulf Bank broadcast several social and educational campaigns, launching initiatives spanning a variety of messages relating to health and wellness, the economy, technology, and more.

Throughout the year, Gulf Bank witnessed an impressive growth in viewership and engagement, with a 240 percent increase in social media followers across its various channels. Gulf Bank also racked in over 20.4 million views on YouTube, and tallied its engagement reach to over 555,000 comments, likes, and shares. As part of Gulf Bank's ongoing commitment to outstanding customer service, the Bank's active call center unit received over 40,000 inbound messages, with all queries answered in a timely manner.

In 2019, Gulf Bank's social media campaign strategy was determined by a three-pronged approach: customer engagement, corporate social responsibility, and marketing services. As part of an increasing focus on consumer engagement, Gulf Bank introduced shareable content that interested viewers, including news coverage and weather forecast updates. The Bank also introduced weekly competitions with timely topics (including football) and exciting prizes. Gulf Bank also launched a video coverage series at its branches all across Kuwait as a way to connect clients with the day-to-day happenings at the Bank, and bridge the gap between clients, branch managers, and the Bank's latest service offerings. Gulf Bank's cor-



555,000 **ENGAGEMENT**

porate social responsibility approach focused on a variety of activities throughout 2019, and included providing live coverage for the Bank's CSR events as a way to increase their accessibility to the general public. Throughout the year, the Bank provided live coverage for its CSRrelated events, including: Gulf Bank 642 Marathon, Mother's Day, Women's Day, Breast Cancer Awareness, Earth Hour, and both National and Liberation Days. During the holy month of Ramadan, Gulf Bank also championed the "Ten Minutes" health and wellness campaign, and released a Ramadan ad campaign that generated over 8.5 million views in its first week. Gulf Bank also launched "One-Minute Tip," their latest segment of short tips on the economy, investing, and personal finance dedicated to raising the state of financial literacy among consumers. The one-minute tips are delivered by Tareq Al-Saleh, Deputy General Manager of the Economic Research Unit at Gulf Bank, and are aired across Gulf Bank's various social media channels. This year, Gulf Bank also launched "Tech Tuesdays," which have quickly become one of the Bank's most anticipated social media segments.

Gulf Bank also utilized its social media channels to introduce its latest services and products to its customer base. Customer security also played a huge role throughout the year, with Gulf Bank offering numerous pieces of security and travel advice in order to ensure their clients' financial security both locally and abroad. Commenting on this year's achievements, Nawaf Al-Jazzaf, Management Associate for Social Media of External Communications at Gulf Bank, said: "Throughout this past year, we have been working towards this very moment in which we can step back and reflect on all the achievements and goals we reached. Our primary goal has



40,000 INBOUND MESSAGES

always been to maintain an innovative communication approach with our followers, and we pride ourselves on launching creative initiatives that serve to deepen our relationship with the general public. At Gulf Bank, we are keen on creating interest and taking advantage of all the means available to us when it comes to communicating with our customers, and it is with great pride that we can look back at what we have achieved with our social media presence and activity. We look forward to engaging with our local community in even more innovative ways in the future, and are excited to achieve even bigger milestones in the coming year!"

Gulf Bank's Ramadan campaign

Gulf Bank's Ramadan campaign acquired a record number of viewers in the first week of the holy month, garnering over 8.5 million views across various social media channels. The campaign made use of a unique advertising move the first of its kind in Kuwait and the region - in which viewers were given the chance to determine the ending of the story by voting for one of the two main characters, resulting in widespread engagement with the videos.

Last year, Gulf Bank's Ramadan campaign revolved around the story of Lulwa, who as a young girl captures the hearts of two neighborhood boys, Aziz and Nasser. The story of Lulwa's engagement highlights authentic Kuwaiti customs and values, including girgean, close-knit neighbors, caring families, and the humility and simplicity of the Kuwaiti people. At the end of the main video, both Aziz and Nasser are shown attending Lulwa's engagement, but it is unclear which of the suitors Lulwa will choose. That decision was left up to the viewers, an advertising decision that marked its debut this year on Gulf Bank's social media channels. After



20.4 M **VIEWS**

watching a series of short videos featuring Lulwa's mother interviewing the two candidates, viewers voted for the candidate they believed would make the best match.

After a round of voting, Aziz emerged as the best suitor. The campaign's conclusion showing the end of Lulwa's story was released on Gulf Bank's social media channels.

"One-Minute Tips" on the economy, investing, and personal finance

Gulf Bank also launched their newest segment, "One-Minute Tip," dedicated to raising awareness on various financial matters and the latest economic trends. Every week, Deputy General Manager of the Economic Research Unit at Gulf Bank, Tareq Al-Saleh, discusses best practices in finance and investment with the aim to promote a better understanding of the latest happenings in the financial sector. The short and simple tips also aim to teach viewers how to better manage their personal finances and investments. The videos are aired across Gulf Bank's various social media channels.

"Ten Minutes" for a healthier lifestyle in Ramadan

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



physiotherapy and fitness specialist, Yousef Al-Saleh; fitness coach, Ali Al-Adwani; and mental and well-being specialist, Dr Mohammed Al-Suwaidan.

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

Marathon prep with nutrition & fitness tips

In preparation for the "Gulf Bank 642 Marathon," Gulf Bank also partnered with nutrition coach, Dana Ghareeb, and founder and head coach of Lose|Gain fitness center, Abdullah AbulQassim to present several exercise and nutrition tips for race participants. The videos aimed to enhance participants' performances on race day, and encouraged them to maintain healthier lifestyles beyond race day as well.

Technology tips on "Tech Tuesday"This year, Gulf Bank also coined Tuesdays as "Tech Tuesdays," taking the opportunity to share various tech-related tips on a weekly basis via Instagram. The topics of discussion every Tuesday can range from a new and innovative way to use one's phone to photography tips and more. The segment is one of the Bank's most anticipated social media activities, and is delivered by members of the local youth community who are experts in their respective technological fields.

To stay up-to-date with Gulf Bank's activities, you can follow Gulf Bank on its various social media channels: Instagram @Gulf_Bank; Twitter @Gulf Bank; Facebook "Gulf Bank"; and YouTube "GulfBankChannel"

Peugeot sub **Opel announces** 2,100 job cuts in Germany

FRANKFURT: Peugeot subsidiary Opel said yesterday it would offer 2,100 more German workers voluntary redundancies, as it struggles to stay afloat faced with collapsing demand and an EU emissions squeeze. "The voluntary leave program will be reopened for employees ... limited to a maximum of 2,100 positions," the company said in a statement.

But it added that forced redundancies would be ruled out until at

Meanwhile Opel's main Ruesselsheim plant will be outfitted to produce the next generation Astra sedan in both internal combustion and hybrid versions-"providing the perspective for many years of manufacturing". After years of losses under GM, Opel returned to the black under its new owner in 2018,

selling around a million vehicles.

"This agreement creates a further considerable improvement of our competitiveness" and "gives our employees long-term security," chief executive Michael Lohscheller said.

The historic German carmaker, which Peugeot bought from USbased General Motors in 2017, had already slashed almost 7,000 out of 19,000 jobs since the takeover, as the industry grapples with lower global demand. But rather than sales challenges, Opel highlighted "everstricter CO2 (carbon dioxide) regulations that the entire automotive industry is facing" as the main reason for Tuesday's move.

From this year, manufacturers in the EU must reach average CO2 emissions across their new vehicle fleets of below 95 grammes per kilometer, on pain of harsh fines.

Around 40,000 job cuts have already been announced by major German carmakers for the coming years-half of those at Daimler and Audi alone-as the industry scrambles to adapt to the changes, including a shift to less labor-intensive electric vehicles. German car production fell to its lowest level in 22 years in 2019. —AFP

Softbank-funded hotel firm Oyo lays off 10% of India staff

MUMBAI: Indian hotel giant Oyo said yesterday it is cutting 1,000 employees, or 10 percent of its local staff, as it battles multiple allegations including bribery and pressure from Japanese backer SoftBank to cut costs. An Indian newspaper said 2,400 jobs would go in total and that the firm, which has expanded aggressively in Asia and the Middle East under its 26-year-old founder, had offloaded around a quarter of its unprofitable properties.

SoftBank has backed a slew of start-ups but problems with some of the companies it has invested in including office-sharing firm WeWork and ride-hailing operator Uber had led to it pressuring others to slash costs. A source at Oyo said it was "letting go" the 1,000 employees in India, a tenth of its total strength. Bloomberg News reported last month that it has also laid off five percent of its 12,000 staff in China. In a letter sent to employees and investors and seen by AFP, Oyo founder Ritesh Agarwal said the company was reorganizing its teams, a process that would result in some jobs becoming "redundant".

This has not been an easy decision for us. We are doing everything we can to ensure that our outgoing colleagues receive as much assistance and support as possible through this transition," Agarwal said. Oyo has also offloaded about 25 percent of its unprofitable properties in India, the Economic Times daily quoted an unnamed senior company executive as saying.

In his letter, Agarwal also addressed "questionable" claims made in recent media reports, saying the behaviour described was against



Indian entrepreneur Ritesh Agarwal founded Oyo in 2013 and the company is now valued at \$10 billion. —AFP

the company's code of conduct. "We take all the allegations very seriously and are looking into each and every one," he said. A New York Times report published earlier this month said Oyo bribed government officials and resorted to unfair practices including fraudulent listings. Founded in 2013, Oyo, now valued at \$10 billion after a recent share buyback, is one of the world's biggest hotel chains. Oyo allows users to book rooms through its app and also runs a franchise business rebranding budget hotels and offering them to tourists looking for cheap but clean accommodation.

The firm is also facing a backlash in India over its customer service record and alleged non-payment of outstanding dues to property owners. Last October, Indian regulators opened antitrust investigations into Oyo and hotel-booking platform MakeMyTrip after hospitality firms and industry bodies complained the two companies were stifling competition. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini	Exchange Co.
	COUNTRIES
Japanese Yen	2.769
Indian Rupees	4.290
Pakistani Rupees	1.962
Srilankan Rupees	1.675
Nepali Rupees	2.681
Singapore Dollar	227.520
Hongkong Dollar	39.138
Bangladesh Taka	3.557
Philippine Peso	6.041
Thai Baht	10.085 77.801
Malaysian Ringgit	11.801
GCC C	OUNTRIES
Saudi Riyal	81.174
Qatari Riyal	83.606
ani Riyal	790.643
Bahraini Dinar	808.290
UAE Dirham	82.877
ARAB C	COUNTRIES
Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.700
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	19.115
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.222
Tunisian Dinar	114.790
Jordanian Dinar	429.330
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	0.203
Syrian Lira	0.000

Morocco Dirham

EUROPEAN &	AMERICAN COUNTRIES
US Dollar Transfer	304.200
Euro	341.920
Sterling Pound	400.330
Canadian dollar	234.990
Turkish lira	52.900
Swiss Franc	316.050
US Dollar Buying	296.850

Dollarco Exc	change Co. Ltd
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.850
Canadian Dollar	233.395
Sterling Pound	396.310
Euro	339.950
Swiss Frank	297.640
Bahrain Dinar	808.050
UAE Dirhams	83.130
Qatari Riyals	84.365
Saudi Riyals	81.920
Jordanian Dinar	429.845
Egyptian Pound	19.117
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.676
Indian Rupees	4.287
Pakistani Rupees	1.960
Bangladesh Taka	3.549
Philippines Pesso	6.017
Cyprus pound	18.080
Japanese Yen	3.760
Syrian Pound	1.590

2.685

Nepalese Rupees

hinese Yuan Renminbi hai Bhat	44.480 11.035	
urkish Lira	52.110	
ingapore dollars	224.778	
BAHRAIN EXC	CHANGE COMPAN	Y W
URRENCY	BUY	
	Europe	
ritish Pound	0.387898	0
zech Korune	0.005409	0
1 77	0.041221	

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
	Europe	
British Pound	0.387898	0.401798
Czech Korune	0.005409	0.014709
Danish Krone	0.041231	0.046231
Euro	0. 331038	0.344738
Georgian Lari	0.104655	0.104655
Hungarian	0.000923	0.001113
Norwegian Krone	0.030175	0.035375
Romanian Leu	0.053896	0.070746
Russian Ruble	0.004961	0.004961
Slovakia	0.009090	0.019090
Swedish Krona	0.028099	0.033099
Swiss Franc	0.306564	0.317564
	Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.201415	0.213415
New Zealand Dollar	0.195099	0.204599
	America	
Canadian Dollar	0.201415	0.213415
US Dollars	0.300100	0.304650
US Dollars Mint	0.300600	0.304650
	Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.002914	0.003715

Chinese Yuan	0.042807	0.046307
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037048	0.039798
Indian Rupee	0.003672	0.004444
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002677	0.002857
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070985	0.076985
Nepalese Rupee	0.002623	0.002963
Pakistan Rupee	0.001293	0.002063
Philippine Peso	0.005900	0.006200
Singapore Dollar	0.220357	0.230357
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001317	0.001897
Taiwan	0.010046	0.010226
Thai Baht	0.009714	0.010264
Vietnamese Dong	0.00013	0.000013
	Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.800751	0.808797
Egyptian Pound	0.019078	0.021819
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000199	0.000259
Jordanian Dinar	0.424149	0.433149
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000101	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020989	0.044989
Omani Riyal	0.785005	0.792892
Qatar Riyal	0.082901	0.083733
Saudi Riyal	0.080033	0.081333
Syrian Pound	0.001290	0.001510
Tunisian Dinar	0.103977	0.111977
Turkich Lira	0.045058	0.054803

0.082191

0.000989

0.083017

0.001069

UAE Dirham

Yemeni Rival

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Nissan rules out reported plans to split with Renault

Ghosn scandal fuelled speculation about a 'divorce'

TOKYO: Nissan is "in no way" planning to end its partnership with Renault, the Japanese auto giant insisted yesterday after a report suggested a divorce was possible in the wake of the Carlos Ghosn scandal. Britain's Financial Times, citing "several people with knowledge of the matter", said on Monday that senior executives at the scandal-hit firm were speeding up work on secret plans for a potential parting of ways with France's Renault.

But in a statement, Nissan firmly denied the claims. "Nissan is in no way considering dissolving the alliance," the statement said. "The alliance is the source of Nissan's competitiveness," the firm said, adding that it will look to continue delivering "win-win results for all member companies".

The partnership, which also includes Japan's Mitsubishi Motors, has been troubled since the shock arrest of its former chief Ghosn on charges of financial misconduct.

Ghosn, who last month jumped bail in Japan and fled to Lebanon, claims the charges against him were cooked up by disgruntled Nissan executives hoping to block his plans to more closely integrate the automaker with Renault. In a news conference in Lebanon, he claimed the alliance was now on the rocks and directionless.

The alliance's new chief, Jean-Dominique Senard, earlier hit back at the reports of a planned split, telling Belgian daily L'Echo the claims had "no connection to the current situation of the alliance".

"The Renault-Nissan alliance is not dead! Soon we will show you why," he said in an interview published yesterday. "I ask myself, where does this sort of information come from? I am not sure it comes from a place of goodwill."

Meanwhile in Paris, French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire dismissed the report as "malicious information" in an interview on the French TV station CNEWS

He said it aimed to "destabilize the group, cause trouble at a moment when, on the contrary, we are in the process of rehabilitating the alliance between Renault and Nissan, which had indeed gone through a rough patch". The 20-year partnership between Nissan and Renault, whose alliance is based on cross-shareholdings without a joint structure, has been badly shaken by the Ghosn scandal.

At the close on the Tokyo market, Nissan dropped 2.96 percent to 618 yen despite the firm company denial. Shares in Renault slumped 2.82 percent on Monday, but were stable in yesterday morning trading. Senard said the alliance was "nowhere near" the point of collapse and insisted its leaders were busy "recreating its original spirit" and planning future investments.

A source close to Nissan told AFP that the leaks probably came from "a few disgruntled souls" inside the company who wanted to "vent their frustration", adding that rebuilding trust between the two firms "will take time".—AFP



US bike firms face uphill slog to replace Chinese supply chains

CHICAGO: When Mehdi Farsi decided to shift production of State Bicycle Co's niche fixed-gear urban bikes out of China to escape US tariffs, it took months to find another factory in Asia willing to do business with his Arizona company. Farsi, who founded the firm in 2009 with his brother and another cycle fanatic, turned to Taiwan but soon found most factories were so swamped with business from rivals that they declined his "low volume and less profitable" orders

The company's struggle to find a competitive manufacturing alternative to China epitomizes the challenges many US firms have faced since the start of the trade war between the world's two biggest economies 18 months ago. A survey by Cowen & Co. at the end of 2019 found only 28 percent of North American companies had switched supply chains away from China. Of those firms, just a fraction had managed to shift 75 percent or more of their supply chain to a different country.

Alternatives often lack the infrastructure and capacity to absorb everyone seeking a new base. That has driven up the costs of moving and sourcing new supply chains to the point where some U.S. firms say it makes more sense just to take the tariff hit.

A Phase 1 trade deal between Beijing and Washington, expected to be signed on Wednesday, will at least hold off increasing tariffs US President Donald Trump imposed on bicycles from China. But the 25 percent tariff on bikes and a host of other products will remain in

place to give the US leverage in further talks. The bike industry is a small part of what experts call the biggest shake-up in cross-border supply chains since China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001.

From furniture, electronics, apparel, tires, vacuum cleaners, to name a few, companies are moving operations to Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and other Asian countries.

'CHRISTMAS GIFT'

Farsi's experience with State Bicycle echoes the Cowen & Co findings. After months of research and several trips, a small Taiwanese factory agreed to make his bikes but he had to triple orders and pay 30 percent of the cost of goods up front, unlike in China where he paid upon delivery.

The new terms locked up as much as \$1 million of working capital until the bikes were shipped and required a new credit line. After a year of toil, State Bicycle managed to shift production of only two of its five models which are sold in the United States. "It took a lot of time and resources," said Farsi.

Gina Chang, secretary general of the Taiwan Bicycle Association, likened the Sino-US trade war to a "Christmas gift". But she said the island's limited capacity meant some manufacturers had turned down business to focus on existing orders, mainly for e-bikes from Europe.

Taiwan's U.S. bike exports jumped 37 percent to 597,000 in the first 10 months of 2019, the association said. But Chang said manufacturers were hesitant about expanding production lines as they feared orders might dwindle if the trade war ended. "Trump is fickle ... will the shift of orders continue in 2020?" she said. "We need to wait and see."

In a move to help bicycle companies, the Trump administration has been granting tariff exclusions to some of their imports since September. The relief,



Gabe Ortiz services one of the company's products at State Bicycle in Tempe, Arizona, US. —Reuters

however, is only for a year and is meant to give them more time to move production - ideally to the United States.

But Don DiCostanzo, chief executive officer of Pedego Electric Bikes in California, said higher labor costs and the absence of a viable supply base have made it "virtually impossible" to assemble bikes in the United States. DiCostanzo examined setting up a US factory but said production costs would have doubled - and exceeded the tariffs. He moved Pedego's production to Vietnam in December 2018 instead.

OVERBURDENED

"Even if they slap 100 percent tariffs on bicycles, I'm not sure that will be enough to bring production back to the US," DiCostanzo said. Farsi, meanwhile, said he didn't even consider moving production to the United States and lingering uncertainty about tariffs has left him no option but to stay invested in Taiwan - despite the 12-month relief.

In the 1970s, the United States assembled more than 15 million bicycles a year. Now it makes fewer than 500,000, according to industry data presented to the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in 2018. By contrast, China made about 95 percent of the 17 million bikes sold in 2018, US Census data showed. The world's second-largest economy also provides more than 300 million components such as tires, tubes, seats and handlebars - or about 60 percent of US bike component imports.

While none of the alternative manufacturing bases can easily supplant China, a rush for safe havens has kept their factories very busy. Taiwan, for example, accounted for 6.3 percent of US bicycle imports in 2019, up from 3.6 percent a year earlier, according to US Census bureau data.

And with their factories bursting at the seams, Taiwanese suppliers are quoting higher prices.

Citigroup profit beats as credit card, trading revenue jump

NEW YORK: Citigroup Inc beat analysts' estimates for fourth-quarter profit yesterday, boosted by growth in its credit card business and a jump in trading revenue. North American branded cards, which account for a majority of consumer banking revenue, continued to be a bright spot for the bank, clocking double-digit revenue growth for the second straight quarter. Revenue grew 10% from a year earlier.

Citi has been leveraging its robust card business to help grow deposits by pitching checking and savings accounts to card holders. Trading revenue rose nearly 31 percent as markets steadied during the last three months of 2019. The gains were driven by a 49 percent surge in fixed-income trading that offset a 23 percent decline in equities trading, where weak performance in derivatives weighed on results.

In the year-earlier quarter, the bank's equities trading business came under pressure from a spike in volatility, while a widening of the yield spreads weighed on the fixed-income business.

Citi also reached a key profitability target. The third-largest US bank by assets hit a return on tangible common equity (ROTCE) of 12.1 percent for 2019, above the goal of 12 percent it promised investors for the year. ROTCE is a widely watched measure of how well a bank uses shareholder money to generate profits.

The lender's shares were up about 1 percent in premarket trade. Citi continued to add loans and deposits in the most recent quarter, reflecting continued growth in the economy.—Reuters

New CEO tells staff Boeing must be 'transparent'

NEW YORK: New Boeing Chief Executive David Calhoun told employees on Monday the company must strengthen its culture, focus on "integrity" and be "transparent," according to an email sent to staff.

