



**4** Filipino FM's remark infringes on Kuwait's security, judiciary



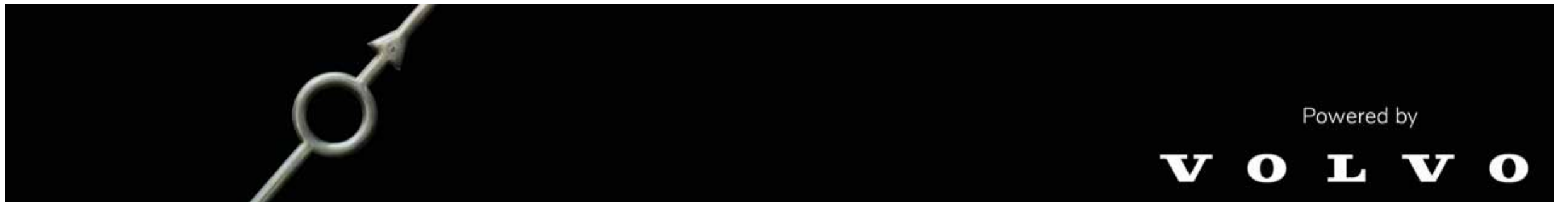
**20** Eilish dominates Grammys as music world mourns Kobe



**24** 4 months after 'Howdy, Modi!', some Indians abroad protest



**28** Nadal weathers fierce Kyrgios challenge to reach quarters



# IMF calls for slashing public sector wages, imposing taxes

Global lender warns that without reforms, Kuwait's financing needs will grow rapidly

## Kuwait denies entry to 9 as virus spreads

**WUHAN, China:** China's capital yesterday recorded its first death from a deadly coronavirus as it struggles to contain a rapidly spreading disease that has sparked global alarm, with countries scrambling to evacuate their citizens from the epicenter of the epidemic. Meanwhile, Kuwait airport authorities prevented nine passengers arriving from China from entering Kuwait over suspicions they were infected with the coronavirus.

The death in Beijing raises the death toll from the new virus to 82, with more than 2,700 people infected across the nation and cases found in more than a dozen other countries.

Continued on Page 24



BEIJING: A woman wearing a protective mask to help stop the spread of a deadly virus checks her look with the camera of her smartphone at Beijing railway station yesterday. — AFP

**KUWAIT:** The International Monetary Fund yesterday urged OPEC member Kuwait to introduce a package of reforms that includes imposing taxes and phasing out subsidies to plug a chronic budget deficit. Kuwait, which heavily depends on oil for almost 90 percent of its revenues, has been hit hard since crude prices crashed in mid-2014 and earlier this month approved a budget with a huge shortfall for the sixth year in a row. Income from investments held through the government's sovereign wealth fund is not included in

amplify fiscal financing needs while slow progress on the structural front would dampen growth," the IMF said in a report.

Kuwait's economy grew by just 0.7 percent last year and is forecast by the IMF to grow by 1.2 percent this year. The IMF said that without reforms, the government's financing needs are projected to grow rapidly, accounting for \$180 billion over the next six years. The global lender proposed specific reforms over the next decade to help the state adjust its finances. The plan calls for gradually reducing public spending and curtailing the public wage bill, which accounts for nearly

**FULL REPORT ON PAGE 14**

Spending, mostly on hard-to-reverse categories such as salaries and social aid, expanded by 25 percent only in the past two fiscal years while the public wage bill has grown by about 6.0 percent annually, the IMF said. Kuwait, which pumps 2.7 million barrels of oil per day, has huge fiscal reserves estimated at \$644 billion by the IMF. Unlike other Gulf states, Kuwait has a lively parliament which has repeatedly blocked government plans to impose taxes or charges on public services. "Delays in fiscal reforms would further

ing and curtailing the public wage bill, which accounts for nearly half of public expenditures, by making private sector jobs more attractive.