Calhoun, a longtime Boeing board member, officially took over on Monday as chief executive, replacing Dennis Muilenburg, who was ousted in December as the company faces a drawn-out crisis following deadly crashes of a top-selling jet. Calhoun invoked Boeing's "tremendous legacy of aerospace achievement" and called on employees to work to "rebuild trust" and restore key relationships with customers, partners and regulators.

"I see greatness in this company but I also see opportunities to be better. Much better," Calhoun said.

"That includes engaging one another and our stakeholders with greater transparency, holding ourselves accountable to the highest standards of safety and quality and incorporating outside-in perspective on what we do and how we do it." He takes the reins four days after the release of a new trove of embarrassing employee emails, including one saying the 737 MAX was "designed by clowns."

The aircraft has been grounded since March following two deadly crashes.

Boeing faces numerous probes and lawsuits over the crashes. The incidents have already cost the company more than \$9 billion and led to the suspension of production of the 737 MAX due to lengthy delays in winning regulatory approval to resume flights. Calhoun said returning the MAX to service safely "must be our primary focus," and that includes "following the lead of our regulators and working with them to ensure they're satisfied completely with the airplane and our work, so that we can continue to meet our customer commitments." Deteriorating relations between Boeing and the US Federal Aviation Administration were a chief factor in Muilenburg's ouster, with agency chief Steve Dickson publicly calling out Boeing for making statements about the MAX's return "designed to force FAA into taking quicker action."

Right pick?

While lawmakers in Congress and Wall Street analysts had called for change atop Boeing, some have questioned whether Calhoun's lengthy service on the Boeing board makes him an ideal pick for resetting the company. After Calhoun was selected, Bank of



America Merrill Lynch said in a December note it had "mixed feelings" in light of Calhoun's background.

Victorville, California. —AFP

"We wonder if appointing from within, especially an insider that has been with the company for 10 years, signals more of the same from Boeing vs an outside appointee who may have offered more of a change of pace and culture,"

the bank said in a commentary.

But others have noted that Calhoun has hands-on experience in industrial leadership, having overseen a General

Electric division that oversaw aircraft engines, rail, among other units.

Calhoun also served as chief executive at data analytics company Nielsen and as a senior executive at the Blackstone Group. "While it could be argued that because Calhoun has been with Boeing for the entirety of the MAX's history, he may be too close to the ensuing crisis, we think that his clear understanding of the aviation industry is the paramount qualification for this job," Morningstar said in December. —AFP

UK to ban use of credit cards for gambling

LONDON: Britain will from April ban the use of credit cards to pay for bets, its gambling regulator announced yesterday, the latest clampdown on the industry.

"The Gambling Commission has announced a ban on gambling businesses allowing consumers in Great Britain to use credit cards to gamble," a statement said. The ban comes into effect on April 14 and follows a measure introduced last year by the British government to slash the maximum stake on electronic casino-style games aimed at curbing their addictive appeal.

On banning the use of credit cards, Gambling Commission chief executive Neil McArthur said Tuesday:

"Credit card gambling can lead to significant financial harm. The ban that we have announced today should minimize the risks of harm to consumers from gambling with money they do not have." McArthur said that 22 percent of Britain's online gamblers using credit cards are "problem gamblers".

"There are examples of consumers who have accumulated tens of thousands of pounds of debt through gambling because of credit card availability," he said. "There is also evidence that the fees charged by credit cards can exacerbate the situation because the consumer can try to chase losses to a greater extent."

The Commission noted that 24 million adults in Britain gamble, including 10.5 million online. "Whilst millions gamble responsibly, I have also met people whose lives have been turned upside down by gambling addiction," Culture Minister Helen Whately said in yesterday's statement.—AFP

Business

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

KIB awarded 'Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA' 2019

Recognition for a fourth consecutive year

KUWAIT: In recognition of its remarkable growth in the banking sector, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was awarded 'Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA' 2019 for a fourth consecutive year by Capital Finance International (CFI.co); an organization specializing in the finance and banking sectors.

This achievement underlines the merit of KIB's new strategic direction; a key component for its remarkable growth and expansion in the banking sector. Evaluated by an independent judging panel composed of specialized editors, the Bank was assessed against several key criteria, namely: financial performance, risk management, corporate governance, customer service, innovation, corporate social responsibility, market leadership, transparency, response to market demands, and number of votes.

On this occasion, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KIB, -Raed Jawad Bukhamseen congratulated all



KIB staff for winning this prestigious award, saying: This award bears testament to KIB's commitment to excellence, leveraging the latest technologies to better serve its clients and taking on an active role in the regional economy. We continue to deliver products and services that push boundaries in a highly-competitive market, reflecting our growing strength and leading role in the local financial landscape."

Bukhamseen pointed out that KIB has collected the 'Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA' award for a fourth consecutive year. As a repeat winner in CFI.co award programs, the judges have witnessed KIB's impressive performance trajectory over the years. In 2018, the Bank was included in the Premier Market segment of Boursa Kuwait, further boosting its investor profile at the regional and international levels. In 2019, KIB issued a \$300 million AT1 perpetual Sukuk to fuel its local expansion plans and enhance its capital base.

CFI.co is an international, independent assessment body specializing in finance and banking. A prominent, London-based organization, CFI.co combines views from leading multilateral and national organizations with thought leadership from some of the world's top minds to bring you news, analysis and commentary on markets worldwide. The organization also recognizes both individuals and institutions that demonstrate high standards of innovation and performance excellence in the global financial market.



Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners are:

- 1. Ahmad Aifan Sultan Jarboua Al-Zaferi
- 2. Alsheikha Loulwah Khalifah Abdullah Al-Sabah
- **3.** Aqila Zaman

4. Saleem Syed Syed Ismail

5. Mohammad Abdulwahab Ibrahim Al-Ayyadi

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

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

Malabar Gold & Diamonds' new store at Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India was inaugurated by Satish Mahana, Minister for Industrial Development, Uttar Pradesh on 11th Jan 2020 in the presence of Asher O, Managing D<u>irector - India</u> operations, management team members, media and well-wishers.

KAMCO Report on Equity Markets

Equity markets post healthy gains in 2019

KUWAIT: Equity markets in almost all major global financial centers posted healthy growth in 2019 despite several warnings of slower global economic growth rates, amid the US-China trade war, and declining international trade volumes. The MSCI World index closed the year with a gain of 25.2 percent, supported primarily by the US in addition to double digit gains for most other developed markets. Emerging markets also posted healthy gains of 15 percent during the year. Positive performance was also seen in almost all the major asset classes, with oil prices showing a growth of more than 23 percent. The top performing asset classes of 2019 witnessed a steep reversal from their lows of 2018.

US equity markets recorded the best yearly performance among major equity markets across the globe. With a return of 29 percent for the S&P 500 index and an even higher 35 percent return for the Nasdaq Composite index for 2019, the US equity markets closed little short of the record high level touched during late December. Markets in Europe also had a positive run during the year with the DJ Stoxx 600 index gaining 23 percent during the year. In the Asia Pacific region, gains were slightly less but nevertheless positive and in double digits at 16.3 percent for the MSCI Asia Pacific Index.

Performance of the GCC equity markets were also positive during the year, barring Oman a decline of 7.9 percent was recorded. The MSCI GCC Index witnessed a gain of 5.9 percent, its fourth consecutive year of gains. Kuwaiti indices were the best performers in the MENA region and also one of the best performing globally. Dubai posted a gain of 9.3 percent after declining for the previous two years while Saudi Arabia posted a gain for the fourth consecutive year at 7.2 percent. In the MENA region, Egypt reported gains of 7.1 percent while most other

Clear disconnect

The year 2019 proved to be a recovery year for most major global financial markets after a majority of these markets declined during 2018. Gains during the year came despite several warnings from various international agencies regarding a slowdown in economic growth rates. Most of these estimates were based on the decline in international trade due to the unresolved trade war between two of the world's largest trading partners-US and China. Nevertheless, in what was termed as a part of the 'Phase one' deal, the two countries made some progress on a trade deal during mid-December that provided a big boost to the equity markets. Also, the year 2020 started with more concrete steps towards a trade deal with the US President announcing 15-January-2020 as the date of signing of the Phase One Trade Deal between the two countries followed by a Phase Two deal in the coming months.

Equity market performance during the year showed corporate optimism that hoped for an economic recovery during the year. The US markets touched record highs during the year backed by technology stocks while on the other hand the consumer retail segment suffered amid efficiency improvement measures. European stock markets also gained during the year with Greece, Russia and Italy being the best performing markets during the year with returns of 43 percent, 29 percent and 28 percent, respectively. The larger markets in the region also saw healthy gains with France recording a gain of 26.4 percent followed by Germany and UK with gains of 25.5 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively. UK's stock market was lagging behind its European peers for the most part of the year but post the election results in December-19, the market reported gains that pushed it to double digit territory. In the Emerging Market space, China was one of the best performing equity markets with a gain of 22.3 percent while India's SENSEX recorded a surge of 14.4 percent. The overall MSCI Emerging Market index was up by 15.4 percent during the year.

In terms of other asset classes, the broader global commodity gauge was up 17.6 percent, with crude oil being the best performer with a gain of more than 23 percent, whereas natural gas was one of the few asset types that declined during the year by more than 25 percent. Prices of gold gained during the year as its safe haven status got strengthened while the greenback weakened led by the JS-China trade talks. Both the Global High Yield and the Investment grade bond indices saw gains during the year at 13.4 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively.

After ending 2018 as the best performing market, GCC equity markets underperformed global peers during 2019, reporting significantly lower gains during the year. The MSCI GCC index reported a gain of 5.9 percent during the year as geopolitical issues and subdued oil prices as compared to historical levels, affected investor sentiments towards regional markets. Volatility in the GCC was one of the highest on record, and was in line with the US markets with both recording 37 days when the markets moved more than 1 percent during the year as compared to 32 days and 64 days for the GCC and US equity market in 2018, respectively. In addition, gains for the individual markets also varied across the GCC, with Kuwait reporting gains of 23.7 percent during the year, while on the other hand, Oman reported a decline of 7.9 percent. Last year's best performing market, Oatar, reported marginal gains of 1.2 percent while 2018's worst performer, Dubai, reported a gain this year of 9.3 percent. Saudi Arabia was one of the most volatile markets during the year with YTD gains reaching around 20 percent during the first half of the year being wiped off by 9M-19 post the MSCI inclusion, as well as due to the attacks on Aramco's oil facilities during

Nevertheless, the Kingdom reported gains during the last quarter and closed the year with a gain of 7.2 percent. Market performance during the year was once again swayed by regional geopolitics in addition to oil price movement while changes in international markets had minimal impact on the GČC, as gains in the international market were significantly more than the GCC markets.

Lack of catalysts was also one of the primarily reasons for the subdued performance of most major markets in the GCC. Kuwait was the only market that benefited from the MSCI upgrade announcement, whereas Saudi Arabia's gains during December-19 came primarily after

the listing of Aramco. On the other hand, international events like the US China trade war affected prospects of stronger economic growth across the region denting investor sentiments. In terms of sector performance, the Food Beverage & Tobacco sector posted the biggest gain during the year, primarily on the back of multifold gains in the shares of Abu Dhabi-listed IHC further supported by gain in shares of Saudi Arabia's Sadafco.

The Utilities sector also witnessed gains of more than 25 percent solely on the back of gain in shares of Saudilisted utilities giants Saudi Electricity and National Gas and Industrialization Co. Meanwhile, Banking sector was

GCC Equity Markets	Index Closing	2019 Chg%	M-Cap (USD Bn)	2019 Value Traded (USD Mn)	P/E(x) TIM	P/B (x) TTM	Div. Yield
Kuwait - Premier Market Index	6,976.0	32.4%	120.3	26,270.0	16.8	1.5	3.4%
Kuwait - Main Market Index	4,910.7	3.6%					
Kuwait - All Share Index	6,282.5	23.7%					
Saudi Arabia	8,389.2	7.2%	2,397.8	234,679.6	17.9	2.1	4.1%
Abu Dhabi	5,075.8	3.3%	144.0	14,050.4	12.8	1.4	4.9%
Dubai	2,764.9	9.3%	98.0	13,791.5	6.8	0.9	4.3%
Qatar	10,425.5	1.2%	160.1	18,619.9	14.2	1.4	4.0%
Bahrain	1,610.2	20.4%	24.3	794.5	11.1	1.0	4.4%
Oman	3,981.2	(7.9%)	17.1	1,722.4	8.1	0.7	7.2%
Total GCC			2,961.6	309,928.3	16.4	1.9	4.1%

one of the strongest performing large cap sectors in the GCC with gains of almost 20 percent. Bank's performance was positive for a majority of the markets with 50 GCC banks seeing their stocks gain during the year while shares of 14 banks receded. In terms of trading activity, value traded on GCC stock exchanges gained 5.5 percent to reach \$310 billion in 2019 as compared to \$294 billion during 2018. Kuwait and Abu Dhabi witnessed significantly higher trading activity during the year while Dubai, Bahrain and Oman recorded declines

Kuwait upbeat

Kuwait's benchmark index recorded positive performance for the fourth consecutive year with gains across most major indices and in all the market segments. The gains were primarily on the back of talks of MSCI upgrading Kuwait to Emerging Market which was announced during December-19. The Premier Market index was the best performing index during the year with gains of 32.4 percent backed by positive performance in 14 out of the 19 constituents in the index. A majority of the stocks that are expected to be included in the MSCI's Emerging Market index are constituents of the Premier Market index which led to heavy buying during the year. These gains helped offset the muted gain for the main index at 3.6 percent resulting in 23.7 percent gain for the All Share Index. The year saw Kuwait's total market cap gain KD 7.4 billion to reach KD 36.3 billion. The sector performance chart for 2019 showed gains predominantly came on the back of large cap sectors including Banks and Telecom which together accounted for 70 percent of the total stock exchange market cap. The Banking index topped the sector performance chart for the year with a gain of 35.7 percent followed by the Telecom index with a gain of 25.8 percent. On the decliner's side, the Technology Index saw the steepest decline of 34.4 percent primarily on the back of fall in shares of ASC. The Basic Materials index also declined by almost 22 percent led by decline in shares of three out of four stocks in the sector. In the Banking sector, shares of 9 out of 10 Kuwaiti banks saw gains during the year with Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait being the only local back which saw its shares decline. KFH was the biggest gainer in the sector with its shares up by 46 percent during the year followed by 34.7 percent gains for NBK. The two banks account for almost 60 percent of the banking sector market cap in Kuwait. In the Telecom sector, shares of Zain were up by 33.6 percent during the year further supported by 16 percent gain in shares of Ooredoo Kuwait that more than offset the decline in shares of AAN Digital Services and STC Kuwait.

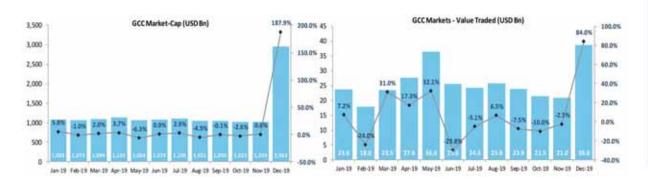


Trading activity on the exchange almost doubled during the year primarily on the back of buying led by positive sentiments surrounding the MSCI decision. Total value traded was up 92 percent to reach KD 7.9 billion in 2019 as compared to KD 4.1 billion during the previous year.

Volume traded was also up by 82 percent during the year at 39 billion shares as compared to 21.4 billion shares during 2018. Banks once again dominated trading activity during the year with KFH topping the yearly value traded chart with KD 1.3 billion in trades followed by NBK at KD 1.1 billion in trades. AUB Bahrain and Gulf Bank were next on the chart with trades of KD 810 million and KD 709 million during the year, respectively. The top five stocks by value traded accounted for 56 percent of the value traded during the year. In terms of yearly volume. AUB Bahrain topped with 3.1 billion shares traded during the year followed by Aayan Leasing and Gulf bank with 2.8 billion and 2.4 billion shares traded during the year, respectively.

Saudi Stock Exchange

The Saudi Stock Exchange continued to witness steep volatility during 2019, following the trend seen in the previous year. The benchmark reached a YTD-19 gain of almost 20 percent during May-19 but geopolitical events and the sell-off after the inclusion in the MSCI index wiped off most of the gains by the close of the year. Nevertheless, the listing of Aramco helped push investor sentiments towards the close of the year with gains of 1.5 percent in November-19 followed by 6.7 percent gains in December-19 resulting in a full year gain of 7.2 percent for TASI. This was also the fourth consecutive year of gains for the benchmark. The listing of Aramco also pushed the exchange's market cap multifold from SAR 1.9 Trillion in 2018 to SAR 9.0 Trillion at the end of 2019.





Ooredoo Kuwait concludes 'Join the Fight' CrossFit competition

oredoo Kuwait, the first to launch innovated digital services in Kuwait concluded its sponsorship of 'Join the Fight' against Rheumatoid disease competition. 'Join the Fight' is CrossFit competition organized by Neon Fitness and Tamper which aims to raise funds and awareness of Rheumatoid Disease. The CrossFit was held last Friday January 10 from 8 am to 7 pm on Abdulmunim Riyadh Street in Kuwait City. All the raised funds will be donated to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to provide treatment to the ever increasing number of rheumatoid patients who cannot afford the high costs of treatment. A large number of social media celebrities in Kuwait supported the cause, such as Dana Al-Tuwarish, Hajer Jamal, Nourah Al-Ameeri, and Yalda Golsharifi.

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease that results in a chronic, systematic inflammatory disorder that may affect many tissues and organs, and mainly attacks flexible joints. It can be a disabling and painful condition which can lead to substantial loss of



Mijbil Alayoub

mobility if not treated adequately.

Commenting on the company's sponsorship, Mijbil Alayoub, Senior Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "We always believe in the importance of playing an active role in participating to help others. We are

honoured to have worked with 'Join the Fight' and Kuwait Red Crescent Society and we look forward to taking part in more events that contribute to the society".

Ooredoo's support to this cause comes in line with the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, which focuses a great deal on supporting health initiative and promoting a healthier Kuwait.







LuLu Hypermarket announces winners of 'Shop & Win' promotion

■ uLu Hypermarket, the leading mum of KD10 at any LuLu Hypermarket retailer in the region, announced the winners of its 'Shop at LuLu & Win' promotion, which was held in association with Kalyan Jewellers.

The promotion, which ran from 20th November to 10th January, saw six winners each walking away with a prize 250 grams of gold, for a total of 1.5kg gold, from Kalyan Jewellers. The promotion offered customers, shopping for a miniin the country, an e-raffle coupon that entered them into the grand draw.

To add further delight to the shoppers taking part in the promotion, e-raffle coupon holders were also eligible for other prizes like gold vouchers/diamond vouchers/ zero percent making charges on purchases from all outlets of Kalyan Jewellers in Kuwait during the promotion period.

The winners of the 'Shop at LuLu & Win' were announced at the grand draw held at the Ministry of Commerce premises on 14th January, in the presence of ministry officials and top officials from Lulu Hypermarket and Kalyan Jewellers in Kuwait. The 'Shop at LuLu & Win' promotion is part of the hypermarket's commitment to continue interacting with their patrons at every retail touch-point, from offering high quality products at competitive prices, to providing a relaxing and comfortable shopping ambiance, and making the experience of shopping at LuLu an enjoyable and exciting experience through their frequent value-driven promotions.

n a hot morning in December, Haitian

farmer Remy Augustin lifted a pickaxe

that was taller than him and began

digging holes in a small plot of land. In each

hole he dropped a few kernels of maize,

we're aerating the land ourselves," said

Augustin, 55, lamenting the days when the

land he tilled was his own. "The land I had

was better - it gave me so many bananas,

Nine years ago, the father of five was

working on government land he rented when

"a tractor destroyed everything". The land

was earmarked for the Caracol industrial

park, a venture led by South Korean textile

firm Sae-A Trading Co Ltd and financed by

international donors to spur development fol-

lowing Haiti's devastating 2010 earthquake.

"I don't have money to pay for a tractor, so

which he covered with loose dirt.

peas, beans."



ICSK to hold **Higher ducation** Fair 2020

The Indian Community School (Senior), Kuwait, is conducting the Higher Education Fair for the second time on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th January 2020. Higher Education Fair 2020 is an exclusive programme which is not only a University Exhibition but also comprises of Career Guidance Seminars. It caters to the needs of the Indian Students of classes 9, 10, 11 & 12 all over Kuwait to understand the revolutionary developments taking place in the field of career.

The Higher Education Fair consists of an aptitude test & one to one counselling sessions by career experts from India followed by career guidance seminars & university stall visits to give a road map to the students to streamline their career

For the first time in Middle East, this year, Indian Institute of Technology-IIT Roorkee & National Institute of Fashion Technology-NIFT New Delhi are also conducting separate sessions to guide the students towards the right career path. Sessions by IIT Directors are at 7.00 pm on 17th Jan 2020 & 11.00 am on 18th Jan 2020. NIFT Directors will be conducting the Sessions at 06.30~pm on 17th Jan 2020& 11.30 am on 18th Jan 2020.

The highlight of the fair is the pres-Colleges from all around the world

ICSK is bringing to Kuwait the topmost Career Guru & popular columnist Dr. B. S. Warrier (Indian universities) and prominent USA based career guidance specialist Jihad Yaacoub (Foreign universities) who will conduct the career guidance seminars from their repertoire of experience and knowledge and will clear all the queries regarding various career prospects so that students can wholly benefit from the range of opportunities set before them. These seminars are free of cost. Dr. B.S. Warrier (celebrated pioneer with a vast experience of more than 30 years, author of 16 books on Career Guidance) will be conducting the sessions on Indian Universities on 17th January 2020 at 09.30 am - 12 Noon & 03.30 pm - 05.30 pm & 18th January 2020 at 09.00 am - 11.00 am & 03.30 pm - 05.00 pm. Jihad will be holding his sessions on Foreign Universities on 17th January 2020 at 02.00 pm - 03.00 pm & 05.30 pm - 06.30 pm & 18th January 2020 at 12 Noon - 01.00 pm,02.00 pm - 03.00 pm

& 05.00 pm - 06.00 pm.

ence of more than 50 Universities/ whose personnels will have their stalls in the school premises providing the students and their parents a broader spectrum of understanding the challenges and nuances of Higher Education. ICSK's Higher Educational Fair 2020 is a unique opportunity for the children to get the information and knowledge about the opportunities from all over the world that await them and have a long term effect in

@ ICSK Senior (Essa Al Qatami Street, Block - 10) for all Indian Students in Kuwait {Classes 9,10,11 & 12

FREE CAREER GUIDANCE SEMINARS & UNIVERSITY EXHIBITION

Located in Haiti's northern region, the \$300 million park opened in 2012 and now employs approximately 15,000 people, most of whom work in clothing factories there, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), one of the park's main financial backers. In 2018 farmers like Augustin who had

been evicted from their land in 2011 struck a rare deal with the IDB to provide Caracol's 100 most vulnerable families with new, titled land. But 10 years after the earthquake that killed more than 200,000 people and made 1.5 million homeless, the farmers are still waiting to receive compensation for their land used to build the Caracol park.

Augustin now works as a laborer on a plot owned by his niece, struggling to pay his children's school fees for the coming year.

"I have to share this land with my whole family," Augustin told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I don't have anything of my own."

Driven from land

International donors pledged nearly \$10 billion to help Haiti recover after the 2010 earthquake, which destroyed or damaged

after 'groundbreaking' land deal 300,000 homes in the capital Port-au-Prince and surrounding cities, said the International Organization for Migration.

Haiti farmers to receive compensation

To make space for the park, in 2011, 366 Haitian families - including 720 farmers were evicted from their land, according to charity ActionAid Haiti.

Neither the government, the IDB, nor USAID - another of the park's main funders responded to requests to verify those figures. A spokeswoman for Sae-A Trading Co Ltd described the textile firm as a "tenant of the park", adding it had been involved neither in its construction nor in the 2018 land deal.

Local farmer and activist Milostene Castin said that from 2011 to 2013 the IDB gave the farmers an annual living stipend of \$80 per family member, and paid \$1,450 for each hectare of land, well below the land's value.

"The cash compensation that was received by the vast majority of the farmers was not sufficient to purchase new land or to establish new livelihoods," said Lani Inverarity, a lawyer at San Francisco-based charity Accountability Counsel, which promotes

The IDB later promised the farmers new plots of land, but "year after year the land never came", said Castin, who works for local organization Action for Reforestation and Environmental Defense (AREDE).

Families that once lived off of the food they grew "were struggling just to eat", he said. Eventually, the IDB identified a swath of replacement land, but when Castin went to inspect it, other farmers were there already,

Collective action

Fed up with waiting, hundreds of farmers formed a collective in 2014 to fight for land. In 2017, with the help of ActionAid Haiti and AREDE, the farmers filed a complaint against the IDB, demanding new land with legal titles to prove ownership so they could resume farming.

Their self-organizing paid off: After more than a year of meetings, the IDB agreed to

purchase new, titled land for 100 of the most vulnerable families. Others were offered alternative compensation such as irrigation schemes or money to invest in personal businesses. One member of each family will also be offered employment at the industrial park, according to the IDB.

"The farmers' story is a really incredible one of persistence in the face of incredible power imbalances," said Inverarity of the Accountability Counsel, which supported the farmers throughout the complaints

"Typically, IFIs (international financial institutions) try their best to stay out of these disputes, leaving it to the company or government entity to respond. However, here the IDB genuinely turned up," said Inverarity.

Andy White, coordinator of Washingtonbased advocacy group Rights and Resources Initiative, agreed, calling the land agreement 'groundbreaking for Haiti". "We are seeing more and more cases like this around the world where communities have fought back against international investors to demand respect for their land rights," he added. "But this is the first case I'm aware of this scale and this nature.'

Complex process

Implementation of the agreement is behind schedule due to logistical challenges in identifying the most vulnerable families - among other hurdles - who are still waiting to receive compensation, according to the Accountability Counsel.

It is meeting with all farmers to figure out how they would like to receive financing to obtain title deeds to a parcel of land. Assuming the IDB disburses the funds soon, Accountability Counsel said what happened in Haiti's north could be seen as a successful model of how communities displaced by development projects can self-organize to demand new, titled land. The group is currently monitoring more than 1,200 cases in which local communities are facing similar issues in 129 countries across the world. "About 13% of concluded cases have gone through a dispute resolution process like in Haiti," resulting in 90 agreements globally, said Sarah Singh, the Accountability Counsel's global communities director. — Reuters

Health & Science

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

WHO says new China coronavirus could spread, warns hospitals worldwide

GENEVA: There may have been limited human-to- there is limited human-to-human transmission, potenfamilies, and it is possible there could be a wider outbreak, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause infections ranging from the common cold to SARS. A Chinese woman has been quarantined in Thailand with a mystery strain of coronavirus, Thai authorities said on Monday, the first time the virus has been detected outside China.

In all, 41 cases of pneumonia have been reported in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, which preliminary lab tests cited by state media showed could be from a new type of coronavirus. One of the patients has died. "From the information that we have it is possible that

DUBAI: At least 78 children in war-torn Yemen have

died from dengue-related illnesses, Save the Children

said yesterday, warning of an epidemic. "Seventy-eight

children under 16 have already died in the outbreak of

dengue-related illness in Yemen, with more than 52,000

suspected cases being recorded across the country,"

Yemen dengue

epidemic kills 78 children

the aid group said in a statement.

THINNHOSPITAL

human transmission of a new coronavirus in China within tially among families, but it is very clear right now that we have no sustained human-to-human transmission," said Maria Van Kerkhove, acting head of WHO's emerging diseases unit. The WHO is however preparing for the possibility that there could be a wider outbreak, she told a Geneva news briefing. "It is still early days, we don't have a clear clinical picture."

Some types of the virus cause less serious diseases, while others - like the one that causes MERS - are far more severe. The UN agency has given guidance to hospitals worldwide about infection control in case the new virus spreads. There is no specific treatment for the new virus, but anti-virals are being considered and could be "re-purposed", Van Kerkhove said. — Reuters

It added this "could signal the start of an epidemic." Save the Children said that a total of 192 people have died in Yemen last year from dengue-related illnesses — most cases reported in the port cities of Hodeida and Aden.

"Hodeida has the second highest death rate in the country with 62 adult and children deaths in 2019. We have never seen anything like this before," said Save the Children's field coordinator in Yemen, Mariam Aldogani, herself recovering from dengue fever. "More than 40 of our staff including their families have been affected by the fever." According to the Red Cross in November, Yemen was already grappling with an epidemic of the viral disease, which is transmitted by several species of mosquito that breed in stagnant water. — AFP

Russian firm offers free path to immortality

SERGIYEV POSAD, Russia: When Alexei Voronenkov's 70-year-old mother passed away, he paid to have her brain frozen and stored in the hope breakthroughs in science will one day be able to bring her back to life. It is one of 71 brains and human cadavers - which Russian company KrioRus calls its "patients" - floating in liquid nitrogen in one of several meters-tall vats in a corrugated metal shed outside

They are stored at -196 degrees Celsius (-320.8°F) with the aim of protecting them against deterioration, although there is currently no evidence science will be able to revive the dead. "I did this because we were very close and I think it is the only chance for us to meet in the future," said Voronenkov who intends to undergo the procedure, known as cryonics, when he dies.

The head of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Pseudoscience Commission, Evgeny Alexandrov, described cryonics as "an exclusively commercial undertaking that does not have any scientific basis",

in comments to the Izvestia newspaper. It is "a fantasy speculating on people's hopes of resurrection from the dead and dreams of eternal life," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

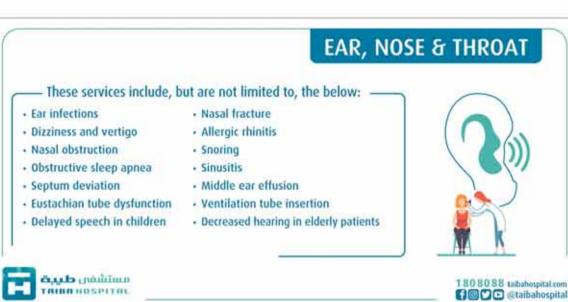
Valeriya Udalova, KrioRus's director who got her dog frozen when it died in 2008, said it is likely that humankind will develop the technology to revive dead people in the future, but that there is no guarantee of such technology. KrioRus says hundreds of potential clients from nearly 20 countries have signed up for its after-death service.

It costs \$36,000 for a whole body and \$15,000 for the brain alone for Russians, who earn average monthly salaries of \$760, according to official statistics. Prices are slightly higher for non-Russians. The company says it is the only one in Russia and the surrounding region. Set up in 2005, it has at least two competitors in the United States, where the practice dates back further.

Voronenkov said he set his hopes on science. "I hope one day it reaches a level when we can produce artificial bodies and organs to create an artificial body where my mother's brain can be integrated." KrioRus' director Udalova argues that those paying to have dying relatives' remains preserved are showing how much they love them. "They try to bring hope," she said. "What can we do for our dying relatives or the ones that we love? A nice burial, a photo album," she said. "They go further, proving their love even more." — Reuters



Kuwait 📤 Times 248 33 199









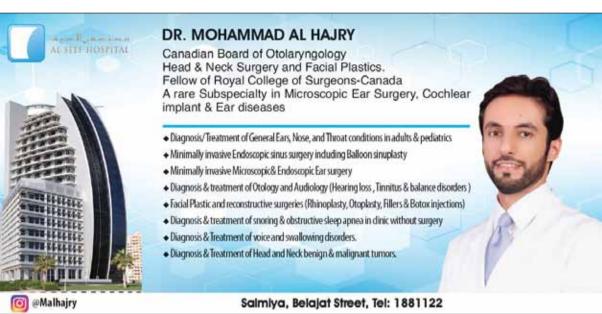
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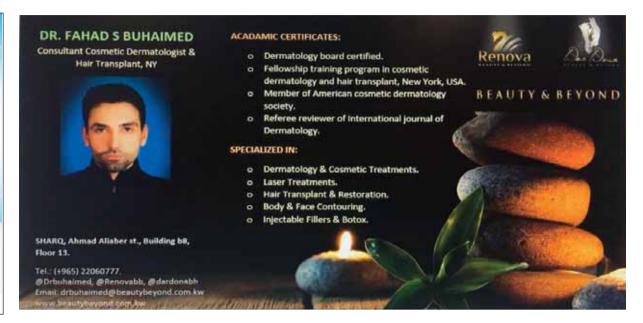




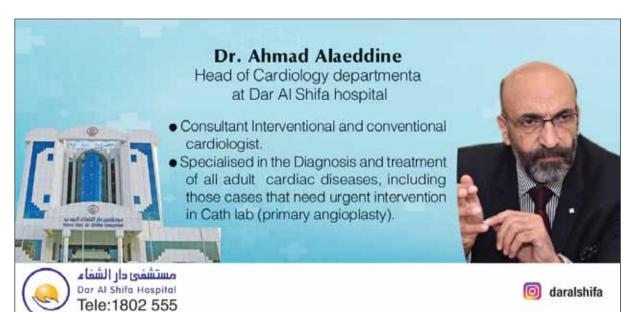


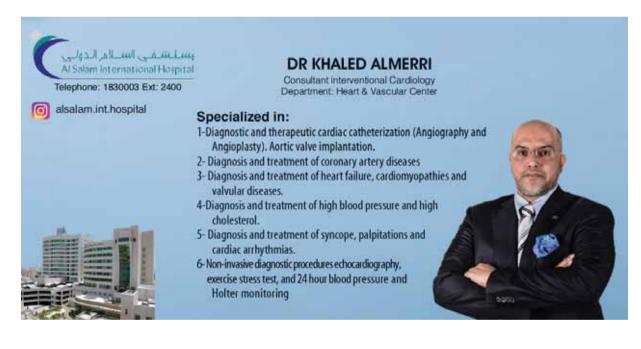
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- Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment
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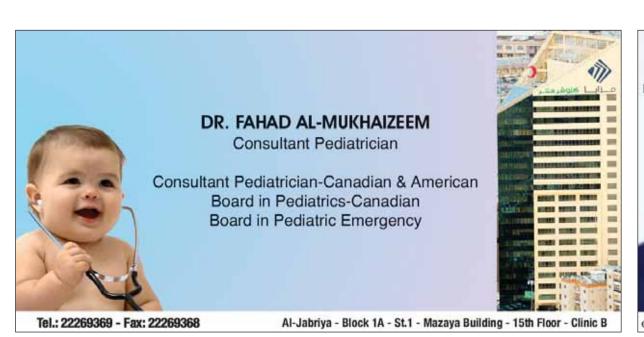
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- American Board of Surgical Critical Care





daralshifa Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com





Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Stars

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ACROSS

- 1. A Spanish title of respect for a gentleman or
- 4. Denoting or characteristic of the biogeographic region including southern Asia and the Malay Archipelago as far as the Philippines and Borneo and Java.
- 12. A yearning for something or to do something.
- 15. Black tropical American cuckoo.
- 16. Hard yellowish to brownish wax from leaves of the carnauba palm used especially in floor waxes and polishes.
- 17. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism
- 18. Formerly a gold coin of various European coun-
- 20. A public promotion of some product or service. 21. A soft blackish-brown resinous exudate from various rockroses used in perfumes especially as a
- 23. Port city on southern Honshu on Osaka Bay. 24. A cap with a flat circular top and a visor.
- 25. A long depression in the surface of the land that usually contains a river
- 26. (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann. 28. Large dark brown North American arboreal car-
- 31. A state in the eastern United States. 33. A small ball with a hole through the middle.

nivorous mammal.

- 35. Someone who copies the words or behavior of
- 38. Any tree or shrub of the genus Inga having pinnate leaves and showy usually white flowers.
- 40. The airforce of Great Britain.
- 41. A port city in southwestern Iran.
- 43. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- 47. Affect with wonder 48. A seaport in northwestern Italy.
- 50. (Roman mythology) God of love. 52. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 53. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar. 54. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of
- petroleum. 56. By bad luck.
- 60. Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- 62. (archaic or Scottish) Faithful and true. 64. Type genus of the Dipsacaceae.
- 67. Any member of Athapaskan tribes that migrated to the southwestern desert (from Arizona to
- Texas and south into Mexico). 71. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in
- Turkey). 72. Austrian zoologist who studied the behavior of
- birds and emphasized the importance of innate as
- opposed to learned behaviors (1903-1989). 75. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
- 76. Marked by skill in deception
- 77. Pertaining to or resembling amoebae. 79. Greenwich Mean Time updated with leap sec-
- onds.
- 80. The quality of a color as determined by its dominant wavelength. 81. Loosely matted plant with mosslike foliage
- studded with tiny starry 4-petaled white blossoms. 82. A spacecraft that carries astronauts from the command module to the surface of the moon and

DOWN

1. Panel forming the lower part of an interior wall when it is finished differently from the rest.

- 2. An onerous or difficult concern. 3. A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and
- a cadmium anode 4. Any isomeric saturated hydrocarbon found in
- petroleum and used as a fuel and solvent. 5. An intensely radioactive metallic element that

occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.

- 6. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia. 7. Having come or been brought to a conclusion. 8. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali
- 9. Eurasian perennial bulbous herbs. 10. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from
- aba cloth.
- 11. A boy or man.
- 12. A language group of the Hokan family.
- 13. The twelfth month of the civil year. 14. A language unit by which a person or thing is
- known.
- 19. Jordan's port.
- 22. Evergreen Indian shrub with vivid yellow flowers whose bark is used in tanning.
- 27. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 29. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
- 30. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a
- skewer usually with vegetables. 32. Anneal or toughen by a process of gradually
- heating and cooling.
- 34. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad. 36. A source of danger
- 37. A deficiency of red blood cells. 39. A strong-smelling plant from whose dried leaves a number of euphoriant and hallucinogenic
- drugs are prepared.
- 42. Marked by features of the immediate and usually discounted past.
- 44. A light touch or stroke
- 45. An oral poliovirus vaccine (containing live but weakened poliovirus) that is given to provide immunity to poliomyelitis.
- 46. Of or relating to or involving an area. 49. A fertile tract in a desert (where the water table approaches the surface).
- 51. Plant of the family Menispermaceae having red or black fruit with crescent- or ring-shaped seeds. 55. East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a
- yellow dye. 57. An ascocarp having the spore-bearing layer of cells (the hymenium) on a broad disklike recepta-
- 58. A cell that is specialized to conduct nerve
- 59. Of or relating to or supporting Romanism. 61. A pale rose-colored variety of the ruby spinel.
- 63. (Akkadian) God of wisdom. 65. An Eskimo hut.
- 66. The British system of withholding tax. 68. part of the peritoneum attached to the stomach and to the colon and covering the intestines. 69. The emotion of hate.
- 70. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare. 73. The compass point that is one point west of due
- 74. The facility where wild animals are housed for
- 78. An ancient city of Sumer located on a former channel of the Euphrates River.

Yesterday's Solution

В	A	I		A	T	Α	K	Α	P	Α		F	L	U	Е
Α	В	M		W	Α	L	Α	P	Α	I		Α	I	R	Y
С	О	P		Е	M		S	Е	N	D		L	Α	D	Е
С	Н	A	N	D	Ι		В		J	Е	Α	L	О	U	S
Α	M	Ι	Α		A	G	Α	M	Α		G	Α			
		R	В		S	Α	Н	Ι	В		L	L	Α	M	Α
С	R	Е	0	N		D		R	I	M	Е		K	О	S
R	Е	D	В	U	D		С	A		В	A	S	Α	L	T
Ι	A			D	Α	S		В	L	Α	M	Α	В	L	Е
В	R	Ι	Т	Α	Ι	N		Е	Α			L	Α	Ι	R
		В	Α		S	Α	В	Α	Н		P	Α		Е	N
S	P	Е	С			F	L	U		В	Е	A	D		
N	A	R	С		Y	U	Е		G	Α	S	M	Α	S	K
U	N	Ι	Α	T	Е		N	Y	Α	L	Α		G	С	Α
F	D	Α		S	Α	N	D	Α	R	Α	С		D	Α	M
F	A	N		S	Н	Е	Е	P	I	S	Н		A	В	Α

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Kuwait Cimes

Some projects requiring a lot of thought, which you may have been working on for a long time, could well be completed today. Your efforts are definitely going to be appreciated by those who matter, Aries, and you might even receive public acknowledgment of some kind. A rise in income could be just over the horizon. You've worked hard to be where you are and can't be blamed if you give yourself a pat on the back. Go to it!



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Inspiration stemming from other places and other cultures might direct your passions to a new creative project of some kind, Taurus. Your mind is quick and resourceful and your energy high, so you'll probably have a busy day. You could also be feeling especially romantic and sexy and desirous to share all you've been doing with a love partner. Arrange a hot date if you can, then make sure you look your



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Some images deriving from dreams or visions might provide inspiration for ideas to redecorate your house, Gemini. You might spend some time perusing books in order to find ways to put your ideas to work for you. Then you'll embrace the task with a passion! Speaking of passion, sex and romance are also very much on your mind at this time. Get a lover to help you with your work. This could propel you to some rather pleasant consequences.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Plans for social events to take place in your neighborhood might have you spending a lot of time on the phone today, Cancer. Or you might be running around in the car taking care of various errands. This could involve the healing profession in some way. Whatever it is, you feel especially strongly about it. A current or potential love partner might also be involved with your project. Invite this person to dinner. You'll probably like how the evening ends!



Leo (July 23-August 22)

New information regarding opportunities for career, business, and personal expansion might shake up your value system today, Leo. This is a positive development, although it may be a bit disconcerting for you right now. Your life could well take a different turn, starting today. An immediate desire for pleasure could be satisfied by scheduling a romantic dinner with a lover. Forget the changes that are happening for a while and enjoy your evening!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

New ideas that you have been studying over the past few days might have turned your mind in a different direction, Virgo. Thus, you are shifting away from the concepts that you've always accepted toward other ideas that you may have just learned. This could lead to projects of your own, perhaps involving writing or speaking. Open and honest communication with a lover might lead to an intimate evening together. Expect some intense conversation, among other things!

Wordsearch Puzzle

Types of Music 1

Find and circle all of the different types of music that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 14 letters spell an additional type of music.