The government should phase out fuel, electricity and water subsidies and social aid, which currently account for 7.5 percent of GDP or \$10.3 billion annually, IMF said. It called on the government to follow in the footsteps of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in imposing a five-percent value-added tax and excises on luxury goods, as well as broadening profit tax on domestic companies. — Agencies

## World mourns Kobe Bryant

**LOS ANGELES:** Basketball legend Kobe Bryant's death in a helicopter crash along with his teenage daughter sparked an outpouring of grief across the worlds of sports and entertainment yesterday. Bryant, 41, was traveling Sunday with his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and seven other passengers and crew when their helicopter slammed into a rugged hillside in thick fog in Calabasas, west of Los Angeles. There were no survivors.

A five-time NBA champion and two-time Olympic gold medalist, Bryant is widely

regarded as one of the greatest basketball players in history. He was an iconic figure who became one of the faces of his sport during a glittering two-decade career with the Los Angeles Lakers. All-time basketball great Michael Jordan said Bryant was "like a little brother" to him. "Words can't describe the pain I'm feeling," the former Chicago Bulls star said. "We used to talk often and I will miss those conversations very much."

Dozens of firefighters and paramedics battled across hilly terrain to reach the flaming wreckage of the Sikorsky S-76 but found no survivors, officials said. Fans and mourners descended on the area but police warned people to stay away. "As you can imagine, it's a logistical nightmare in a sense because the crash site itself is not easily accessible," Los

Angeles County Sheriff Alex

Villanueva told reporters. The National Transportation Safety Board said an 18-strong team of investigators would be sent to California to probe the crash.

Tributes to Bryant flooded in from former US presidents, pop stars and athletes from different sports, a sign of how the man known as the "Black Mamba" had transcended basketball. "Kobe was a legend on the court and just getting started in what would have been just as meaningful a second act," Barack Obama tweeted.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to US President Donald Trump over the helicopter crash. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh

Continued on Page 24



MANILA: A boy with a basketball walks past a wall painted for former Los Angeles Lakers basketball player Kobe Bryant yesterday, following his death overnight in the US. — AFP (See Page 26)

## News in brief

### Currency forger arrested

**KUWAIT:** Criminal detectives arrested a currency forger with KD 8,960 in forged KD 20 notes. Jleeb detectives were tipped off about a person who forged KD 20 notes and released them in the market. After investigations, an undercover source was sent to buy the forged currency, and the suspect was arrested with KD 1,300 in forged KD 20 notes. The suspect confessed to forging banknotes and told them he had more in his car, where they found amounts of KD 3,180 and KD 4,480, in addition to blank paper in the size of KD 20 notes. — Hanan Al-Saadoun

### Maid's 'killers' jailed

**KUWAIT:** An informed source said prosecutor general Dherar Al-Asousi ordered a Kuwaiti man and his wife - accused of killing their Filipino maid - be sent to the central prison, with a decision to jail them for 21 days after they were charged with premeditated murder. Asousi decided to refer them to the criminal court and demanded the strictest sentence for the crime, which may reach capital punishment. The maid's death caused the Philippines government to impose a total ban on the deployment of new Filipino workers to Kuwait. In a Twitter post on Friday, Filipino Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr said the Manila government has rejected any offer of blood money and is pursuing legal action against the Kuwaiti employers. — Hanan Al-Saadoun

## Iran plane slides off runway onto highway

**TEHRAN:** An Iranian passenger plane overshot a runway as it landed yesterday in the southwestern city of Bandar-e Mahshahr, barreling into an adjacent highway without causing casualties, state TV reported. "Arriving at Mahshahr airport, the pilot landed the aircraft too late and this caused him to miss the runway," the broadcaster quoted the head of Khuzestan province's aviation authority as saying. This "caused the aircraft to overshoot the runway and stop in a boulevard" next to the airport, Mohammadreza Rezaeia said. The McDonnell Douglas jet, belonging to Iran's

Caspian Airlines, was flying from Tehran's Mehrabad Airport with 135 passengers plus the plane's crew. State TV reported that all were safe. A state TV reporter travelling on the plane told the broadcaster that the aircraft's "back wheel had broken off, as we saw it was left on the runway" and said the plane had been moving with no wheels before it ground to a halt. Iran's aviation authority said "the cause of the incident is being investigated".