R	J	S	Α	Μ	Т	S	ı	R	Н	С	L	Α	R	0	Н	С	
Н	Α	K	L	0	Р	D	Ν	Α	В	G	Ι	В	Н	С	Α	Υ	
Т	Z	С	Т	Н	Ν	E	W	W	Α	٧	E	М	I	I	В	W	
Е	Z	0	Α	٧	Α	Ν	Т	G	Α	R	D	Е	Ρ	Т	М	Α	
R	Α	R	М	E	R	E	Ν	G	U	E	Α	Ν	Н	S	Α	L	
Α	С	С	Ι	L	E	D	E	Н	С	Υ	S	Ρ	0	U	S	Т	
В	Α	Ι	Ι	D	Α	Ι	Α	В	Ν	G	Ρ	Υ	Р	0	Н	Z	
Α	Ρ	S	В	Ν	D	Т	R	С	Α	Α	L	U	0	С	E	Т	
С	E	S	S	Ν	0	0	1	Ν	ı	L	Ι	С	Ν	Α	Α	Α	
Т	L	Α	ı	Α	А	R	G	Ν	ı	D	Ν	D	Ν	K	٧	Ν	
Ν	L	L	L	D	R	S	Т	В	М	Е	R	Α	Ν	G	Υ	G	
Ε	Α	С	W	0	Т	G	Α	С	М	U	С	0	0	I	М	0	
I	С	Α	S	Α	U	K	Е	Α	E	Ι	S	Т	С	K	E	С	
В	Υ	Ν	R	0	С	Ν	L	U	×	L	Н	I	L	K	Т	S	
Μ	L	Α	Α	0	U	F	G	Е	L	I	Ε	0	С	U	Α	1	
Α	Ρ	E	R	D	s	L	М	E	С	В	F	W	0	R	L	D	

ACAPELLA ACID ROCK ACOUSTIC AMBIENT AVANT-GARDE BIG BAND BLUEGRASS **BROADWAY** CABARET

CHORAL

CHRISTMAS CLASSIC ROCK DANCE DISCO **ELECTRONICA FLAMENCO GANGSTA RAP**

HEAVY METAL

GOTHIC

HIP HOP INDIAN INDIE JAZZ LATIN MUSIC LOUNGE MERENGUE MEXICAN **NEW WAVE POLKA**

PSYCHEDELIC ROCKABILLY SAMBA SOUL **TANGO** WALTZ WORLD

Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your logical mind might try to make rational sense of the strange metaphysical ideas that are popping in and out of your head today, Libra. Some of them might be conclusions drawn from books you've been reading, but others might actually be messages from the other side. Write down whatever insights come your way. They might not seem logical, but they'll make a difference to your life. In the evening, discuss these ideas with a love partner.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

A growing sense of intimacy with a close friend or love partner is likely to stem from mutual interests. The two of you might even discuss taking a long trip together, perhaps to a distant state or foreign country. This isn't the time to hold back or be too cautious, Scorpio. Your life is very much on track. If you want to get away with this person, go for it. In the evening, get together with



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A powerful romantic attraction might lead to creative or artistic inspiration. You should be feeling especially passionate today, Sagittarius, and your passions are likely to spill over not only into your relationships but into your work as well. Whatever you produce creatively is likely to be so inspired it impresses even you. Work done on the job should attract favorable attention from superiors. You're feeling especially sexy. Dress up and see what happens!



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

A project initiated by a group with which you're affiliated could keep you very busy today, Capricorn. You might have to spend a lot of time on the phone or running around in the car to libraries and bookstores obtaining information. A close friend or love partner might choose to accompany you. You're likely to be feeling very strongly about whatever you're doing, so expect a gratifying day. Spend the evening with someone close to you.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

New ideas and concepts regarding the way you make your living might come your way today, Aquarius, which could cause a bit of a shakeup in your value system. You might decide to tackle an entirely new profession that you've never considered before. Books on the subject could prove supportive and encouraging, as could those closest to you. It's important to follow your heart at this time. Go for it!

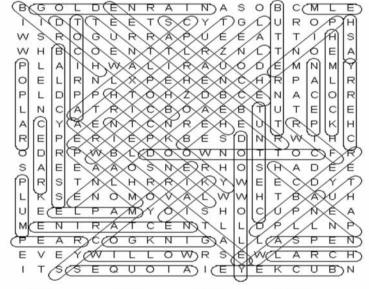


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Group activities and social events excite your passions today, Pisces. You'll meet lots of new people, take on some interesting new projects, and, if you haven't already, you might even fall in love. A number of fascinating ideas exchanged at these events might propel you into a new course of study. Partnerships of any kind formed today stand a powerful chance of succeeding. In the evening, go to dinner with your new friends.§

Yesterday's Solution

Trees



APPLE APRICOT ARBORVITAE BALD CYPRESS BEECH BIRCH BOXWOOD BUCKEYE BUTTERNUT CATALPA

CHERRY CHESTNUT GINKGO GOLDENRAIN HAZELNUT HEMLOCK HICKORY LARCH

LINDEN LONDON PLANE MAPLE NECTARINE PALM PEAR PECAN PLUM

POPLAR REDBUD RUBBER TREE SEQUOIA SPRUCE SYCAMORE TULIPTREE WALNUT WITCHHAZEL WILLOW YELLOWWOOD

The hidden sentence is: A SOCIETY GROWS GREAT WHEN OLD MEN PLANT TREES WHOSE SHADE THEY KNOW THEY SHALL NEVER SIT IN

			D	ally Sul	JUKU			
7		1					2	5 3
9	2				8			3
				7				
			1			9	8	
		5				4		
	1	3			2			
				2				
3			5				4	7
1	6					3		8

Yesterday's Solution

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

medium

very hard

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2020



A photo taken on Jan 10, 2020 shows diners at the North Korean-themed Pyongyang Bar in the Hongdae district of Seoul. — AFP photos

A North Korean outpost in Seoul: The Pyongyang Bar

Nucked away in the dazzling neon of just a man loyal to capitalism." North Korean-looking construction worker pointing to the slogan: "Look! It's the Pyongyang Bar!" There are no post, telephone or transport links between the two halves of the divided Korean peninsula, but Seoul's only North Korean-themed pub aims to give its patrons a taste of their nuclear-armed neighbor.

Owner Jang Woo-kyung has never been north of the Demilitarized Zone - the two Koreas are technically still at war and Southerners need their government's permission to visit - but the bar's decor is inspired by imagery from across the border. The premises are festooned with North Korean-style posters, the lime green walls reminiscent of the pastel shades seen on Pyongyang apartment blocks, and slogans painted around the pub are written in a white-on-red script similar to the North's propaganda.

But rather than praise North Korean leaders, which might fall foul of the South's National Security Act, the messages proclaim more prosaic goals: "Let's provide the most cold beer!" Others combine health regulations with allusions to the North's uncompromising judicial system: "Execution by firing squad if caught smoking inside.

'Loyal to capitalism'

Even before the business opened, Jang was ordered by authorities to remove portraits of Kim II Sung and Kim Jong II - the grandfather and father of current leader Kim Jong Un - from the building's exterior. "I have no intention of dignifying or praising North Korea," said Jang, whose business cards use the South's English spelling for the North's capital, Pyeongyang. "I'm

Seoul's Hongdae nightlife district, a He used to run a Japanese restaurant, small building bears an image of a but with Seoul and Tokyo locked in a bitter diplomatic row, his takings plunged by 50 percent and he opened a new business. "A lot of people come here - some who sympathize with North Korea and some who hate North Korea - but the majority of people, 80 to 90 percent, just come here for fun," he said.

> The menu offers typical North Korean dishes such as Pyongyang cold noodles and drinks labelled with imaginary Northern brands. A mock gift shop is stocked with genuine Northern trinkets and snacks. The shop also sells traditional Korean dresses in the bright, bold colors seen north of the border, rather than the $more\ subdued, or nate\ Southern\ style.$

> The clientele are largely curious Southerners, with the occasional Northern defector. "The writing and slogans seem familiar, and it seems they have paid a lot of attention to the details," said Na Minhee, 30, from Pyongyang, who arrived in the South in 2016. Such establishments could "help people view grandiose issues like unification with less fear and more positivity", she said.

Pyongyang has repeatedly excoriated Seoul since the breakdown in relations between Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump following their Hanoi summit in February, dismissing the South's latest diplomatic approaches as "frivolous" and "somewhat presumptuous" at the weekend. Na lamented the fact there is no equivalent bar north of the border. "If a 'Seoul pub' or 'Busan pub' were ever established in Pyongyang, that would be evidence that North Korea has changed," she said, referring to the South's two biggest cities. "I dearly hope that happens as soon as possible." — AFP





A 'gift shop' photo zone at the Pyongyang Bar.





A group of North Korean defectors visit the Pyongyang Bar.

Harry, Meghan criticized after royal crisis summit

Trince Harry and his wife Meghan faced fresh criticism vesterday in the wake of an emergency royal meeting to discuss their shock announcement to step back from frontline royal duties. British newspapers raked over yesterday's meeting at which Queen Elizabeth II agreed to allow the young couple to split their time between Canada and the UK until a solution was found. "It means only one thing - Harry and Meghan have won!" royal commentator Philip Dampier wrote in the Daily Express. "They metaphorically held a gun to her head and she has given in.'

The Sun tabloid's editorial said: "Our Queen's surrender to the petulant, selfish demands of Harry and Meghan may prove the biggest mistake of her reign. "This couple have simply raised the bar for selfobsessed, arrogant entitlement." The Daily Mirror said the monarch "displayed a selflessness sadly lacking from the way Harry and Meghan have disrespectfully treated her". The Daily Telegraph called the decision "The Queen's reluctant farewell".

The final decisions on the couple's future will be thrashed out in the coming days. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, as they are formally known, unilaterally announced last week they were stepping back as senior royals and wanted financial independence from the monarchy. The pair, who have a baby son, Archie, have hinted in recent months at their unhappiness about life in the public eye and Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he understood their concerns. "I am a massive fan... of the queen and the royal family as a fantastic asset for our country," he told BBC television. "I'm absolutely confident that they are going to sort this out."

'Complex matters'

Queen Elizabeth, 93, summoned her eldest son and heir Prince Charles, and his two sons Princes William and Harry to her Sandringham estate in eastern England for crisis talks on Monday. Meghan was in Canada after briefly returning to Britain last week. In a rare personal statement afterwards, the monarch said the discussions were "very constructive" but admitted the Sussexes' decision was not what she would have wanted. "My family and I are entirely supportive of Harry and Meghan's desire to create a new life," she said.

"Although we would have preferred them to remain full-time working members of the royal family, we respect and understand their wish to live a more independent life as a family while remaining a valued part of my family." The queen said the Sussexes made clear they did not want to be reliant on public funds, while a transition period had been agreed in which they will spend time in Canada and Britain. "These are complex matters for my family to resolve, and there is some more work to be done, but I have asked for final decisions to be reached in the coming days," the sovereign said. — AFP

Lifestyle | Features



An 'Evryman' group meets at Race Brook Lodge on Dec 6, 2019, in Sheffield, Massachusetts. — AFP photos

American men let it all out at new support groups

In a chalet in the Massachusetts countryside, tears run down Lucas Krump's cheeks as he pours his heart out at one of a new kind of support group growing in popularity among American men. "There were moments this year when I wanted to give up," the 40-year-old told the circle of participants, all tired of trying to live up to traditional male stereotypes. The dozen men - almost all white Americans, ranging in age from their 20s to 60s - were leading a retreat run by Evryman, a group that helps men shrug off the armor of masculinity to get in touch with their true feelings. Like a sort of anti-"Fight Club".

Over the course of one weekend last month, no fewer than 55 men opened up about their weaknesses and insecurities at the chalet, as snow fell quietly in the woods outside. "I am sad. I am afraid," says Michael. He wished he could tell his family how he feels, but finds it hard. The groups are seeing a surge in attendance, reflecting a shift in attitudes and increased curiosity about what it means to be male, particularly among US millennials – as well as growing debate about so-called "toxic masculinity" fueled by the #MeToo movement.

'Other ways to be'

Another participant, Tom, is struggling to get over a recent breakup. "I felt a lot of pain. I felt a lot of sadness," he says, as his fellow attendees look on with concern. Participants share their experiences and take part in



'Evryman' Co-Founders Lucas Krump cries during a group meeting at Race Brook Lodge.

group and one-on-one workshops where they learn to deal with feelings of anxiety and anger. Ryan Zagone has been attending sessions for six months. "I grew up in Louisiana where the definition of a man is very narrow. Do you hunt or do you play football? And I didn't do either. I grew up feeling like an outsider," he said. "Coming here for the first time gave me role models of other ways to be as a man. How to be emotional in... a

way that is powerful, loving, empathetic and at the same time strong," Zagone added.

Take a risk

Michael Kimmel, a sociologist who specializes in masculinity, says many American men today worry they are not doing as well as their father or grandfather and feel like they are living in a "straitjacket". "We live in a society in which every other man is a potential competitor, for jobs, for money, for access, for power," he explained. "So we don't look at each other as brothers, we look at each other as rivals. So when you have that kind of relationship, you feel isolated."

Other support groups providing men's workshops and regular retreats include Junto and ManKind Project. The idea behind them is not new. Writer Robert Bly pioneered self-help books and therapy sessions for men in the 1990s. But Owen Marcus, who helped structure Evryman's programs, says the sessions would never have been this popular 20 years ago. "Younger men are much more open to this. They're more willing to take that initial risk," he told AFP.

'Meet men where they are'

Evryman was founded in 2016, predating the #MeToo movement ignited by the Harvey Weinstein scandal in late 2017. But the group and others like it have been brought into focus by the global reckoning on sexual

misconduct, which has caused many men to question their own behavior. Evryman co-founder Dan Doty, says its purpose is not to deal directly with "toxic masculinity" but that the issue is never too far away. "We need to meet men where they are and not come in and say, 'Hey, what you're doing is terrible."

Zagone believes men cause hurt because they themselves are hurting. "So men having the ability to go deep into that hurt, to feel it and to process it in a more healthy way, then they're not hurting other people. "That's the skill we're teaching here," he said. Aside from retreats and week-long expeditions, Evryman has a network of support groups that gather locally on a regular basis, year-round, which it considers as important as the one-off events.

Evryman says its sessions are not intended to replace therapy. Many participants still see their regular therapist and come to Evryman for a support network. Presently, Evryman retreats are mainly frequented by straight, white men. The group is working to attract more diverse participants. Women cannot join for now, however, for fear they will inhibit the men. Everyman says it has helped thousands of men. It hopes to help many more. "We want to have a million do this work", says cofounder Sascha Lewis, for whom "there is a sense of a movement happening here in the US." — AFP

Makeshift koala hospital scrambles to save dozens injured in bushfires



An injured koala is treated for burns by a vet at a makeshift field hospital at the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park on Kangaroo Island yesterday. — AFP photos

ozens of injured koalas arrive at the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park's makeshift animal hospital each day in cat carriers, washing baskets or clinging to wildlife carers. Injured in bushfires that have ravaged the wildlife haven off the coast of South Australia state, there are so many marsupials currently requiring urgent treatment that carers don't have time to give them names - they are simply referred to by a number.

Among them is Koala Number 64, who was brought in with burns to all four of his paws. Stretched out on a surgical table in a bustling tent, he has been sedated so the wounds can be examined and treated. "It's healing nicely," says veterinarian Peter Hutchison, explaining the koala had already benefitted from a few days' of treatment.

Not all rescued koalas have been so lucky. Many are

Not all rescued koalas have been so lucky. Many are found so badly injured that they need to be euthanized. Steven Selwood, South Australia Veterinary Emergency Management team leader at the hospital, says around 46,000 koalas were thought to be on the island before this year's bushfires. It is estimated as few as 9,000 remain, Selwood says, describing the figure as "pretty devastating". "The fires here were particularly ferocious and fast-moving so we're seeing a lot less injured wildlife than in other fires," he tells AFP. "A lot of the wildlife was incinerated."

Australian Environment Minister Sussan Ley said the country's koala population had taken an "extraordinary hit" as a result of bushfires that have raged for months, suggesting they could be listed as "endangered" for the first time. Kangaroo Island is the only place in Australia where the population is entirely free of chlamydia - a sexually transmitted infection also found in humans that is fatal to koalas.

That has made them a key "insurance population" for the future of the species - and even more crucial now that large numbers have died in bushfires on the Australian mainland. Almost half of Kangaroo Island has been razed by fire and an estimated 80 percent of koala habitat wiped out. This widespread destruction has left rescuers with a





An orphaned baby koala sits on the shoulder of a vet.

tricky proposition - what to do with the animals once they have recovered.

For now, that issue is on the back burner as teams of vets work overtime to save as many as possible. "He's going to need another week (to recover) and will need to be kept caged after that," Hutchinson tells AFP as he wraps a pink bandage around Number 64's paw. "Because there's no habitat for him to go back to at this time." — AFP



View of entrance to Race Brook Lodge and 'Evryman'.

People enjoy Camurichico beach in La Guaira, Vargas state, Venezuela, on Jan 12, 2020. — AFP

Fed up Venezuelans find solace on the beach

hen Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido called for street protests at the weekend in a bid to rekindle popular outrage against President Nicolas Maduro, only a few hundred people turned up. It's a far cry from the tens of thousands he mobilized a year ago after declaring himself interim president and winning recognition from more than 50 countries. Many, like Jhoan Navarro, would rather turn their attention to the beach these days, glad of a distraction from the seemingly unending political standoff which they say has brought little change to their lives.

Navarro on Sunday made the hour's journey north from Caracas to Camuri Chico beach on the Caribbean coast with his wife and daughter "for a change of air, to clear our minds". "When I have a problem with my wife we work it out together, but we know that neither Maduro nor Guaido are going to solve our economic problems," said Navarro, bopping to music blaring from the speakers of his car, parked on the edge of the sand.

'No change'

Like many, he has become inured to Guaido's year-long joust with Maduro. Maria Eugenia Hernandez, on the beach with a group of her friends - "all single mothers" - said she had supported Guaido from the beginning. But she admits the 36-year-old opposition leader has made no inroads on the socialist president's grip on power. "To be honest, he hasn't done much. I don't see any change. Nothing," said Hernandez.

A year ago on Jan 23, Guaido used his status as speaker of parliament to proclaim himself interim president, but Maduro has faced down protests and held fast to power with the help of the armed forces. Guaido last week survived dramatic attempts to prevent his re-election as head of the National Assembly, and called a series of new protests to try to drive out the leftist Maduro, who is overseeing an economy in freefall and stands accused of acting like a dictator. "I can't complain, I have a good job," said Navarro, 29, a bank employee who is among the fortunate to be paid

Then Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido called for street protests at the runaway inflation.

Freefalling currency

The bolivar, the national currency, lost nearly 99 percent of its value in 2019, according to the Central Bank. Meanwhile, inflation is approaching a stratospheric 200,000 percent, according to the International Monetary Fund. In the heat of the southern hemisphere summer, Venezuelans want to take advantage of the country's Caribbean beaches to try to forget their struggles. It's a respite from the

daily grind of surviving a crippling economic crisis.

Sitting on the teeming beach, Juan Gonzalez said he had come to "party with my friends". He doesn't care for "either Maduro or Guaido" but said he would like to see the back of Maduro because he had fouled up the economy and "doesn't want to dollarize" it. As a courier, Gonzalez is paid in bolivars at the monthly minimum wage, which the government increased by 50 percent on Friday. It rose to 450,000 bolivars or \$6.70 at the official exchange rate. "My salary is not enough for me," Gonzalez said soberly. — AFP



A youngster dives into the sea at Camurichico beach.

Lifestyle Features

100 years after America went dry, Prohibition's legacy lives on

t was an era famous for its bootleggers, mobsters and hidden speakeasies. On Jan 17, 1920, the 18th Amendment of the US Constitution came into force, ushering in Prohibition in America. A century later, the country has yet to fully turn the page on that raucous chapter in its history. Back in the day, two large owls adorned the bar of the luxurious Belvedere Hotel in Baltimore. Without anyone ever saying a word, clients of the hotel knew to keep a close eye on the birds.

If the owls were blinking, the party could start: The signal the bar had just taken delivery of a new stock of illicit booze, there were no police around and thirsty patrons could wet their beaks. Prohibition left behind a plethora of such stories and has long been romanticized by Hollywood in movies such as "The Untouchables" and "The Road to Perdition" as well as any number of blackand-white gangster flicks, while US literature was deeply affected by the era.

More recently there has been a revival of bars modelling themselves on the classic speakeasies of the Roaring Twenties, those concealed watering holes where clients could down bootleg liquor and beer away from prying eyes.

'Noble experiment'

"There is a nostalgia for the 1920s. You're talking about the mythology of it. Some of it was romanticized, the gangsters, the organized crime aspect of things," said historian Michael Walsh, sitting in the Owl Bar, which still features one of the famous owls. Walsh said the significance of Prohibition went way beyond the need to tackle what was then rampant alcohol abuse - to touch on a whole range of facets of American life.

"It's religion, politics, gender, ethnicity, race," he said. "There was a huge amount of spousal abuse, so you have the women forming movements, one of them being the Women's Christian Temperance Union, that really kind of spearheads this fight against alcohol consumption and abuse in America at the time."

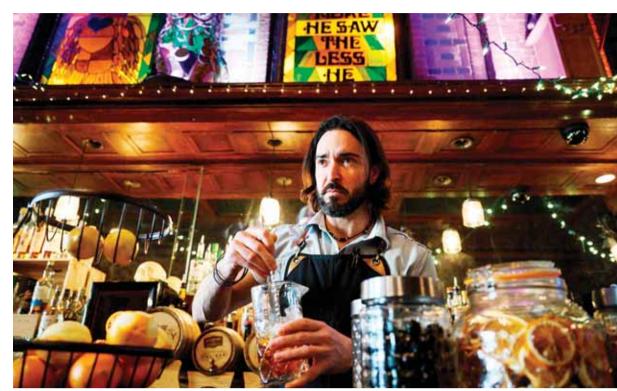
The "noble experiment," as president Herbert Hoover called it, ended in 1933 after Franklin D Roosevelt became president of a country in the depths of the Great Depression. The 18th Amendment, which banned the production, sale and transport of alcohol, is the only constitutional amendment ever to have been repealed. Organized crime had hit epidemic proportions across the country, led by mob bosses like Al Capone.

But for Walsh, who has written a book on the subject, Prohibition was far from being a total failure. "It's much more ambiguous than just saying it's all black or white. There's a lot of grey, as everything is," he said. He said the "divorce rate goes down, which implies hopefully that the home life is getting better. Cases of liver cirrhosis go down, intakes at asylums are down during that decade.'

Phil Collins for president!

After repeal, the regulation of alcohol was left to individual states, which themselves sometimes delegated rule-making to local jurisdictions. That resulted in a patchwork of laws that sometimes varied from county to county, parish to parish and even from town to town. There are to this day hundreds of "dry counties" and "dry towns" across the United States, most of them in Bible Belt states like Kentucky and Arkansas, where sales of alcohol are banned or restricted.

That is even the case in Moore County, Tennessee, home to the distillery of world famous whiskey producers Jack Daniels. Another hangover from that bygone era, though a less well known one, is the temperance movement known as the Prohibition Party. Founded in 1869, it is the third-oldest US political party and has a camel as its symbol, just as the Democrats have a donkey and the Republicans an elephant. This November, it will field a presidential candidate, just as it does every four years.



Kevin Tobin prepares drinks at the Owl bar in Baltimore, Maryland on Jan 9, 2020. — AFP

"After Prohibition was repealed, there were still some people agreeing with the party's principles of trying to remind people that alcohol can have harmful effects on people, diseases or drink and driving related deaths," said the party's presidential candidate, Phil Collins. Collins - not to be mistaken with the British singer who gave up the sauce after developing pancreatitis from

excess drinking - hopes to beat the 5,000 votes won by his predecessor in 2016, far behind the successful candidate Donald Trump. Trump, whose elder brother Fred died of alcoholism, says that he never touches the stuff. He has not, however, suggested reintroducing Prohibition. Or at least, not yet. — AFP



A man walks near a sign on the Ocean City music pier in Ocean City, New Jersey on A sign warning of consuming alcoholic beverages is seen on the Jan 8, 2020. — AFP photos

Alcoholic Beverages Prohibited Strictly Enforced

boardwalk in Ocean City.

Welcome to Ocean City: Dry island, and proud of it

Dizza joints and popcorn stands jostle for attention all along the boardwalk in Ocean City, New Jersey - but good luck finding a drink. A full century after the Prohibition era began in America, being dry has become a trademark for the beachside resort. In between ads for local churches, signs posted all along the Atlantic serve as a stern warning to anyone tempted to crack open a beer on the beach: "Alcoholic beverages prohibited. Strictly enforced. Fine \$275.'

Although Prohibition ended nationwide in 1933, the island of 11,000 residents is one of hundreds of American cities and jurisdictions that continue to ban alcohol sales. Restaurant menus offer a choice of hot drinks, water and sodas, and - although as many as 150,000 people flood the resort during summer weekends - it doesn't have a single bar.

Founded in the late 19th century by Methodists who wanted to turn it into a Christian resort, Ocean City is what is known as a "dry town". Alcohol production and sales have been outlawed there since 1909, a decade before Prohibition was ushered in nationwide on Jan 17, 1920. A century later, very little has changed. You can drink a glass of wine in the privacy of your own home, but to do so you need to trek to one of the large liquor stores strategically placed at the end of the bridges onto the island - often jammed with traffic during high season.

Tense referendum

Drinkers or not, residents have embraced their town's sobriety with a certain pride, particularly in comparison to less virtuous neighbors along the Jersey shore. The city's slogan is "America's greatest family resort". The casinos and strip clubs of neighboring Atlantic City, a major hub for



A family walks by a fountain donated by women during the Temperance movement in Ocean City. The Temperance movement was a social movement against the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the 19th and early 20th century.



The mural on a cafe is reflected in a puddle of water in Ocean City.

organized crime during Prohibition, are less than half an hour away by car. Most of the surrounding beaches are filled with hordes of young partiers. Eric Plyler, a graphic designer who spent his childhood vacations in Ocean City, created the "Dry Island" brand to celebrate its "most unique characteristic". The design, drawing visual and verbal inspiration from the Prohibition era, is emblazoned on mugs, baseball caps and Tshirts filling the shelves of the 26-year-old's store on main street.

"People appreciate the fact that it being dry improves the value of life here, but it doesn't mean that they don't like alcohol," said the bearded young entrepreneur - himself a fan of craft beers. "It just means that it's something that we can hold on to as a claim to fame."

So when a local business owner in 2012 gathered enough signatures to hold a referendum on whether customers could bring their own bottle of beer or wine into restaurants, some, like Drew Fasy, saw it as a threat to the city's image. "If you have a successful brand, you don't mess with it. Nobody is gonna change McDonald's golden arches," said the former real estate agent. He is adamant about not letting Ocean City go the way of other Jersey shore towns, which are "built around alcohol", in his opinion.

'Gray area'

The 2012 BYOB ("bring your own bottle") referendum sharply divided the city. Opponents were accused of being religious zealots. Supporters of seeking to open the flood gates to debauchery. Chris and Sharon Hoffmann, owners of the Captain Bob's restaurant, said they have been boycotted for calling for a little more flexibility when it comes to alcohol. "It was a little nerve-wracking," recalled Sharon Hoffman. "People who would make reservations but not show up. We had people who smashed our flower pots, someone who sliced my tire. It was heated."

As it turned out, the "no" to BYOB won a comfortable two-thirds majority, but the couple has since found a way to work around local alcohol laws by privatizing their restaurant. Patrons pay \$10 per table to join the "Foodies Dinner Club" and are then able to bring their own bottle, as if they were going over to a friend's house to eat. Approved by local authorities, the concept is catching on in the island - where high-end restaurants are almost nonexistent due to the fact owners are unable to offer alcoholic beverages with meals. "Why should I have to leave the island to get a good dinner?" lamented Chris Hoffmann. That said neither he nor his wife would dream of pushing for alcohol to be legalized throughout the city. "You have to respect the culture," he said. — AFP

US speakeasies back in vogue in echo of Prohibition era

clamped down on alcohol and ushered in the Prohibition era, speakeasies are once again popping up behind hidden doors and luring in revelers seeking fancy cocktails with an illicit 1920s vibe. Just a few blocks from the White House in downtown Washington, a steady stream of lawyers, diplomats and lobbyists hurry along the sidewalk of K Street, oblivious to the fact that as their offices close for the night, a basement bar invisible from the street is starting to fill up.

Drinkers enter The Mirror at the bottom of some steps that look at first glance like they lead to an empty store. The place smells vaguely of urine and the walls are bare but for some graffiti and a "For Rent" sign. An imposing mirror in this strange space reveals itself to be a door to a hidden bar. In creating this hard-to-find entrance, The Mirror's two owners wanted to "pay tribute to these great cocktail bars of the past."

The original speakeasies sprang up after Congress passed the 18th Amendment, which in 1920 banned the production, sale and transport of alcohol, and stayed in business until the law's repeal in 1933. Known only to those with contacts on the inside, the illicit drinking holes were set up in basements or concealed rooms and got their name from their clients' need to speak softly to avoid betraying their presence to the police or suspicious neighbors.

Roaring Twenties

In the early 2000s, a few bars in New York revived the tradition of passwords or codes to get through the door, but the trend of the new speakeasies has only really taken off in the past decade. Aside from a penchant for hard-to-find doorways, they share a taste for decor inspired by the Roaring Twenties as well as a broad range of cocktails, the favored beverage of Americans in the wild years of the Jazz Age.

'We wanted to do a little bit of a different spin," The Mirror co-owner Jeff Coles told AFP in the half-light of

century after the United States his bar, noting the contemporary music that was playing rather than the 1920s soundtrack of many such establishments. "A lot of people are looking for sort of an intimate atmosphere," he said. "As long as you go in the shadows,

no one really knows you're there. We're

very big with daters," he said. Sitting on his own, Monty Hobbs is a regular who has brought a number of his dates to the subterranean bar. They often text him from outside, confused about how to get in, but he believes the darkness favors his look. "I'm a pale guy with red hair and red beard, so bright lights do not bring out my best features," said the 44-year-old digital marketing manager.

Word of mouth

The lighting is less subdued at Capo, another speakeasy in the US capital, although the bar's entrance is even more cunningly disguised. Most passers-by simply take the place to be a straight-up Italian delicatessen, unaware that behind the door of what looks like a cold storage room is in fact a concealed bar. "We've had people come to this deli for a month, if not a year, and have no idea that we're back here," said manager Rohit Malhotra.

When the door opens, confusion often breaks out among the deli's customers. "They start pointing out and say, 'I think I saw a bar,' 'No, no you're crazy,' 'No, the guy walked into the freezer...' That's a fun moment." Like most of its counterparts, Capo's reputation has largely spread by word of mouth, although its fame has been burnished by Instagrammers fascinated with its trick shopfront.

"You have to cater for the millennials," said Patrick Zarifeh, Capo's general manager, who said his clientele came not just for a drink but for an "experience". These 21st century speakeasies are sometimes accused of being elitist and lacking authenticity - not a charge that could be levelled at the The Mirror's former owner, whose establishment, then called "The Speak", was twice shut down for want of an adequate liquor license. — AFP



A man enters the hidden entrance, at an office building basement level, of "The Mirror" Speakeasy bar in Washington on Jan 3, 2020.

Lifestyle Cocktail

Congresswoman Cardi B?

Rapper mulls political career

ap superstar Cardi B is floating the notion of a political career, saying she could "shake the table" Las a member of US Congress. "I think I want to be a politician. I really love government even tho I don't agree with Government," the brash artist from New York's Bronx borough tweeted over the weekend. "I do feel like if I go back to school and focus up I can be part of Congress. I deada** have sooo much ideas that make sense. I just need a couple of years of school and I can shake the table," the rapper known for hits like "Bodak Yellow", "Money" and "Î Like It" said.

The stripper-turned-rap superstar has gotten political in the past, famously encouraging her fans in an expletive-laden clip to "vote for Daddy Bernie" in 2016, warning that foreign women "gonna get deported if Trump is president". She's throwing her celebrity behind Sanders this presidential nomination season as well, most notably meeting with the senator from Vermont in a nail salon to discuss issues including raising the minimum wage, canceling student debt and climate change.

At 27 years old she meets the threshold to run for the House of Representatives, which is 25. She would have to wait until her 30th birthday to launch a Senate bid, and her 35th for the presidency. Fans praised the Grammy winner's political musings on social media: "no need to go back to school if you don't want to! you can learn plenty from folks already fighting in movements, and read up on your own or with others. you'd be great," said Twitter user Natalie Shure.

Last year Cardi B, who was born Belcalis Almanzar to a Dominican father and Trinidadian mother, went off on Donald Trump and the US government shutdown that furloughed federal employees amid a standoff between the US president and Democrats in Congress. "Our country is in a hellhole right now," she said at the time. "I feel like we need to take some action." — AFP



Spike Lee to be first black head of Cannes film festival jury

merican director Spike Lee was named president of this year's Cannes film festival jury on Tuesday, becoming the first black head of the panel. The maker of "Malcolm X" and "Do the Right Thing" is the first person of black African descent to preside at the world's biggest film festival, which is held in May on the French Riviera. Lee, 62, said he was "shocked, happy, surprised and proud all at the same time" to make history.

The Cannes veteran has premiered seven of his films at the festival, with his debut movie "She's Gotta Have It" causing a sensation in 1986 when it won the youth prize at Directors' Fortnight. His appointment comes as activists criticized the Oscars on Monday for ignoring actors and directors of color, with no nominations for the acclaimed performances of Awkwafina in the Chinese-American drama "The Farewell" and Lupita Nyong'o in the horror movie "Us".

Lee - who showed his last film "BlacKkKlansman" at Cannes two years ago - said "my biggest blessings... have happened out of nowhere. "I'm honored to be the first person of the African diaspora (USA) to be named president of the Cannes jury and of a main film festival." Lee will also be awarded a Palme d'Or, the festival's top award, for lifetime achievement.

In a written statement from his home in "Da People's Republic Of Brooklyn, New York", Lee said Cannes had changed his life. "To me the Cannes film festival (besides being the most important film festival in the world - no In this file photo taken on May 19, 2018, US director Spike Lee poses with his trophy during a photocall after he won the

career. "You could easily say Cannes changed the trajectory of who I became in world cinema," he added.

Lack of diversity

Lee also thanked "the great people of France who have supported my film career throughout four decades. I will always treasure this special relationship". Only one Asian, the Hong Kong auteur Wong Kar-wai, has ever led the Cannes jury in its 73-year history. French actress Isabelle Adjani, whose father was Algerian, became the first person of African descent to lead the jury in 1997.

The world's top film festivals have faced fierce criticism for their lack of diversity in recent years.

Cannes and its rival Venice have faced growing scrutiny, particularly for the lack of female directors in their main competitions, even as they have chosen gender-balanced juries. More than 80 actresses and woman filmmakers led by then jury president Cate Blanchett staged a red carpet protest at Cannes for equality in the film industry in 2018. Lee was vocal in his support for the women at the time. — AFP



disrespect to anybody) has had a great impact on my film Grand Prix for the film "BlacKkKlansman" at the 71st edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Mark Hamill quits Facebook over dishonest political ads

ark Hamill, the actor famous for legendary "Star Wars" film character Luke Skywalker, has quit Facebook for its refusal to require political ads to be honest. "So disappointed that #MarkZuckerberg values profit more than truthfulness that I've decided to delete my Facebook account," Hamill tweeted Sunday evening. "I know this is a big 'Who Cares?' for the world at large, but I'll sleep better at night. #PatriotismOverProfits."

Hamill's message triggered a flood of replies, with many lauding his decision to use his celebrity platform to make a statement about honesty in politics. "Facebook, pay attention. You've lost the man who

played Luke Skywalker," one fan commented. "The only thing worse than that is maybe Santa Claus telling you to feck off. Might be time to rethink things."

In contrast, another tweet questioned whether it was Facebook's place to censor politicians or their ads, and suggested instead putting notice labels on demonstrably false messages. "Giving up Facebook doesn't solve the problem," the Twitter user replied to Hamill. "Fake news is everywhere. What happens next? Give up the Internet?"

Facebook this month enacted a new ban on posts or ads that interfere with people taking part in the US census, which will have an online participation option this year. The census interference policy forbids deception about when or how to take part in the US census, or the significance of participating, according to the California-based internet titan.

Facebook, criticized for its hands-off policy on misleading comments from politicians, said it would not allow political actors to post false information about the census, in a policy similar to theirs on "voter interference". Online platforms face the challenge of stopping an avalanche of disinformation while remaining open to political debate and free speech. — AFP

'Bung a bob for a Big Ben bong': Boris floats **Brexit bells crowdfunder**

rime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday said the government was working on a crowdfunding plan to get the currently silent Big Ben to chime when Britain leaves the European Union. Some eurosceptic lawmakers have been pushing for a celebratory peal to mark Brexit at 2300 GMT on Jan 31, despite the tower in which the world-famous bell is housed being closed for repairs. Former House of Commons speaker John Bercow rejected the request, but hopes were raised when he was replaced just before last month's general election.

But it again appears to be ruled out on cost grounds: the Commons Commission, which runs parliament, has found an exceptional bong could cost around £500,000 (\$650,000). Johnson, though, said all was not lost. "The bong cost £500,000 but we're working a plan so people can bung a bob for a Big Ben bong because there are some people who want to," he told BBC television.

A bob is the equivalent of five pence and a slang expression for money. "Because Big Ben is being refurbished, they seem to have taken the clapper away, so we need to restore the clapper in order to bong Big Ben on Brexit night," the prime minister said. "And that's expensive, so we're looking at whether the public can fund it." Downing Street could not say exactly how this would operate, however, and explained there was no specific government fund. A spokesman said: "We will make sure that - whatever happens in regard to Big Ben's bongs - Jan 31 is properly marked. It is a significant moment in our history.

'£50,000 a bong'

Conservative MP and arch Brexiteer Mark Francois, of the European Research Group, has been trying to drum up support for a Brexit bong of Big Ben, which attracts tourists from around the world. "I've already offered to go up Big Ben... to ring the bell myself to save money," he was quoted as telling the Daily Telegraph newspaper. "If all else fails, the BBC must have a recording they could play at 11:00 pm at no cost whatsoever to taxpayers.

But new House of Commons Speaker Lindsay Hoyle said the cost could not be justified for a bell that would only be heard by those living near or visiting Westminster. "You are talking about £50,000 a bong," he said. Bringing the "bonging" mechanism back, testing it and allowing it to chime, and building and then removing a temporary floor to the belfry, is estimated to cost £120,000. But a further £100,000 a week could be lost by the delay to ongoing conservation work. The famous bell, housed in the Elizabeth Tower of the Palace of Westminster in central London, has been silent since Aug 2017 due to major renovations scheduled to last four years. An exception is made for Remembrance Sunday and the New Year. — AFP

Florida man catches oldest grouper fish, 50, in state records

Tou never know what you'll get when you go fishing in Florida. You might accidentally catch an alligator, a snake - or, for one man, the oldest grouper on record. Researchers estimate that the Warsaw grouper, caught in December, was 50 years old. The fish is "the oldest sample collected for our ageing program," the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Research Institute said Friday in a Facebook post.

Biologists in the FWC Age and Growth Lab calculated the grouper's age by examining its otoliths, also known as "earstones", which are hard calcium structures located behind the brain in bony fish. Otoliths allow scientists to estimate a fish's age. The FWC accompanied the post with a photograph of Jason Boyll, an amateur fisherman from the southwestern Siesta Key who caught the 350-pound (160 kg) grouper.

In the photo, Boyll is standing next to his catch, which is taller than he is. Boyll caught the grouper off the west coast of Florida on Dec 29, at a depth of 600 feet (182 m), according to the FWC. Warsaw groupers can weigh up to 570 pounds. — AFP



A 350-pound Warsaw grouper caught in waters off Florida thought to be 50 years old. -AFP



French police question director over assault claim by top actress

Trench police on Monday questioned a film director → accused by star actress Adele Haenel of assaulting her while she was an underage teenager, prosecutors said yesterday, in a case that has rocked the French cinema industry. Christophe Ruggia was detained by investigators on accusations of sexual assault and harassment of a minor by a person in authority, a source in the Paris prosecutors office told AFP, confirming a report by LCI television.

Haenel lodged a formal complaint against Ruggia in November after accusing him in an interview that month of sexually harassing her between the ages of 12 and 15. She accused Ruggia, who directed her in "The Devils", her first film role, of repeatedly touching and kissing her. Her accusations stunned the French film industry, which has generally been slower than Hollywood to react to the #MeToo movement that has turned the spotlight on endemic sexual abuse. — AFP

Model Gigi Hadid called as potential Weinstein juror

disgraced movie producer Harvey Weinstein's rape and sexual assault trial on Monday, adding a fresh celebrity twist to the high-profile proceedings. Hadid, 24, raised her hand in the New York state court when Judge James Burke asked the dozens appearing for jury selection whether any of them knew Weinstein or his legal team. "I have met the defendant," said Hadid, sitting in the jury box. Burke then asked her if she could be fair and

impartial. "Yes," she replied. Hadid - who has modeled for a host of top fashion brands including Chanel and Victoria's Secret -said she had also met Salma Hayek. The Mexican-born actress has accused Weinstein, 67, of sexual harassment and may be mentioned in court during the trial. "I think I'm still able to keep an open mind on the facts," Hadid told the Manhattan court. Hadid appeared alongside 120 or so other jury candidates as pre-screening of potential jurors entered its second week.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys are trying to select 12 jurors and six alternates. They have already questioned more than 500 candidates. Scores have already been excused after saying they could not

merican model Gigi Hadid be impartial due to heightened publicity appeared as a potential juror in surrounding the trial, which is expected to surrounding the trial, which is expected to run until early March. Following her appearance, Hadid was due to fill out a questionnaire before returning later this week for further screening. — $\breve{\mathrm{AFP}}$



Classifieds







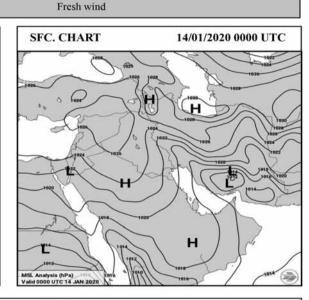
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 66819 - 66817 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Rather cold and Clouds will decrease gradually with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 50 km/h causing rising dust.

BY NIGHT: Very cold with light to moderate freshening at times over costal areas north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear.

WEATHER WATCH		
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	17 °C	12 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	16 °C	07 °C
ABDALY	16 °C	08 °C
BUBYAN	15 °C	10 °C
JAHRA	16 °C	10 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	- °C	- °C
SALMIYAH	17 °C	14 °C
AHMADI	18 °C	12 °C
NUWAISIB	17 °C	08 °C
WAFRA	16 °C	08 °C
SALMY	15 °C	07 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST							
	rate on reserv		Tempe	ratures		Carrier Street of	
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX.	MIN.	Wind Direction	Wind Speed	
Wednesday	01/15	Rather cool and some scattered clouds will	19 °C	05 °C	NW	08 - 32 km/h	
Thursday	01/16	Rather cold and some scattered clouds will appear later on	20 °C	06 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 26 km/h	
Friday	01/17	Rather hot and Cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance for scattered light rain	21 °C	06 °C	VRB-SE	08 - 35 km/h	
Saturday	01/18	Rather hot and Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for scattered rain	20 °C	11 °C	SE-NW	15 - 45 km/h	

PRAYER	TIMES
Fajr	05:20
Sunrise	06:44
Zuhr	11:57
Asr	14:51
Sunset	17:11
Isha	18:32

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT I	CUWAIT AIRPORT
MAX. Temp.	20 °C
MIN. Temp.	04 °C
MAX. RH	66 %
MIN. RH	22 %
MAX. Wind	SW 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sreedharan Aniyan Kumbalaparambil, holder of Indian Passport No. M9886020 issued at Embassy of India, Kuwait. I am a permanent resident of Koorkanchery, Thrissur, Kerala, India, and presently residing in Kuwait hereby declare my given name is Aniyan and surname is Kumbalaparambil Sreedharan. (C 5609)

I, Mohammad Samsad Alam holder of Indian Passport No. M8779222 & Civil ID No. 286010153306 has changed my name from Mohammad Samsad Alam to Mohammad Shamshad (Given name) Alam (Surname) hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Mohammad Shamshad Alam. (C 5610) 14-1-2020

I Arackal Vareed Beena, holder of Indian Passport No. K7038262 issued at Kuwait on 12/07/2012, permanent address, Arackal House, no. 582, Kakkulissery. PO. Thrissur, Kerala and presently residing at Kuwait do here by change my name as Given name: Beena Vareed. Surname: Arackal.