The Islamic republic had been planning to upgrade its decrepit fleet after long-standing US sanctions were lifted following the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers. But when US President Donald Trump pulled out of the accord in 2018 and reimposed crippling economic sanctions, the treasury department revoked licenses for Boeing and Airbus to sell passenger jets to Iran. — AFP



BANDAR-E MAHSHAHR, Iran: A Caspian Airlines McDonnell Douglas MD-83 aircraft is seen on a highway after it overshoot the runway during its approach yesterday. — AFP

## IS urges attacks against Israel to nix Trump plan

**BEIRUT:** The Islamic State group vowed to shift its focus from the remnants of its "caliphate" towards Israel, in its first audio statement since confirming the death of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. In a purported audio message by its spokesman Abu Hamza Al-Quraishi, the organization called for sabotaging a so-called peace plan US President Donald Trump is due to unveil. The spokesman said IS leader Abu Ibrahim Al-Hashimi Al-Quraishi encourages the group's fighters to launch "a new phase" and vowed major operations against Israel.

"The eyes of the soldiers of the caliphate, wherever they are, are still on Jerusalem," the spokesman said in the 37-minute message. "And in the coming days, God willing, you will see what harms you and what will make you forget the horrors you have seen," Abu Hamza Al-Quraishi said, apparently threatening attacks of unprecedented scope. AFP could not immediately authenticate the message but the recording was published via the group's usual social media channels.

The organization once administered a sprawling self-proclaimed "caliphate" straddling big parts of Syria and Iraq, where it minted a currency, levied taxes and ran school curricula.

Under pressure from combined military operations by Syrian and Iraqi forces supported by their respective allies, the proto-state collapsed last year. IS has remained a potent outfit in its Euphrates heartland and surrounding desert hideouts however and its franchises in Africa and Asia have also continued to expand their attacks. The group also has a presence in Egypt's Sinai

Continued on Page 24

## Local

# Prime Minister reflects on Kuwait's 'prideful' UN Security Council stint

## Kuwait pursued unwavering commitment to noble values during UNSC membership: FM



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks during a symposium at the Saud Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute yesterday. —KUNA photos



Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah delivers a speech.



Senior officials and diplomats seen in attendance.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday praised Kuwait's tenure in the UN Security Council, saying it was something all Kuwaitis should be proud of. During a symposium held at the Saud Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute, he gave credit to Kuwait's diplomats, headed by Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, for their strenuous efforts during the country's 2018-2019 non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Kuwait's commitment to matters concerning the Arab world, particularly the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, was its primary concern during its tenure, in addition to its devotion to humanitarian causes, he added.

Describing the symposium as highly significant, the Kuwaiti prime minister said the country's stint in the UN Security Council was a complete success, helping thrust Kuwait's diplomatic shrewdness into the global limelight, citing its unflinching foreign policy that garnered the trust of UN Security Council members. He went on to say that Kuwait did everything in its power

to ensure that peace and stability in the region remained intact, pointing out that the UN Security Council tenure was also a learning experience that gave Kuwait some insight on how to deal with sudden outbreaks of conflict. Kuwait's UN Security Council membership coincided with a turbulent time on both regional and international levels, the Kuwaiti premier explained, saying the silver lining was the opportunity to work closer with UN Security Council member states. With the end of Kuwait's UN Security Council stint, the country lived through a "pivotal point" in its illustrious history, pushing it forward amid its quest to attain global prominence, he highlighted.

### Successful experience

Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah commended Kuwait's non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the second time in its history as a "successful experience." The minister made the remark during the symposium held at the Foreign Ministry under the aegis and in the presence of His

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, under the title 'Kuwait's Second Experience at the UN Security Council - 2018-2019.'

Sheikh Ahmad said that at the behest of the country's political leadership, Kuwait maintained its unyielding abidance by noble values enshrined in the UN Charter. "Kuwait's second experience at the UNSC was so successful and fruitful that Kuwait, at the direction of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, pursued its unwavering commitment to noble values enshrined in the UN Charter and even other relevant international covenants," he said. He added that the Foreign Ministry would never forget His Highness the Prime Minister's crucial role even ahead of Kuwait's UNSC non-permanent membership, recalling that as soon as Kuwait had announced nomination for its second-ever non-permanent membership, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled wasted no time to hold meetings and pay visits to world countries to rally up

support. He spoke highly of these moves as having greatly contributed to gaining Kuwait international trust for its UNSC non-permanent membership.