I Padamadan Antony Jose, Father of Kevin Jose Padamadan holder of Indian Passport No. 59919434 issued at Kuwait on 21/10/2018, Permanent address of Padamadan House, Pallikunnu, Varandarappilly P.O, Thrissur District, Kerala - 680303, India. Presently residing at Kuwait do here by changes as follows: Given name: Kevin Jose,

Surname: Padamadan.

I Padamadan Antony Jose, holder of Indian Passport No. P7115988 issued at Kuwait on 02/01/2017, Permanent address of Padamadan House, Pallikunnu, Varandarappilly P.O, Thrissur District, Kerala - 680303, India. Presently residing at Kuwait do here by changes as follows: Given name: Jose Antony, Surname: Padamadan.

I Abdullah S/o Abdullah Tanwar holder of Indian Passport No. M1802552 & Civil ID No. 293011803513 has changed my name from Abdullah to Abdullah (given name) Tanwar (surname) hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Abdullah Tanwar. (C

I Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan Ashraf, F/o Alameen Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan Ashraf. Residing at Ceeyam New House, Ayikara, Poovalap, Cannanore 17, Kerala, holder of Passport No: R2316678 issued at Kuwait on 26.03.17 have changed my minor son's name as Alameen Ashraf Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan.

I Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan Ashraf, F/o Ahnaf Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan Ashraf. Residing at Ceeyam New House, Ayikara, Poovalap, P.O Cannanore 670017, Kerala, holder of Passport No: N1900966 issued at Kozhikode on 19.08.2015 have changed my minor son's name as Ahnaf Ashraf Ceeyantagath Mannangadiyan. (C 5608)

Notice is given to general public at large that I have wholly renounce/relinquish and abandon the use of my former name i.e. Austin Fulaji Vaity (Add.-Naigaon, Christan wadi, Vasai (W), Dist. Palghar 401207) and I hereby declare that henceforth I will be called, known and distinguished by my new name i.e. Austin Fulaji Baretto. (Gazette No. X-26640) Place-Vasai. (C 5607) 13-1-2020

My son DALTON IMMANUEL SAM JONATHAN DAVID DURAI PANDI-AN, Indian Passport holder N1871481 born on 26.09.2007 residing in Salmiya, Kuwait. Shall henceforth be known as given name: DALTON IMMANUEL, Surname: SAM. (C 5604)

Old name: ANMOLIKA, Passport No. N9725963, new name only surname: ANMOLIKA SINGH. (**C 5488**)

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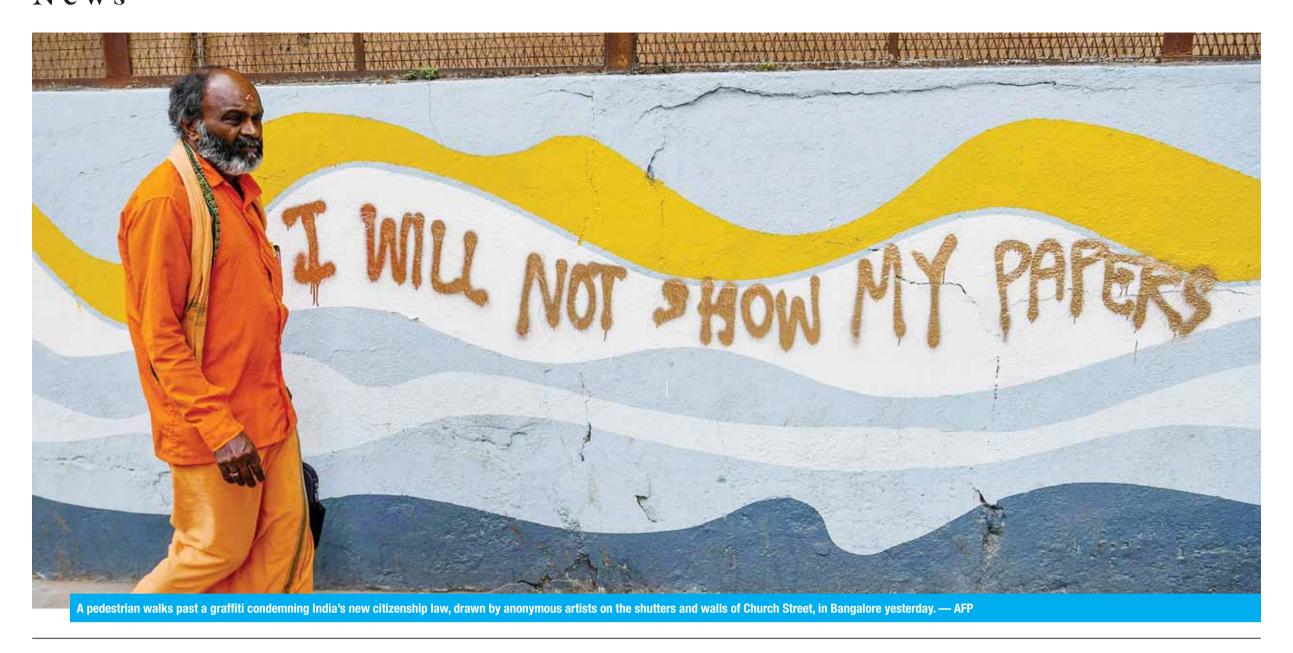


Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

		nts on Wednesday 15/1/2020		MSR	610	Cairo	12:45			ghts on Wednesday 15/1/2020		QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	CLX	7912	Luxembourg	12:45	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	IGO NIA	1756 1504	CNN	12:30 12:30
FEG IGO	441 1757	Asyut Kochi	00:05 00:10	UAE KAC	871 774	Dubai Riyadh	12:45 13:35	AIC JZR	988 713	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05 00:10	KIS	6033	Asyut Mashhad	12:45
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	JZR	212	Jeddah	13:45	MSC	412	Sohag Asyut	00:10	TBZ	6606	Mashhad	12:55
JZR	254	Amman	00:20	RBG	213	Sohag	13:55	MSR	615	Cairo	00:13	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	RBG	554	Alexandria	13:10
KAC	102	London	00:50	UAE	877	Dubai	14:00	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:40	JZR	115	Doha	13:25
JZR	734	Cairo	01:00	JZR	152	Mashhad	14:05	FEG	342	Sohag	01:05	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
JZR	722	Alexandria	01:00	KNE	231 221 500	Riyadh	14:10	JZR	723	Alexandria	01:05	MSR	611	Cairo	13:45
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	JZR	409	Delhi	01:10	THY	767	Istanbul	14:00
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15	IGO	1758	Kochi	01:10	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50	CLX RBG	7912 218	Hanoi Asyut	14:20 14:35
THY KKK	1464 1268	Istanbul Istanbul	01:50 01:55	QTR KAC	1078 364	Doha Colombo	14:25 14:35	THY	773	Istanbul	01:50	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:55	KAC	286	Dhaka	14:35	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	02:40	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:45	KAC	417	Manila	02:00	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	JZR	222	Riyadh	14:45	KAC	285	Dhaka	02:00	JZR	103	Bahrain	15:05
THY	1404	AYT	02:45	KAC	562	Amman	14:50	KAC JZR	363 111	Colombo	02:00 02:10	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
PGT	860	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	618	Doha	14:50	MSR	619	Doha Alexandria	02:10	UAE	878	Dubai	15:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:50	KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:50	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	QTR SVA	1079	Doha Jeddah	15:30
JZR	502	Lahore	02:55	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55	JZR	501 125	Dubai	15:45 15:50
KAC	156	Istanbul	02:55	KAC KAC	512	Mashhad	14:55	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
RJA ETD	648 305	Amman Abu Dhabi	03:05 03:05	KAC KNE	118	New York	15:00 15:05	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10	KAC	105	London	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	529 412	Jeddah Bangkok	15:10	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30	KAC	563	Amman	16:00
NIA	1604	Luxor	03:10	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:00	JZR	405	Kochi	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	OMA	645	Muscat	15:20	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
KAC	418	Manila	03:20	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	NIA	1404	Sohag	04:10	KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
OHY	352	Istanbul	04:00	KAC	546	Cairo	15:50	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	ETD	304 646	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	382	Delhi	04:05	SVA	504	Madinah	16:00	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:20	OMA KAC	646 785	Muscat Jeddah	16:20 16:20
IGO	1751	Chennai	04:10	FEG	341	Sohag	16:00	JZR	1735	Cairo	04:40	KAC	619	Doha	16:25
RBG	1153	Asyut Bahrain	04:10	JZR	732	Cairo	16:10	RBG	1152	Alexandria	05:00 05:00	FEG	242	Alexandria	16:55
ETH	3424		04:15	FDB	051	Dubai	16:10	QTR OHY	1077 351	Doha Istanbul	05:00 05:00	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:55
KAC KAC	796 784	Madinah	04:25	MSR KAC	575 503	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:10	IGO	1752	Chennai	05:00	SVA	505	Madinah	17:00
JZR	784 1738	Jeddah Cairo	04:25 04:45	QTR	502 1072	Beirut Doha	16:15 16:15	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
JZR	404	Hyderabad	04.43	SAW	705	Damascus	17:00	KAC	103	London	05:13	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:05	JZR	116	Doha	17:05	ETH	3425	Addis Ababa	05:45	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	OMS	225	Muscat	17:10	THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00	KAC KAC	155	Istanbul	17:35
IGO	1759	Delhi	05:10	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:10	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00	UAE	503 858	Beirut Dubai	17:40 17:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:20	GFA	215	Báhrain	17:30	IGO	1765	Delhi	06:10	KAC	283	Dubai Dhaka	17:40 17:40
JZR	402	Mumbai	05:25	JZR	214	Jeddah	17:35	RBG	216	Sohag	06:15	OMS	226	Muscat	17:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	158	Istanbul	17:50	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30	KAC	343	Chennai	17:50
RBG	215	Sohag	05:35	JZR	104	Bahrain	18:00	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	KAC	381	Delhi	17:55
UAE	873	Dubai	05:40	QTR	1080	Doha	18:10	RJA	649	Amman	07:00	SAW	706	Damascus	18:00
KAC JZR	552 112	Cairo Doha	05:45 05:50	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	UAE	874	Dubai	07:10	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:10
BAW	157	London	06:10	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	KAC	167	Paris	07:15	KAC	615	Bahrain	18:10
JZR	708	Luxor	06:15	FDB GFA	063	Dubai	19:05	JZR	121	Dubai	07:15	JZR	721	Alexandria	18:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:15		217 640	Bahrain	19:05 19:05	JZR	113	Doha	07:30	GFA	216 127	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	714	Sohag	06:20	RJA JZR	306	Amman Istanbul	19:20	KAC KAC	165 171	Rome Frankfurt	08:00 08:00	JZR JZR	403	Dubai Hyderabad	18:20 18:25
KAC	678	Dubai	06:40	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	JZR	211	Jeddah	08:00	JZR	733	Cairo	18:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	KAC	744	Dammam	19:25	BAW	156	London	08:00	JZR	253	Amman	19:10
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:05	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	IGO	1767	Mumbai	08:10	QTR	1081	Doha	19:20
IGO	1766	Mumbai	07:10	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:45	JZR	151	Mashhad	08:15	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	358	Kochi	07:25	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35	FDB	064	Dubai	19:45
FDB	053 724	Dubai	07:50	KAC	104	London	20:00	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50	GFA	218	<u>B</u> ahrain	19:50
JZR KAC	724 354	Alexandria Bengaluru	07:50 08:00	KAC	166	Rome	20:00	KAC	501	Beirut	08:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	19:55
QTR	1084	Doha	08:00	KNE	381	Taif	20:00	KAC	545	Cairo	08:50	ABY RJA	124 641	Sharjah Amman	20:00 20:05
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05	KAC	561	Amman	08:55	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
KAC	384	Delhi	08:10	NIA	1503	Asyut	20:10	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00	KAC	351	Kochi	20:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:10	KAC	117	New York	09:05	JZR	401	Mumbai	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:50	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC QTR	511 1085	Mashhad Doha	09:05 09:10	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
OMA	641	Muscat	09:00	JZR	126	Dubai	20:20	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:10	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:50
ABY IRA	125 665	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	620	Doha	20:30	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:50
QTR	1070	Shiraz Doha	09:15 09:20	QTR	1088	Doha	20:40	KAC	157	Istanbul	09:35	OMA NIA	648 1406	Muscat Sohag	21:05 21:10
GOW	061	CNN	09.20	RBG	217	Asyut	20:55	KAC	773	Riyadh	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:10
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:00	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:25
IGO	1753	Ahmedabad	09:40	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:00	JZR	731	Cairo	09:45	RBG	214	Sohag	21:35
JZR	410	Delhi	09:50	ETD	307 850	Abu Dhabi	21:10	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	UAE	859 220	Dubai Colombo	21:15	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	09:55	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:20	ALK KAC	229 168	Colombo Paris	21:15 21:20	OMA	642	Muscat	10:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	THY	764	Istanbul	21:30	KAC	101	London	10:05	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:10
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	616	Bahrain	21:40	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:15	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50	GOW	062	CNN	10:30	ALK THY	230 1413	Colombo	22:20 22:25
KIS JZR	6032 1736	Mashhad	11:00 11:05	KAC	564	Amman	21:55	QTR	1071	Doha	10:30	UAE	1413 860	Trabzon Dubai	22:25 22:35
JZR JZR	1736	Cairo Doha	11:05	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	KAC	617	Doha Abmodahad	10:40	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
IGO	1755	CNN	11:10	JAV	621	Amman	22:15	IGO FDB	1754 056	Ahmedabad Dubai	10:40 10:40	JZR	407	Ahmedabad	22:40
NIA	1405	Sohag	11:30	KAC	786	Jeddah	22:20	SYR	342	Dubai Damascus	11:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
JZR	122	Dubai	11:45	SVA	514	Riyadh	22:25	JZR	221	Riyadh	11:20	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:55
KIS	6032	Mashhad	11:45	AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:20	KAC	551	Cairo	23:00
TBZ	6605	Mashhad	11:55	SVA	502	Jeddah	22:45	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	KAC	411	Bangkok	23:00
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	JZR	128	Dubai	22:50	JZR	305	Istanbul	11:45	JAV QTR	622	Amman	23:15
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	MSC	411	Asyut	23:15	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55	SVA	1083 515	Doha Riyadh	23:20 23:25
RBG	553 766	Alexandria	12:30	MSR	614	Cairo	23:30	KIS	6033	Mashhad	12:00	SVA	503	Jeddah	23:45
THY KAC	766 614	Istanbul Bahrain	12:30 12:30	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	JZR	213	Jeddah	12:05	JZR	701	Asyut	23:45
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News



New protests as Iran makes first arrests over downed jet

TEHRAN: Iran announced yesterday its first arrests over the accidental shooting down of a Ukrainian passenger jet, as protesters vented their anger over the catastrophic blunder for a fourth consecutive day. Making matters worse for the sanctions-hit country, Britain, France and Germany triggered a dispute resolution mechanism under the already tattered 2015 nuclear deal, prompting Iran to warn them of unspecified "consequences".

The Ukraine International Airlines plane was brought down by a missile shortly after takeoff on Wednesday, killing all 176 passengers and crew on board. Iran has struggled to contain the fallout over its handling of the air disaster, after initially dismissing Western claims it was brought down by a missile before admitting it on Saturday. The tragedy has seen hundreds of angry protesters, most of them students, take to the streets, apparently chanting slogans against the Islamic republic.

AFP correspondents said around 200 mainly masked students gathered at Tehran University yesterday and were locked in a tense standoff with youths from the Basij militia loyal to the establishment. "Death to Britain," women clad in black chadors chanted as Basij members burned a cardboard cutout of the British ambassador to Tehran, Rob Macaire, after his brief arrest for allegedly attending a demonstration Saturday. Kept apart by security forces, the groups eventually parted ways.

'Real rift'

The protests have been much smaller than nation-wide demonstrations against fuel price hikes that turned deadly in November. But one commentator said the latest rallies showed there was a "real rift between the people and the authorities". "I hope that (police restraint) will continue and that no lives are lost, because this could be a catalyst for more protests," Mehdi Rahmanian, director of reformist daily Shargh, told AFP.

Newborn mauled to death by dogs at India hospital

NEW DELHI: Indian police have sealed a private hospital and charged staff for manslaughter after a newborn baby was mauled to death by dogs inside an operating theatre, an investigator said yesterday. The three-hour-old baby was attacked by the pack of dogs, who got into the hospital through a window, before relatives heard growling inside the room early Monday in Farrukhabad district, around 180 km from Uttar Pradesh capital Lucknow.

Police said the newborn had injuries all over his body and were expecting a postmortem report to confirm the

Erdogan threatens to 'teach lesson' to Libya's Haftar

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday he would "teach a lesson" to Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar if he resumed fighting after abandoning ceasefire talks in Moscow. Haftar left Moscow yesterday without signing a peace deal aimed at ending a nine-month offensive against the UNbacked government in Tripoli. "We will not hesitate to teach a deserved lesson to the putschist Haftar if he continues his attacks on the country's legitimate administration and our brothers in Libya," Erdogan told a

In another sign of growing dissent, a group of artists cancelled their participation in the Fajr festival, held each year on the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, according to Hamshahri newspaper, which is owned by Tehran City Hall. Tehran had for days denied Western claims based on US intelligence that the Boeing 737 had been downed by a missile.

It came clean on Saturday when Revolutionary Guards aerospace commander Brigadier General Amirali Hajizadeh acknowledged a missile operator had mistaken the plane for a cruise missile and opened fire independently. Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili said the first arrests had been made over the air disaster, without naming them or specifying how many. "Extensive investigations have been carried out and some people have been arrested," he said. Esmaili also said around 30 people had been arrested in the protests over the air disaster.

'World watching'

The announcement came shortly after President Hassan Rouhani said about the air disaster that "anyone who should be punished must be punished". "The judiciary must form a special court with a high-ranking judge and dozens of experts... The whole world will be watching," he said. "It cannot be that only the person who pressed the button is at fault. There are others."

The Kiev-bound plane was shot down at a time when Iran's armed forces were on heightened alert after launching a volley of missiles at Iraqi bases hosting US troops. Iran fired the missiles in retaliation for a US drone strike on Jan 3 that killed Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Guards' Quds Force foreign operations arm. Addressing that issue, Rouhani said while "the root of all sorrows goes back to America... this cannot be a reason for us not to look into all the root causes" of the air disaster.

Canadians join probe The president also demanded officials explain why it

exact cause of death. "The family alleged the baby was left unattended inside the theatre with windows open, leading to the attack," Ved Prakash Panday, investigating officer, told AFP. "We are waiting for the post-

mortem report before arrests can be made over the

death," he said.

The family said officials at Akash Ganga Hospital initially told them that the baby was stillborn, and when challenged they offered the relatives money to keep the matter hushed up. Authorities said the hospital was functioning without a license and may face penalties for

operating illegally.

India has more than 30 million stray dogs and some 20,000 people die every year of rabies, almost 35 percent of the global deaths caused by the virus. Reports of strays roaming hospitals are common in India that suffers from creaking healthcare infrastructure, particularly in small cities and towns. Last week dogs were found sleeping on beds at a government-run hospital in the state, triggering local protests. —AFP

meeting of his party in Ankara in a televised speech.

He said the issue would now be discussed at talks in Berlin on Sunday attended by European, North African and Middle Eastern countries, as well as the UN, EU, Africa Union and Arab League. The head of the Tripoli government, Prime Minister Fayez Al-Sarraj, arrived in Istanbul yesterday. His government said on Facebook he held talks with US Ambassador to Turkey David Satterfield, underlining the need to "resume the process for a political cettlement".

for a political settlement".

Turkey, which approved the deployment of troops to support Sarraj's government earlier this month, praised his "constructive" role in the Moscow talks on Monday. "The putschist Haftar did not sign the ceasefire. He first said yes, but later unfortunately he left Moscow, he fled Moscow," Erdogan said. "Despite this, we find the talks in Moscow were positive as they showed the true face of the putschist Haftar to the international community." — AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian students gather for a demonstration over the downing of a Ukrainian airliner at Tehran University yesterday. — AFP

took so long for authorities to announce the real cause of the air disaster. But Rouhani said that for him it would be more important that Iranians are "assured that this incident will not be repeated". Iran has invited experts from Canada, France, Ukraine and the United States to take part in the probe.

On Monday night, Canada's Transportation Safety Board (TSB) said its investigators flying to Tehran would be granted access to the wreckage and black box flight recorders. "There have been early signs that Iran is allowing the TSB to play a more active role than is normally permitted," its chair Kathy Fox said. On the diplomatic front, Britain on Monday summoned Iran's ambassador to lodge its "strong objections" after its Tehran envoy, Macaire, was temporarily arrested for allegedly attending a demonstration on Sunday night. Iran's judiciary spokesman yesterday described Macaire as a "persona non grata" and said his "obligations under international treaties are clear".—AFP

Oceans were hottest on record in 2019

PARIS: The world's oceans were the hottest in recorded history in 2019, scientists said yesterday, as manmade emissions warmed seas at an ever-increasing rate with potentially disastrous impacts on Earth's climate. Oceans absorb more than 90 percent of excess heat created by greenhouse gas emissions and quantifying how much they have warmed up in recent years gives scientists an accurate read on the rate of global warming.

on the rate of global warming.