The foreign minister also highly appreciated the great efforts of the Foreign Ministry's senior officials and permanent delegation in New York during the country's significant experience. Extolling His Highness the Prime Minister's role in this regard, Sheikh Ahmad vowed to follow in his footsteps to serve the supreme goals of the country's foreign policy, based on the long wisdom and shrewdness of His Highness the Amir. He regarded His Highness the Prime Minister's patronage and presence in the symposium as proof of his unshakable interest in spurring and stimulating the Foreign Ministry's staff. Kuwait has ever gained UNSC non-permanent membership twice: once in 1978-1979 and once more in 2018-2019, reflecting the Gulf country's great international status and confidence in its ability to play an effective role in safeguarding international peace and security. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Zain receives an award during the event.

## Zain receives biggest share at Kuwait PR, Customer Service Prize



Zain staff pose for a photo with the awards.



Zain's awards.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, received three public relations and customer service awards in recognition of the company's distinguished efforts during the year 2019. The announcement was made during the conclusion ceremony of the Kuwait Public Relations and Customer Service Prize, which was hosted by Kuwait's Public Relations Association at Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center (JACC) under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

The awarding ceremony witnessed the attendance of His Highness the Amir's representative the Minister of Social Affairs Dr Ghadeer Aseeri, Head of Amiri Protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, and Head of Kuwait's Public Relations Association Jamal Al-Nasrullah, who presented Zain's awards to the company's Customer Care Director Raed Al-Thaqeb, Media Relations Department Manager Alia Al Awadhi, and Corporate Sustainability Department Manager Haya Al-Mana.

Zain received the biggest share of awards during the event; the Excellence in Customer Service in the Telecommunications Sector Award to shed light on the company's distinguished efforts in providing the best cus-

tomers service to its customer base, considered the largest in Kuwait. The company was also awarded with the Excellence in Corporate Sustainability in the Telecommunications Sector Award to highlight its effective social and humanitarian campaigns all year round as part of its comprehensive Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility Strategy. Zain also received the Excellence in Social Media Accounts (Instagram) in the Telecommunications Sector Award in recognition of the company's active and creative communication with customers through social media channels.

Kuwait's Public Relations Association dedicates this prize to shed light on the distinguished efforts and achievements of companies and organizations in the fields of public relations and customer service across all industries from both the public and private sectors. The event also featured a number of workshops about the strategies of PR and customer service targeted at employees of ministries and organizations.

The judging committee - responsible for selecting the winners - consisted of local and international PR and Customer Service experts who evaluated the participating

entities as per the highest international standards. The standards included serving customers while meeting their needs, distinguished social contributions, excellent media presence, and more.

During December 2019, Zain proudly received four titles as part of the seventh Advertising Creativity Award. The award, organized by the Arab Media Forum, awarded Zain with the TV Commercial Award for its Ramadan TVC, Direction Award for its Eid TVC, Creativity Award for its National Day TVC, as well as the Customer Service Excellence Award presented to Zain Kuwait's Chief Corporate Communications and Relations Officer Waleed Al-Khashti.

This recognition from Kuwait's Public Relations and Customer Service Prize showcases Zain's distinguished PR and media involvement, and further strengthens the company's role as a leading private sector company launching several public relations and marketing campaigns all year round. Zain will continue supporting this very important field which carries significant and informative messaging to the public at large and the communications world as a whole, whether through traditional or modern media tools.

## 'Ship of Hope' helps inventors market their creations



KUWAIT: MP Ali Al-Deqbasi (center) speaks during a press conference to announce the Safinat Al-Amal (Ship of Hope) project yesterday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: A Kuwait inventor has come up with an idea to support inventors in realizing their inventions and protecting their intellectual rights. Abdulrahman Saleh Al-Heraibi presented his idea to MP Ali Al-Deqbasi, who considered it an important idea and submitted a draft law to approve the project.

Heraibi spoke about this project - Safinat Al-Amal (Ship of Hope) - during a press conference on Sunday. "Many inventors in Kuwait and other countries were not able to market their inventions. So I came up with this idea to establish a public company that will transform the inventions into real products and bring additional income to the public budget," he said.

This is a unique project. "This huge project is commercial and humanitarian at the same time. Realizing this project needs legislation, as it would be a public company owned by the government, and this is why I approached the member of parliament. This project will serve inventors of all nationalities and the government will also benefit from the production of the inventions," added Heraibi.

According to him, this public company will provide solutions for inventors and small and medium enterprises all over the world. "The company will produce the machines for the inventions and will sell the inventors this machine at an affordable price that suits their budget. So the inventors will be able to produce their invention themselves and big companies won't be able to exploit these inventions. This will help their dreams come true," he noted.

Every project starts as a dream. "If we had told somebody that this industrial area Al-Rai will be a huge entertainment place with a shopping mall, cinema and hotel 20 years ago, nobody

would've believed me. The same applies to this idea - Ship of Hope - which is in line with the New Kuwait 2035 vision and transferring Kuwait into a financial and trade center. I adopted this idea by submitting a draft law to the legislative committee at the parliament, and we hope it will pass," stressed MP Deqbasi.

There are further details of this project that will be discussed later. "Currently we are focusing on approving the law to establish this national public company. This is a unique and new idea in Kuwait and the world. I believe that after establishing this company, it will attract inventors from all over the world, especially since it will protect their patents and market them. This company will protect inventors from unequal competition by big companies, as only inventors or small enterprises producing these inventions will have the right to produce them," Deqbasi explained.

"I will work hard to approve this law. I don't mind discussing it with specialized committees from the ministry of finance, Public Authority for Investment, Audit Bureau and other public institutions to highlight the economic benefits of this project and to take their opinions and suggestions. After approving the law to establish this company, we will discuss the details with the institutions in charge," concluded Deqbasi.

Heraibi concluded by mentioning more benefits of this project. "It will be a new source of public income through the manufacturing of the machines that will produce the inventions. This project will also boost the global economy due to buying raw materials for the production of the machines, in addition of dealing with banks and other financial institutions. Furthermore, it will shed light on Kuwait for proposing this new profitable and humanitarian idea that will help poor families."

Local

# Amir set to attend Kuwaiti flag hoisting ceremony today

Sheikh Sabah receives senior state officials at Bayan Palace



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



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Chief Justice Yousef Al-Mutawaa.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is set to attend and patronize a ceremony to hoist the Kuwaiti flag at Bayan Palace at 10:00 am today. The ceremony will see the attendance of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and senior state officials. Meanwhile, 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 yesterday. The meeting came after His Highness the Crown Prince represented His Highness the Amir at the closing ceremony of the King Abdulaziz fourth Camel festival, which was held in Riyadh. His Highness the Amir also received National

Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem. Furthermore, His Highness the Amir received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Moreover, His Highness hosted His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. In the meantime, His Highness the Amir received Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court, and President of the Constitutional Court, Justice Yousef Al-Mutawaa. Also yesterday, His Highness the Crown Prince received at Bayan Palace Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak and His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled. In other news, His Highness the Crown Prince sent a cable to Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al

Saud, thanking him for the warm reception he received while attending the King Abdulaziz Camel Racing Festival in Riyadh. His Highness the Crown Prince also sent a similar cable to Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In the cable to King Salman, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his delight at meeting the King along with representatives of the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. A fraternal spirit dominated the encounter, which reflect the strength and historical ties amongst GCC member states and their nations, he said. His Highness the Crown Prince lauded the good organization and preparation which went into the festival as

well as the performances of the racers at this large event, which he said, embodies the deep-rooted traditions and customs of the Gulf Arab region. Separately, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, expressing his deepest sympathy over the flood victims in southeastern Brazil, which resulted in dozens injured and thousands displaced from their areas. In the cable, His Highness wished the injured a speedy recovery and for the displaced to return quickly to their areas, hoping that officials can overcome the aftermath of this natural disaster. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables. —KUNA