A team of experts from around the world looked at data compiled by China's Institute of Atmospheric Physics (IAP) to gain a clear picture of ocean warmth to a depth of 2,000 m over several decades. They found that oceans last year were by far the hottest ever recorded and said that the effects of ocean warming were already being felt in the form of more extreme weather, rising sea levels and damage to marine life. The study, published in the journal Advances in Atmospheric Sciences, said that last year the ocean was 0.075 Celsius hotter than the historical average between 1981-2010. That means the world's oceans have absorbed

Kuwait projects huge budget...

Continued from Page 1

a temporary decision. Expenses will be redistributed according to priorities, which will help in preserving the general reserves more than expected," noted Khaled Mahdi, Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development.

Supreme Council for Planning and Development.
The 2020/2021 budget is a result of joint work

228 Zetta Joules (228 billion trillion Joules) of energy in recent decades. "That's a lot of zeros," said Cheng Lijing, lead paper author and associate professor at the International Centre for Climate and Environmental Sciences at the IAP. "The amount of heat we have put in the world's oceans in the past 25 years equals 3.6 billion Hiroshima atom bomb explosions."

The past five years are the five hottest years for the ocean, the study found. As well as the mid-term warming trend, the data showed that the ocean had absorbed 25 Zetta Joules of additional energy in 2019 compared with 2018's figure. "That's roughly equivalent to everyone on the planet running a hundred hairdryers or a hundred microwaves continuously for the entire year," Michael Mann, director of Penn State's Earth System Sciences Center, told AFP.

The 2015 Paris accord aims to limit global temperature rises to "well below" 2C, and to 1.5C if at all possible. With just 1C of warming since the pre-industrial period, Earth has experienced a cascade of droughts, superstorms, floods and wildfires made more likely by climate change. The study authors said there was a clear link between climate-related disasters - such as the bushfires that have ravaged southeastern Australia for months - and warming oceans. — AFP

between the ministry of finance and the supreme council. "This budget includes governmental priorities and understanding of the present challenges without affecting capital and investment spending. Clear optimization of this budget is seen in fixed capital spending of 16

percent," he added.

"The deficit should drop by the end of this year as the price of oil is higher than the average price used for calculating the budget. We have executed and carried out many projects, but their results won't appear in the budget before approximately two years," stressed Abdulghafar Al-Awadhi, Assistant Undersecretary for the Public Budget Affairs at the Ministry of Finance.

Sports

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Astros coach, GM banned and sacked over cheating scandal

We need to move forward with a clean slate: Crane

LOS ANGELES: Houston Astros manager A.J. Hinch and assistance of a camera positioned in the outfield, with team boss Jeff Luhnow were banned for the 2020 season then sacked by the club on Monday after Major League Baseball found team members engaged in an illegal sign-stealing scheme during their 2017 World Series-winning campaign.

In sanctions that sent shockwaves through baseball, MLB commissioner Rob Manfred said the Astros had effectively ignored a league warning against illegal signstealing issued in September 2017. "The conduct of the Astros, and its senior baseball operations executives, merits significant discipline," Manfred said in a nine-

"While it is impossible to determine whether the conduct actually impacted the results on the field, the perception of some that it did causes significant harm to the game," he said. Shortly after the suspensions were announced, Astros owner Jim Crane said Hinch and Luhnow had been fired.

We need to move forward with a clean slate," Crane said. "We will not have this happen again on my watch." In addition to the suspensions, the Astros have been fined the maximum \$5 million allowed under MLB rules.

The team has also forfeited its first- and secondround picks in the 2020 and 2021 drafts, MLB said. The penalties are among the stiffest ever handed out to a team by MLB. The Astros — who defeated the Los Angeles Dodgers in seven games to win the 2017 World Series — had been under investigation since November after former pitcher Mike Fiers lifted the lid on tactics used by Houston to illegally steal signs from opposing teams. Sign-stealing in baseball — observing the signals of opposing teams, most often between pitchers and catchers — is an age-old albeit frowned upon practice by which players seek the tactical advantage of knowing what pitch is likely to be thrown.

Major League Baseball forbids the use of mechanical or electronic assistance to help steal signs. Fiers told The Athletic the Astros had decoded signs with the video relayed to a television monitor near the home

The Athletic report said an Astros employee would watch the opposing team's catcher's signals on the monitor, then bang a trash can to let batters know what pitches to expect. The MLB ruling said that while the Astros sign-stealing in 2017 was "player-driven", former bench coach Alex Cora — who guided the Boston Red Sox to the World Series in 2018 — had been involved in

The report warned that Cora could face penalties when the league completes its investigation into allegations of illegal sign-stealing by Boston in 2018. Manfred said that in interviews, Hinch had told investigators he was opposed to the sign-stealing scheme and had twice damaged the video monitor.

However, Manfred said there "simply is no justification for Hinch's failure to act." Hinch himself issued a statement acknowledging as much. "As a leader and Major League Manager, it is my responsibility to lead players and staff with integrity that represents the game in the best possible way," Hinch said.

'While the evidence consistently showed I didn't endorse or participate in the sign stealing practices, I failed to stop them and I am deeply sorry." Luhnow also issued a statement saying he accepted responsibility for rules violations that occurred on his watch but adding: "I am not a cheater.

"I did not know rules were being broken," Luhnow said. "As the Commissioner set out in his statement, I did not personally direct, oversee or engage in any misconduct: The sign-stealing initiative was not planned or directed by baseball management; the trash-can banging was driven and executed by players, and the video decoding of signs originated and was executed by lower-level employees working with the bench coach.'

Manfred made it clear, however, that he thought Luhnow failed in his responsibility to prevent such

TEXAS: In this file photo taken on October 5, 2019 Manager AJ Hinch talks with Jeff Luhnow (R), General

Manager of the Houston Astros, prior to game two of the American League Division Series against the Tampa Bay Rays at Minute Maid Park in Houston, Texas. Houston Astros manager A.J. Hinch and team boss Jeff Luhnow have been banned for the 2020 season. — AFP

actions. "It is the job of the general manager to be aware of the activities of his staff and players, and to ensure that those activities comport with both standards of conduct set by club ownership and MLB rules," Manfred said.

The league said Luhnow and Hinch would be barred from performing any role with the Astros or any other club, whether Major League, Minor League or at spring training. They are also banned from stadiums and any breach of the suspension could bring a lifetime ban.

In a separate sanction, the league also banned former Astros assistant general manager Brandon Taubman for one year. Taubman was sacked by the Astros in October after taunting a group of female reporters about domestic violence. Manfred's ruling, however, cleared Astros owner Crane of involvement, saying there was "absolutely no evidence" he was aware of what had taken place. — AFP

Kuwait bags 3 medals, Italy tops in Amir's shooting grand prix

By Abdellaltif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait started strongly in its competition of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah 9th Annual Shooting Grand Prix by winning three medals Monday including gold, silver and bronze, while Italy topped the medals list with two gold, two silver and one bronze. It was clear that the competition was tough with the distribution of the first five medals, with Serbia, Czech and UAE joining Kuwait and Italy in competition which indicates the strength of the tournament.

The Olympic archery event (70 meters) saw total Kuwaiti control, as archer Bader Al-Mutairi won gold, while Faisal Sindy won silver and Abdallah Al-Harby

Meanwhile, the gold medalist in Beijing 2008 Olympics, holder of the Olympic record David Kostelecky won the men's gold medal by hitting 48 targets in the final round, followed by Italian Emanuele Buccolieri and his teammate Fabio Sollami.

While in the women's category second place winner of the world championship Italy's Gaia Razzini won first place by hitting 43 targets while teammate Guilia Grassia took silver and third place went to Kazakhstan's Anastassiya Davydova.

UAE's Ahmad Al-Amiri was upto the challenge and won the 10m air pistol gold medal by scoring 238.7 points followed by Pakistan's Joseph Gulfam, while the bronze went to Serbia's Mikec Damir.

Serbia's shooters won the gold and silver medals of the 10m air rifle as the world champion in 2015 and 2017 Milutin Stefanovic won gold while the silver medal went to Serbic Milenko and the bronze went to Lithuania's Girulis Karolis.

Meanwhile, two gold medals will be distributed today in the skeet event for men and women to start at 9 am while the final rounds will start at 12:45 pm, while the official training of the sporting event.

Archer Abdallah Al-Harby from Kuwait said competition was very strong with the Bahrainis due to having close levels and the point difference was minimal.

won the gold medal said competition was highly competitive adding that his winning the gold medal gives him a strong motive to keep going and make more





achievements in upcoming events.

Pistol and air rifle coaches from Serbia said the Grand Prix is the best preparation for their shooters as they get ready for the European Championship to be held in a month from now, and for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, due to its high standard, and the caliber of participating shooters.

President of Lithuania federation commended HH

the Amir Grand Prix and added that it is at the highest level from all aspects.

He said that he is keen to be present at the 9th Grand Prix as he attended two previous championships and was impressed with the organization.

He said the good weather is a main reason for the success of the tournament and this encourages many shooters to be present.

Rio medallists in Singapore golf showdown before Olympics

SINGAPORE: The three men's golf medallists from the week in a closely-watched showdown just months ahead of the Tokyo Games.

Gold medallist Justin Rose, silver winner Henrik Stenson and third-placed Matt Kuchar's performances will give clues about their form before the Games begin in July. "My goal really... is to play well and to make as many ranking points as possible to secure my position in team GB," said 39-year-old Rose, ranked ninth in the world. The English player added that his schedule this year was designed with "staying fresh" for the Games in mind, and that "defending the Olympic gold is obviously very much on the top of my list". The trio made light of their rivalry and said they were looking forward to facing each other again at an Olympics — Rio marked golf's return to the Games after a 112-year absence.

'We all look back with great memories from Rio and want to make some new ones in Tokyo this coming summer," said Stenson of Sweden. Ten Olympians in total will compete at the \$1 million SMBC Singapore Open, which runs from Thursday to Sunday and is jointly sanctioned by the Asian Tour and Japan Golf Tour Organization.

They include Australia's Marcus Fraser, Japanese player Yuta Ikeda and Brazil's Adilson da Silva.

The Rio winners joked about what they had done with their medals — with America's Kuchar, 41, admitting he carries his around in a sock inside his backpack.

"It has not found a permanent home," said the ninetime PGA Tour winner from the United States. Stenson, 43, said that his son once took his silver medal to school only to bring it back with a dent.—AFP

All Blacks and chief sponsor to part ways

WELLINGTON: The All Blacks have lost their main sponsor, US insurance giant AIG, following their disappointing performance in this year's World Cup, the team announced

New Zealand Rugby (NZR) chief executive Mark Robinson said AIG had given early notice that the multimillion-dollar arrangement, in place since 2012, would end next year. "Lengthy commercial partnerships such as this are unusual, and the lead-in time provided means NZR is very well placed to attract new sponsors," Robinson said.
In a brief statement from AIG, global head of sponsor-

ship Daniel Glantz gave no reason for ending the arrangement. But he thanked New Zealand Rugby and the players who have "consistently demonstrated a commitment to excellence on and off the pitch, which has enhanced both of our brands and inspired rugby fans around the world."

The announcement comes just three months after the All Blacks failed in their bid for an unprecedented third consecutive World Cup and fell from the top of the world rankings for the first time in 10 years.

The AIG sponsorship covered not only the All Blacks and the women's Black Ferns but also the national men's and women's sevens teams, the Maori All Blacks and the New Zealand under-20 side. During the AIG partnership years, the All Blacks won the 2015 World Cup and the 2017 Women's World Cup, while the men's and women's sevens teams both won gold at the Commonwealth Games and the Sevens World Cup in 2018. Last October, environmental activists delivered a 35,000 signature petition to NZR urging it to axe its association with AIG after it was revealed that the company was insuring the controversial Adani Carmichael coal mine in Australia. —AFP

UAE's 10m pistol shooter Ahmad Al-Ameeri who





Sports

Warner, Finch hit centuries to inflict 10-wicket loss on India

Kuwait Times

Two sides meet again in Rajkot for second ODI on Friday

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Final scoreboard of the first one-day international between India and Australia in Mumbai yesterday:

R. Sharma c Warner b Starc	10
S. Dhawan c Agar b Cummins	74
KL Rahul c Smith b Agar	47
V. Kohli c & b Zampa	16
S. Iyer c Carey b Starc	4
R. Pant c Turner b Cummins	28
R. Jadeja c Carey b Richardson	25
S. Thakur b Starc	13
M. Shami c Carey b Richardson	10
K. Yadav run out (Smith)	17
J. Bumrah not out	0
Extras (lb3, w8)	11
Total (all out, 49.1 overs)	255
Fall of wickets: 1-13 (Sharma), 2-134 (Rahul), 3-140	(Dhav
4 45C (IV 11) 5 4C4 (I) C 242 (I 1:) 7 247 (D	1) 0

4-156 (Kohli), 5-164 (Iyer), 6-213 (Jadeja), 7-217 (Pant), 8-229 (Thakur), 9-255 (Yadav), 10-255 (Shami)

Bowling: Starc 10-0-56-3 (2w), Cummins 10-1-44-2 (2w), Richardson 9.1-O-43-2 (2w), Zampa 10-O-53-1 (1w), Agar 10-1-

Australia (target 256)

Result: Australia won by 10 wickets.

D. warner not out	128
A. Finch not out	110
Extras (b4, lb7, w9)	20
Total (for 0 wkts, 37.4 overs)	258
Did not bat: S. Smith, M. Labuschagne, A. Turne	er, A. Carey, A.
Agar, P. Cummins, M. Starc, K. Richardson, A. Zam	npa
Bowling: Shami 7.4-0-58-0 (1w), Bumrah 7-	0-50-0 (1w),
Thakur 5-0-43-0 (4w) 10-0-55-0 (2w) Jadeja 8	-0-41-0 (1w)

MUMBAI: Australia openers David Warner and Aaron Finch both hit centuries to complement their bowlers' inspired display as the touring side handed out a 10wicket thrashing to India in the opening one-day inter-

India, ranked second in ODIs in the world, suffered a mid-innings collapse to be bundled out for 255 in the 50th over of their innings after Australia captain Finch won the toss and opted to field in the first of the threematch series. Warner and Finch then smashed the Indian bowlers to all corners of the ground, picking up boundaries at will to chase down the target with more than 12 overs to spare at the Wankhede Stadium, which overlooks the Arabian Sea.

Left-handed Warner successfully used the decision review system twice to overturn the umpire's decision on his way to his 18th ODI century, hitting 17 fours and three sixes in his unbeaten knock of 128.

Finch completed his 16th century in the format, his innings of unbeaten 110 studded with 13 fours and two sixes. Earlier, left-arm fast bowler Mitchell Starc, who made his ODI debut in India 10 years ago, picked up three wickets to set up Australia's victory.

Starc struck the first blow for Australia with the new ball when he sent back Rohit Sharma for 10. India managed to recover from that early loss through a secondwicket stand of 121 between opener Shikhar Dhawan, who top-scored for the hosts with 74, and KL Rahul.

Left-arm spinner Ashton Agar broke the stand by dismissing Rahul for 47 before pace spearhead Pat Cummins sent Dhawan back in the next over.

India needed a solid innings from captain Virat Kohli, who batted a position lower than his usual number three spot to accommodate Rahul, to get them out of trouble but he did not last long. Kohli hit leg-spinner



Adam Zampa for a six before offering a return catch to the bowler on the very next delivery to be out for 16.

Starc then returned to remove Shreyas Iver cheaply as India lost four wickets for 30 runs to be reduced to 164-5. Cummins and fast bowler Kane Richardson picked up two wickets each for Australia.

To compound India's woes, wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant suffered a concussion after being hit on his helmet by a short-pitched delivery from Cummins. The Indian cricket board said Pant, who did not come out to keep wickets, was under observation. The two sides will meet in Rajkot for the second ODI on Friday. — Reuters

Jofra Archer abuser banned for two years in N Zealand

WELLINGTON: The man who racially abused England bowler Jofra Archer during a Test against the Black Caps was banned yesterday from international and domestic matches in New Zealand for

Archer was targeted by racial abuse on the final day of the first Test between England and New Zealand in November. Police tracked down a 28year-old Auckland man who admitted responsibility for the abuse and was issued with a verbal warning for using insulting language, New Zealand Cricket spokesman Anthony Crummy said.

Crummy said the man has been banned from all international and domestic fixtures in New Zealand until 2022 and if he breached the ban he "could face further police action". "We'd again like to extend our apologies to Jofra and the England team management for such an unsavoury incident and reiterate once more that this type of behaviour is completely unacceptable," Crummy said.

"We want to thank the police for their efforts in identifying the person responsible, and for making it clear that this type of behaviour will not be minimised." The Barbados-born bowler tweeted after the match it was "a bit disturbing hearing racial insults today whilst battling to help save my team". The 24year-old said the abuser was a solitary spectator making comments "about the colour of my skin". —AFP

MCC in favour of 5-day Test cricket

LONDON: The influential Marylebone Cricket Club has thrown its weight behind five-day Test cricket as debate swirls over the future of the longest form of the game. The International Cricket Council (ICC) will in the coming months discuss a proposal to reduce Tests to four days as part of structuring the global calendar beyond 2023.

But the latest proposal, part of an effort to tackle the crowded international cricket schedule and save on costs, has divided players and fans, many of whom consider Tests the gold standard.

The ICC allowed four-day Tests in 2017 and they have been tried in one-off games between South Africa and Zimbabwe and England against Ireland. But they are not allowed in the Test world championship, which is currently led by Virat Kohli's India.

The MCC Cricket Committee and MCC World Cricket Committee both believe Test cricket should continue to be played over five days. "MCC has noted the recent discussion regarding the future of Test cricket and the ICC's desire to debate the introduction of four-day Test cricket to replace the current five-day format in the World Test Championship from 2023.

The MCC Cricket committee and MCC World Cricket committee have recently discussed the issue and although they can see some benefits that four-day Test cricket could bring, both committees believe that Test cricket should continue to be played over five days." The MCC, founded in 1787 and based at its ground Lord's in London, is the custodian of the laws of the game. Federation of International Cricketers' Associations executive chairman Tony Irish last week stressed there was "currently a lot of negative sentiment" concerning the four-day proposal.—- AFP

Ovechkin alone at number 11 on goals list

WASHINGTON: Alex Ovechkin scored two goals and moved into sole possession of 11th place on the NHL's all-time goal-scoring list as the Washington Capitals defeated the visiting Carolina Hurricanes 2-0 Monday night. Ovechkin broke out of a tie with Teemu Selanne (684 goals) when he scored 11:58 into the game, and he added his second of the night about five minutes later. His 686 goals leave the Washington captain just four goals behind Mario Lemieux, who is alone in 10th place overall. Capitals goalie Ilya Samsonov posted his first career shutout with 23 saves and improved his record to 13-2-1 this year. Samsonov has won eight straight while backing up starter Braden Holtby, tying the franchise's longest victory streak by a rookie goalie. Petr Mrazek made 28 saves for Carolina, which saw its three-game winning streak end. The Capitals snapped a two-game skid.

CANADIENS 2, FLAMES 0

Jordan Weal scored early, Ryan Poehling scored late, and Carey Price made 31 saves for his 46th career shutout as host Montreal cooled off Calgary. The Canadiens were the aggressor most of the evening, outshooting Calgary 37-31. Price and the defense in front of him were solid enough to help Montreal win back-to-back games following an 0-7-1 slide. With his second shutout of the season, Price tied Hall of Famer Ken Dryden for third place on Montreal's career shutout list. Calgary, meanwhile, was blanked for the sixth time this season and saw its five-game winning streak come to an end. David Rittich stopped 35 shots for the Flames, who entered winners of three straight on the road and amid an 8-1-1 stretch away from home.

RANGERS 6, ISLANDERS 2

Artemi Panarin scored twice in the third period and collected three assists for the second five-point game of his career as the host Rangers won the first meeting

WASHINGTON: Teuvo Teravainen #86 of the Carolina Hurricanes skates with the puck in front of Tom Wilson #43 of the Washington Capitals in the third period at Capital One Arena in Washington, DC. — AFP of the New York City rivals this season. Jesper Fast scored in the first period for the Rangers, while Chris Kreider and defenseman Adam Fox scored in the second period, and Jacob Trouba accounted for the Rangers' sixth goal during a power play in the third period. Rangers goaltender Alexandar Georgiev made 32 saves. Jordan Eberle scored 18 seconds into the game, and Brock Nelson added a power-play goal in the third for the Islanders, who are 11-10-2 since a team-record 17-game point streak (15-0-2) from Oct. 12-Nov. 23. Semyon Varlamov allowed six goals on 35 shots and was pulled after Trouba's goal. Thomas

FLYERS 6, BRUINS 5 (SO)

Greiss finished up with one save over the final 9:45.

Travis Konecny scored in the fifth round of a shootout to complete Philadelphia's come-from-behind victory over visiting Boston. Brad Marchand then had a chance to score in the shootout, but he overskated the puck to end the game. Travis Sanheim scored two goals, Sean Couturier added one goal and two assists, and Kevin

Hayes and Connor Bunnaman had one goal apiece for the Flyers, who improved to 5-5 in shootouts this season. Jake Voracek also had two assists, and goaltender Carter Hart made 26 saves for Philadelphia. David Krejci scored two goals, and Charlie Coyle and Anders Bjork had one goal and one assist each. David Pastrnak contributed one goal, and Danton Heinen and Jake DeBrusk registered two assists apiece. The Bruins, who got 34 saves from Jaroslav Halak, fell to 0-7 in shootouts this season.