## Kuwait Deputy FM meets Italy envoy



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Carlo Baldocci. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Carlo Baldocci yesterday. During the meeting, they tackled Kuwaiti-Italian relations and the latest regional and international develop-

ments. Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Affairs Ambassador Waleed Al-Khubaizi and Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Affairs Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar attended the meeting. — KUNA

## Warning against issuing flight tickets below market value

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) urged all travel agencies not to issue flight tickets cheaper than the usual market rates unless approved and authorized by the concerned airlines first. DGCA warned that some travel agents issue tickets for fares less than the market value without the airlines' approval, which multiplies those agencies' debts beyond their payment capacities. DGCA stressed that violating agencies will be fined, adding that it is keen on regulating the local aviation market and prevent unauthorized or unlicensed brokers from operating. Meanwhile, as part of its policy of supporting national labor, Kuwait Aviation Services Company (KASCO) officially announced appointing 25 citizens in various positions (engineers, mechanics, checking officers and quality control) in its facilities.

### Producer sentenced

The court of cassation yesterday sentenced a popular Kuwaiti producer to 10 years in prison with labor and a KD 50,000 fine and acquitted his Iraqi partner in a case filed against them for possessing and trading in drugs. Notably, both suspects were arrested after the discovery of drugs in an apartment they had been allegedly using for 'art production', but which

was actually used in packing and distributing the drugs the suspect had been importing concealed within cosmetics shipments.

### MEW revenues

Recent statistics issued by the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) showed that the ministry's daily revenues are KD 829,000 collected by 37 offices around the country and the main office in MEW premises in South Surra for the ministry's public services. Statistics showed that KD 302.7 million had been collected for electricity and water consumption in 2019 including KD 99.2 million collected during the second half of the year.

The collected revenues also include insurance deposits for connecting electricity and the fees collected for municipal services. Statistics also showed that KD 216 million had been collected for the same services in 2014, KD 193 million in 2015, KD 279 million in 2016 and KD 235 million in 2017. Further, statistics showed that MEW collected a total of KD 2.3 billion in the period of 2004-2017. In a different concern, informed sources said the Central Agency for Public Tenders (CAPT) and the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) are expected to offer for public bidding a tender to hire an international consultant to prepare the documents of the Al-Zour plant project.



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## Local

# Iran envoy vowed position will be taken on recent remarks: Kuwait's Deputy FM

## Filipino FM remark infringement on jurisdictions of Kuwait security, judiciary



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah (center right) joins Indian Ambassador to Kuwait K Jeeva Sagar (center left) in cutting the cake during the Indian Embassy's Republic Day ceremony. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



An Indian folklore dance performance featured during the ceremony.

KUWAIT: Kuwait's deputy foreign minister said Iran's ambassador has vowed that a position will be taken on a senior Iranian Air Force officer's repeated remarks that a Kuwaiti military base was, alongside other bases, involved in a recent operation in Baghdad. Kuwait has "not yet received a response from the Iranian foreign ministry," Deputy Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said and noted that his talks with the Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Irani were "positive."

"We sensed the Iranian ambassador's acknowledgement of Kuwait's concern over the news, and the ambassador promised us that this would be reported to Tehran," Jarallah said. "We also requested for there to be a position (on the matter) and the ambassador promised this would be the case - we are currently awaiting this position."

Jarallah also highlighted that talks remain ongoing between Kuwait's Charge d'Affaires in Tehran and Iranian officials. Kuwait's foreign ministry summoned the Iranian ambassador last Friday over the matter, during which the deputy foreign minister expressed "dismay and puzzlement" at the repetition of the remarks, categorically rejecting any notions that any aircraft had flown from Ali Al-Salem Airbase to take part in the operation. Kuwait's Armed Forces, in an earlier statement, also denied the involvement of any Kuwaiti bases in the said operation.

### Philippines' remarks

Meanwhile, Jarallah has dismissed the Filipino foreign secretary's recent remark about the case of the Filipino national in Kuwait as an infringement on the jurisdictions of the Kuwaiti security and judicial authorities. "We really



### Economic cooperation with India promising

regret the statements of the Philippines' foreign secretary and we believe that they constitute a major transgression on the jurisdictions of the security and judicial authorities of the State of Kuwait," Jarallah told reporters on the sidelines of his participation in the Indian Embassy's celebration of Republic Day. He stressed that Kuwait is a

country that is committed to upholding the rule of law and pursuing justice for all. The senior diplomat stated the Filipino top diplomat's statement runs counter to the simplest rule of international relations. "We see this statement as a threat from an official figure," Jarallah said, asking the Filipino secretary to reconsider his remark. He pointed out that Kuwait's ambassador in Manila is contacting the Filipino side on the matter. According to reports circulated by media and social networking sites, the Filipino secretary has recently said he would not accept anything other than the lives of those who committed the crime against the demised Filipino national in Kuwait. On Saturday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs voiced Kuwait's dismay and condemnation of the Filipino foreign secretary's remarks about the case of a Filipino national. The remarks contained an unacceptable transgression against jurisdictions of Kuwaiti security and judicial authorities, the official source said, describing the statement as an unusual approach in dealing with countries. It runs counter to the simplest rules of international relations, the source lamented. The source also noted the Filipino secretary's remark represents an attempt to influence the ongoing investigations.

Kuwait is known for its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all who live on its soil and punishing

law violators in accordance with the provisions of the country's laws and in a manner that guarantees the rule of law and justice for all, added the foreign ministry source. The source also lauded the measures taken by Kuwaiti relevant bodies on this case. They have quickly arrested those who committed the crime and referred them to a fair judiciary, the source clarified. Kuwait has also informed the Philippines authorities of its readiness to receive a Filipino security team to get acquainted with the measures taken on the case and the latest updates of the investigations.

### Economic cooperation

In the meantime, Jarallah said that there are promising potentials for investments and oil and economic cooperation with India. Jarallah added that there are constant contacts between Kuwait and India, and mutual visits between the two countries' officials. He expressed his pride for taking part in the festival, in light of the distinguished and historical relations between the two friendly countries and their nations. "We always look forward to promoting ties with great countries which have major capabilities on all levels," he said. He commended, at the same time, India's supportive stance with Kuwait during the 1990 Iraqi invasion. — KUNA

## Gulf Bank management welcomes newest Al-Danah Millionaire

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank welcomed Jassem Mohammed Issa Abbas, the 2019 Al-Danah Millionaire, to Gulf Bank's Head Office. During the visit, Abbas received his One Million Kuwaiti Dinar prize from Gulf Bank's CEO, Tony Daher, and members of the bank's senior management.

Abbas was announced as the 2019 Al-Danah Millionaire during an exciting live event held at The Avenues on 16th January 2020. He is the 14th winner to receive the annual prize of One Million Kuwaiti Dinars.

During the draw event, Gulf Bank also announced that Al-Danah is now bigger. As of 2020, the prize of the annual draw is now KD 1,500,000. The next annual Al-Danah draw will be held on 14 January 2021, and the last chance to deposit into an Al-Danah account and participate in the annual draw will be 30 September 2020.

Commenting on Abbas's visit, Ahmad Al Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communications at Gulf Bank, said: "We are delighted to congratulate this year's Al-Danah Millionaire, and welcome him to the bank. Jassem is our 14th Al-Danah Millionaire, and we look forward to discovering who the winner of the new KD 1,500,000 prize will be!"

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



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank's CEO Tony Daher and other bank officials pose for a group photo with Jassem Mohammed Issa Abbas, the 2019 Al-Danah Millionaire.

Al-Danah is Gulf Bank's flagship account, open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD 200 to open an account and the same amount should be maintained for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the weekly draw within two days. Al-Danah draw distributes more than KD 2 million in prizes every year.

Al-Danah offers several unique services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card, which allows account holders to deposit money into their accounts at

their convenience. Account holders can also calculate their weekly, quarterly, and yearly chances of winning the draws through the 'Al-Danah Chances' calculator available on the Gulf Bank website and app.