BLUES 4, DUCKS 1

Tyler Bozak scored the go-ahead goal in the second period, and St. Louis defeated visiting Anaheim for its ninth consecutive home victory. Alexander Steen, Jaden Schwartz and Ivan Barbashev also scored for the Western Conference-leading Blues, who are 12-2-1 on their past 15 games overall. Brayden Schenn had two assists for St. Louis, and Jake Allen made 20 saves. Max Comtois scored, and John Gibson stopped 30 of 34 shots for the Ducks, who are 1-6-1 in their past eight games. — Reuters

Quintanilla wins **Dakar Rally stage**

JEDDAH: Chilean Pablo Quintanilla won the ninth stage of the Dakar Rally yesterday as the motorcyclists returned to action in Saudi Arabia, battling their own emotions as well as the tough desert terrain after a crash killed veteran rider Pablo Goncalves.

Quintanilla, second overall on a Husqvarna, trimmed American Honda rider Ricky Brabec's overall lead to 20 minutes and 53 seconds with three stages remaining before Friday's finish in Qiddiya.

Australian Toby Price, the defending champion for KTM, was second on the 410 km special stage from Wadi Al Dawasir to Haradh and third overall, 26 minutes off the lead. Monday's stage was cancelled after Goncalves, a 40-year-old Portuguese who was runnerup in 2015, died in a fall on Sunday. His Hero team has withdrawn from the event.

Price was the first man on the scene of Goncalves' accident and finished Sunday's stage "dehydrated with tears" after a failed effort to save him. "No doubt this is going to be one of the toughest stages we're all going to have to tackle and not because of the terrain or navigation," the Australian posted on Instagram before Tuesday's start, with a heart emoji.

He had earlier explained how he came over a crest and saw a rider down ahead of him on the dunes. 'Worst fears kicked in cause I knew this one was seri-



ing the 2020 Rally Dakar Stage 9 of the Dakar 2020 between Wadi Al Dawasir and Haradh, Saudi Arabia, yes terday. — AFP

ous. I called for help ASAP and helped get him on his side," wrote Price.

He was joined by Slovak rider Stefan Svitko and retired French Alpine skier Luc Alphand, who was on the first helicopter to land. "Helping holding drip bags, getting bags of medical equipment and guiding other riders around a bad scene. We all worked as long as we could but there was nothing we could do," contin-

"I helped assist carrying him to the helicopter as it was the right thing to do. I was first at his side and wanted to be the last to leave." The Australian had the lost time restored at the finish — as was the case with Goncalves himself in 2017 when the Portuguese stopped to tend to Price, who had crashed and broken

World number one Barty survives scare to stay in hunt in Adelaide

Former US Open champion Sloane Stephens crashes out

ADELAIDE: World number one Ashleigh Barty survived a scare yesterday before battling through her opening match at the Adelaide International to beat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in three tough sets. The top seed, who had a bye in the first round at Memorial Drive, faced a struggle to get past her experienced Russian opponent 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 and book a place in the quarter-finals.

The Australian was joined in the last eight by second seed Simona Halep, who made her 2020 competitive debut with a 6-4, 7-5 defeat of Ajla Tomljanovic. Halep is back with Adelaide coach Darren Cahill after his family leave during 2019, and the Romanian said getting through the opening match of the season is an annual

"It was a tough match but I expected that, since I've played her twice before. I'm very happy to go through. Training cannot compare with actually playing. "I got a bit tired in the second set and I'll have to keep up my level for the next match."

Barty said she got comfortable as she scored her first season win after losing her opening match last week in Brisbane. The 23-year-old is looking for crucial court time before the Australian Open starts next Monday in Melbourne.

"I was able to play, my style and control a bit more in the third set," the Australian said. "No matter what the score is, I try and hang around for the whole match every time. "I felt like I was doing the right things. I just needed to hang in there and wait for an opportunity to come and then try and grab it.

"I'm pretty happy to be able to turn that one around." Barty went up a double break of serve up in the deciding third set, but lost the edge as Pavlyuchenkova levelled at 5-all. But the 31st-ranked

Russian, who now stands 3-3 in their head-to-head, lost her own serve on a forehand wide as Barty took a 6-5 lead and closed out the win a game later after two hours, 10 minutes.

"I'm very proud of myself the way that 5-all game I was able to regather and then get that last bit of momentum that I needed." The Australian, who won the French Open last year, said she was taking nothing for

granted while holding the top WTA ranking.
"It's been an incredible journey for me and my team," she said. "It was a whirlwind year, but I'm back competing and doing what I love."

Former US Open champion Sloane Stephens didn't fare as well, crashing 6-2, 6-2 to 201st-ranked Australian qualifier Arina Rodionova. The American, whose last match was a second-round ouster in Beijing on October 1, exited in 72 minutes, dropping serve four times. Rodionova worked her way through qualifying rounds, defeating a pair of top 100 opponents to earn her spot in the draw. "This is my third big win of the week, so I'm not counting anymore," the winner said.

"Hopefully I manage to continue. It's always great to get such amazing wins against the top players. I feel pretty good about myself right now." Elsewhere, Maria Sakkari of Greece made quick work of Vitalia Diatchenko of Russia 7-5, 6-2.

Last year's French Open finalist, Czech Marketa Vondrosova, played her first match since picking up an arm injury at last year's Wimbledon, defeating Tatiana Maria in Adelaide 6-3, 6-0. German Julia Goerges will line up for a quarter-final place fourth seed Belinda Bencic after defeating Australian wild card Priscilla Hon

In the men's draw, Britain's Dan Evans reached the quarters with a 7-5, 6-2 defeat of Alexander Bublik.



ADELAIDE: Ashleigh Barty of Australia hits a return to Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia during their women's second round singles match at the Adelaide International tennis tournament in Adelaide yesterday. — AFP

6-4. Australian Jordan Thompson was put out 6-4, 6-7

American qualifier Tommy Paul beat Aljaz Bedene 6-4, (5/7), 6-3 in the first round by Spaniard Albert Ramos-

Man Utd can still compete with best in transfer market

LONDON: Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Manchester United retain the power to compete at the top end of the transfer market despite warnings their status as the Premier League's richest club is "at risk". According to Deloitte's Football Money League, United's revenue of £627.1 million (\$814 million) in 2018-19 put them third overall behind only Barcelona and Real Madrid.

find themselves slipping behind Liverpool and Manchester City due to their failure to qualify for the Champions League. Solskjaer offered a robust defence of the club's status yesterday, speaking ahead of his

side's FA Cup third-round relay against Wolves. "The most important thing for me is we get the results sorted and the performances on the pitch," he said. "But I know that we've got the resources, we've got the backing. If we need to go into the transfer mar-

ket we are still up there so we're still in a good place." United are reportedly in talks over a deal for Sporting Lisbon midfielder Bruno Fernandes, who could cost as much as £70 million, though Solskjaer offered no update on that or any other moves in the January market. Wednesday's match against Wolves at Old Trafford could offer another opportunity for 18-yearold striker Mason Greenwood, who started in the goalless draw between the two sides at Molineux on

Greenwood has enjoyed a hugely impressive season to date, scoring nine goals for United's senior side in 26 appearances but Solskjaer cautioned against England taking him to Euro 2020, with concerns over the availability of the injured Harry Kane.

"I think Mason will have a top career, a long career, but let the boy settle in now before we talk about England and the Euros," he said. "His focus has to be playing for us and improving. When he plays well for us, that will happen by itself."

Solskjaer is trying to carefully manage the demands But the consulting firm warned United could soon on his younger players, and his squad as a whole, as they prepare for their 14th game in 46 days. "It is physically and mentally demanding and we've got to make sure we energise them with results," he said.

> "After a performance like Norwich (a 4-0 win) they all felt good about that and used that as motivation. "We're not there yet, we've got to keep working and improving, just keep the rhythm. I didn't play in all these games when I was playing but I felt like, as a team, we improved when we got in a rhythm of match, rest, match, rest. "The likes of Roy (Keane), Gary (Neville), (Paul) 'Scholesy', they only seemed to improve and we need to get to that."

> With United well off the pace in the Premier League and needing to overturn a 3-1 first-leg deficit to rivals



Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

Manchester City in the semi-finals of the League Cup, Solskjaer is looking to the FA Cup as the most realistic prospect of silverware this season.

"This tournament is one that we all dream about winning when we're young," he said. "I loved my time in the finals and lifting the trophy, so we want to go through." — AFP

Japan's 'King Kazu' striker, renews contract

TOKYO: Former Japan striker Kazuyoshi Miura, who turns 53 next month, has renewed his contract with Yokohama FC to extend his record as the world's oldest professional footballer. The veteran player, admiringly nicknamed "King Kazu" for his spirited onfield style, will kick off his 35th career season this year, the club announced over the weekend.

Miura, who has played for Yokohama FC since 2005, has said he won't hang up his boots until he turns 60. He played for the club three times last season but did not find

In a short statement, he said he was concentrating on enjoying his football and keeping the club in the top league. "I'll do my best to contribute to the team winning," he said. In 2017, Miura surpassed football's previous professional longevity record and became the oldest player to score a competitive goal in a professional match. Both records were previously held by English legend Stanley

Miura left Japan for Brazil in 1982 and signed a contract with Santos FC in 1986 to make his professional debut. He made his Japan debut in 1990 and pushed for the country's first ever World Cup appearance in 1998 but failed to make the final squad for France, despite scoring 55 goals in 89 games for the

He was one of the stars of the professional J-League at its 1993 launch before joining Italy's Genoa on loan the following year. Yokohama came second in the J-2 league last season, winning promotion to the top tier. — AFP



Mirza enjoys winning return after having baby

HOBART: India's former doubles world number one Sania Mirza made a winning return to tennis yesterday at the Hobart International after more than two years on maternity leave.

The 33-year-old last played at the China Open in October 2017 before injuries and then the birth of son Izhaan in October 2018 meant an extended spell on the

Mirza, who is married to the former Pakistan cricket captain Shoaib Malik, partnered Ukraine's Nadiia Kichenok to a 2-6, 7-6 (7/3), 10-3 victory over Georgia's Oksana Kalashnikova and Japan's Miyu Kato in the doubles.

"Today was one of the most special days of my life to have my parents and my little baby boy with me in my first match after so long... and we WON our first round," Mirza tweeted after her win.

"Feel very grateful for the love I am receiving. BELIEF!! Takes you places YES my baby boy, we did it." Mirza, regarded as her country's greatest women's tennis player, became the first Indian to win a WTA singles title in 2005. She reached the fourth round of the US Open in the same year, and by 2007 was among the women's top 30.

But a wrist injury caused her to concentrate on doubles, forging a partnership with Swiss great Martina Hingis which produced three Grand Slam titles. She is due to partner American Rajeev Ram in the mixed doubles at the Australian Open next week. —AFP

Barcelona open record gap over Real in Deloitte **Money League**

LONDON: La Liga leaders Barcelona have chalked up a victory over rivals Real Madrid after establishing a record gap between first and second place in the latest Deloitte Football Money League. Barcelona topped the 2018/2019 earnings table with 840.8 million euros (\$937 million), a record 83.5 million euros ahead of Real (757.3 million euros), while Manchester United, the highest-placed British club in third, earned 711.5 million euros (£627.1 million) for 2018-19. Reigning German champions Bayern Munich were fourth on 660.1 million euros. Consulting firm Deloitte suggest United's grip on the number one status among English clubs is under serious threat next year from Premier League champions Manchester City and Champions League holders

Barcelona leading the pack is down to bringing merchandising and licensing activities in-house, according to Deloitte. "Barca are a clear example of a club adapting to changing market conditions, reducing the reliance on broadcast revenue and focusing on growing revenues within its control," Dan Jones, partner in the Sports Business Group at Deloitte, told the Press Association news agency.

The club's commercial operation generated 383.5m euros of revenue, which is more than the total revenue of the 12th-placed club in this year's Money League. "With the club expecting further growth of 30 million euros in commercial revenues and total revenue of almost 880m euros in 2019-20, we expect them to retain the top spot in next year's edition."

United's place as number one English club — a position they have held since the first Money League survey in 1996-97 — is in peril because they are forecasting reduced revenues of between £560-580 million for 2019-20, partly because they failed to qualify for this season's Champions League.

City, who are sixth in the list while Liverpool are seventh, trail United by just under 101 million euros (£89 million). An indication of how much ground Abu Dhabi-backed City have made up is that they were £200 million adrift of United 10 years ago.

However, they were overtaken in the latest study by Qatari-owned Paris Saint-Germain, who moved into fifth place. "United have been the top English club since we started the Money League but that could come under a bit of pressure when we do it in 2021," Jones said.

"That will cover this season when Liverpool are having a tremendous season on the pitch, so we think there's a possibility of United losing that number one

"Part of that will ride on how the rest of this season goes, if City or Liverpool go deep into the Champions League. "If you think about where we were 10 years ago, the idea that City would overhaul United in financial terms would have seemed farfetched."—AFP



beIN SPORTS

Matches on TV (Local Timings)

FRENCH LEAGUE

Nimes Olympique v Stade Rennais 21:00 beIN SPORTS Amiens SC v Stade Reims 21:00 beIN SPORTS AS Monaco FC v Paris Saint-Germain 23:00

Sport Times

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2020

Kuwait bags 3 medals, Italy tops in Amir's shooting grand prix



Warner, Finch hit centuries to inflict 10-wicket loss on India



World number one Barty survives scare to stay in hunt in Adelaide



Gilgeous-Alexander notches historic triple-double



MINNEAPOLIS: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander produced his first career triple-double, finishing with 20 points, 20 rebounds and 10 assists to lead the Oklahoma City Thunder to a 117-104 win over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Monday night in Minneapolis. Gilgeous-Alexander, the Thunder's second-year guard, hadn't pulled down more than 10 rebounds in any of his first 121 career games. At age 21 and 185 days, he is the youngest player ever with 20 points, 20 rebounds and 10 assists in a game (topping a mark held by Maurice Stokes since 1956), and he is the youngest with a 20-rebound triple-double (breaking a mark set by Shaquille O'Neal in 1993). Danilo Gallinari led Oklahoma City with a seasonhigh 30 points. The Thunder posted their 12th win in 15 games, while the Timberwolves fell for the third time in four games. Rookie center Naz Reid scored a seasonhigh 20 points off the bench to lead the Timberwolves. Minnesota's Robert Covington added 18 points.

LOS ANGELES LAKERS 128 - CLEVELAND CAVALIERS 99

Avery Bradley ignited a third-quarter run with a 3pointer as host Los Angeles, after trailing the entire first half, blew past Cleveland for its ninth straight win. LeBron James scored a game-high 31 points while Dwight Howard recorded 21 points and 15 rebounds off the bench as the Lakers snapped Cleveland's two-game

winning streak. Kevin Love (21 points, 11 rebounds) and Tristan Thompson (17 points, 10 rebounds) had doubledoubles for the Cavaliers, who had opened a six-game trip with victories at Detroit and Denver.

BOSTON CELTICS 113 - CHICAGO BULLS 101

Jayson Tatum scored 21 points and Jaylen Brown chipped in 19 to lead host Boston past Chicago for its second straight victory following a three-game losing streak. Chicago sputtered to its seventh loss in eight games despite a game-high 30 points from Zach LaVine. Chaddeus Young scored 17 points for Chicago, while Tomas Satoransky (12) and Daniel Gafford (10) also produced double-figure totals. Enes Kanter (15 points), Kemba Walker (14), Marcus Smart (12) and Grant Williams (11) posted double-figure scoring totals for the Celtics. Kanter grabbed a game-high nine rebounds.

ORLANDO MAGIC 114 - SACRAMENTO KINGS 112

Nikola Vucevic scored 26 points and grabbed 15 rebounds, and Aaron Gordon added 19 points, including a three-point play with 1.1 seconds remaining, as Orlando pulled out a victory at Sacramento. Evan Fournier scored 25 points and Markelle Fultz added 16 as the Magic earned the victory in a game between teams struggling with injuries. Gordon (calf) and D.J. Augustin (knee) each

played after missing Orlando's Friday loss at Phoenix. Nemanja Bjelica scored a career-high 34 points and De'Aaron Fox added 31 for the Kings.

NEW ORLEANS PELICANS

117 - DETROIT PISTONS 110 (OT) Little-used Jahlil Okafor had 25 points, 14 rebounds, five assists and three blocks as short-handed New Orleans handed host Detroit its third straight loss. The Pelicans were missing three starters, including leading scorer and power forward Brandon Ingram (right knee soreness). Derrick Favors (right hamstring strain) and Jrue Holiday (left elbow contusion) were also sidelined. Detroit has been playing without three of its projected starters in recent weeks. Nicolo Melli had 20 points and Lonzo Ball supplied 17 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists but also committed seven turnovers for New Orleans. Derrick Rose led Detroit with 23 points and eight assists while Christian Wood supplied 18 points and nine rebounds.

INDIANA PACERS 101 - PHILADELPHIA 76ERS 95

Malcolm Brogdon scored 21 points in his return from a sore back and strep throat as Indiana posted a victory over Philadelphia in Indianapolis. T.J. Warren also tallied 21 points, and Domantas Sabonis collected 10 points and 16 rebounds for the Pacers, who improved to 16-5 at home this season. Myles Turner and Justin Holiday each had 14 points for Indiana, which overcame an 11-point deficit in the third quarter to post its third win in the past four games. Philadelphia's Ben Simmons scored 20 of his 24 points in the first half and finished with 14 rebounds for the game. Eastern Conference Player of the Week Josh Richardson scored 17 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter for the 76ers, who have lost six of eight overall and six in a row on the road.

PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS 115 - CHARLOTTE HORNETS 112

Damian Lillard recorded 30 points and nine assists as Portland posted a victory over visiting Charlotte. CJ McCollum added 27 points and Carmelo Anthony notched 17 as the Trail Blazers won for just the third time in the past 11 games. Anthony Tolliver came off the bench to score 16 points on 7-of-8 shooting while also collecting 11 rebounds. Devonte' Graham made eight 3-pointers and had 27 points and 10 assists for the Hornets, who have lost five straight games and 11 of their past 13. Terry Rozier registered 25 points and seven rebounds, P.J. Washington added 20 points and 11 rebounds for Charlotte, which lost its 12th straight game in Portland since last winning there on March 29, 2008. — Reuters

Barcelona put faith in purist Setien after sacking Valverde

MADRID: Quique Setien began his first session as Barcelona coach yesterday morning just as the sacked Ernesto Valverde drove out of the training ground for the last time. Valverde had said goodbye to the players, collected his things and left, closing the page on a brutal few days that had finally seen him sacked on Monday night.

After Barca's public pursuit of Xavi Hernandez ended in failure, they have turned to Setien, the 61-year-old who has dedicated his coaching career to a belief in exciting, possession-based football. Barcelona confirmed Setien's appointment following a board meeting that lasted more than four hours at the Camp Nou on Monday afternoon. His contract, which runs until June 2022, appears also to be a show of faith.

Valverde is the first coach to be sacked by Barca midseason since Louis van Gaal in 2003 and if that points to chaos, Setien inherits a team in a healthy position too. Barcelona sit top of La Liga, albeit level on points with Real Madrid, and face a winnable tie against Napoli next month in the last 16 of the Champions League.

Off the pitch, the club came top of Deloitte's annual Football Money League table on Monday, after posting record earnings of 840.8 million euros (\$937 million) for 2018/19. Some of that income might have to be channelled into signing a new striker this month, with Setien taking over a squad that will be without Luis Suarez for four months due to a knee injury.

More generally, he will have to find a way to marry his purist principles with results at one of the most demanding clubs in the world. His critics have suggested style can take precedence over substance.

"Having the ball makes you a football player, not running after it," Setien said last year. He once commented he would have cut off his little finger to play under Johan Cruyff. After Valverde's more functional approach, Barca will believe Setien's philosophy chimes better with the principles they see as part of their DNA.

"Setien is one of the most experienced coaches in Spanish football," a club statement read on Monday night. Throughout his career he has been a proponent of possession based, attacking football that has been attractive to the fans." His first game in charge will be at home to Granada on Sunday and a tricky first six weeks will include

away games at Valencia, Real Betis and then Real Madrid at the start of March. A former player at Atletico Madrid and Racing Santander who won three caps for Spain, Setien led Betis to a sixth-place finish in 2018 and qualification for the Europa League but, despite overseeing a thrilling 4-3 victory at the Camp Nou early the following season, results tailed off.

Betis finished 10th and the club and coach parted ways, even if there was recognition for what had been achieved.

Setien had presided over the team winning twice in a row at the Santiago Bernabeu and beating Atletico. After seeing off Barcelona — Valverde's only home defeat – Sergio Busquets presented Setien with a signed shirt.

"For Quique," read the message. "With appreciation and admiration for the way you see football." Previously, Setien had helped Lugo secure promotion to the second tier in 2012 and, in 2016, steered Las Palmas clear of relegation from La Liga. He has also coached Racing, Poli

Ejido, Logrones and, for one game, Equatorial Guinea. His primary task will be to hold off a resurgent Real Madrid in a neck-and-neck title race after Valverde managed to sustain the domestic dominance enjoyed by Barcelona over the last decade.

He won two La Liga titles, as well as the Copa del Rey in 2018, but doubts were underpinned by two disastrous exits from the Champions League due to collapses against



Ernesto Valverde

Roma and Liverpool.

Familiar frailties were exposed this season in a series of underwhelming performances and a 3-2 defeat by Atletico Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup last Thursday, in which Barca conceded two late goals, finally persuaded the board to act. — AFP