To take part in the upcoming Al-Danah quarterly and yearly draws, customers must meet the required hold period for each draw. Al-Danah chances are added on a daily basis, and the more customers save and the longer they save for, the higher their chances of winning. Furthermore, loyal customers will be rewarded and have their previous year's chances transferred to the next year.

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## Ooredoo Kuwait continues to support entrepreneurs

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, first to launch innovated digital services in Kuwait is proudly partnered with Al-Souq Murouj for the fourth consecutive year. The first market was held on 16 January in which Ooredoo supported local entrepreneurs and international businesses. The market, which was held at Murouj Complex phase 1, included artisanal food products and crafts, with a 'street food' section aimed at highlighting the culinary diversity of Kuwait's local food community. The market also offered an arrangement of live entertainment and a section dedicated for children's activities. The second Scene market will be held next month 25 to 29 February in Murouj phase 3. Ooredoo Kuwait stated: "That it is proud to support local businesses and entrepreneurs through this engaging project. This sponsorship comes in tandem with Ooredoo's social responsibility strategy, which



in turn is based on our core values of caring, connecting and challenging."

## Local

# Ban leaves recruitment agencies' secretaries jobless in Kuwait

## Kuwaiti agency owner hopes for temporary ban

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** Since a total labor deployment ban to Kuwait was imposed by the Philippine government on Jan 15, many local recruitment agencies have stopped operations temporarily. This led some agency secretaries to post on social media urging employers to hire them since they are now jobless. There are around 100 Filipino secretaries dealing with Filipino domestic helpers at approximately 300 active local recruitment agencies in Kuwait.

"Many secretaries working in recruitment agencies are now jobless - others are still retained by employers hoping for a redeployment of Filipino workers soon. But so far, we do not know how long the ban will last. We hope it will only be temporary," said a secretary at a local recruitment agency in Hawally. "Recruitment agencies that were piggybacking on somebody else's licenses have completely stopped their operations. We are operating because some domestic helpers are returning to the agency, and it is part of our job to attend to their needs," she said.

A Kuwaiti recruitment agency owner told Kuwait Times he is in favor of a temporary ban. "Even if I don't have business right now, I am very much in favor of a temporary ban," he said. "The Kuwaiti government should realize the value of Filipino workers - they must implement the memorandum of agreement and I am

hoping fervently that with the ban, employers here realize how important it is to have them as our workers. We should treat our housemaids like members of our family; if they cannot treat them fairly, better not get any worker. They are not here to work as slaves - they are human beings too," he said.

Asked if he is planning to sack some of his Filipino secretaries, he replied in the negative. "No, they are under my responsibility. My business is a recruitment agency; perhaps if the ban continues, I will consider accepting domestic helpers from other countries. I am not planning to fire any of my employees," he said.

He said his agency only deals with Filipino workers because they are easy to handle. "I noticed Filipinos are highly in demand. So we settled on recruiting Filipino workers only, since Kuwaitis like them to work in their houses. They understand English well and are well-mannered. Yes, there have been some issues reported like getting into relationships with drivers or sometimes with the boss, but these are few cases. We Kuwaitis must realize they are coming here to work - we cannot generalize all of them to be like that," he explained.

A secretary of an agency told Kuwait Times that because of lack of business from the Philippine job market, her two sponsored students back home would have to look for new foster parents. "I am sponsoring two students in the Philippines. They are at college lev-



**KUWAIT:** Domestic labor recruitment offices lined up at a complex in Kuwait. — Ben Garcia

el. I don't know how to continue the support since I don't have an extra income working as a secretary of the agency. I hope to get another job, but it's not easy, since we are not allowed to work in another company without the permission of the boss. I am still hoping

that everything will be okay and that the ban will be lifted soon," she said. With the Manila deployment ban, only two countries are legally sending domestic helpers to Kuwait - Sri Lanka and India. Talks on the redeployment of Ethiopian workers are still in progress.

## MP Shatti defends combining amnesty draft laws

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Head of the national assembly legal and legislative committee MP Khaled Al-Shatti yesterday defended his decision to combine three draft laws stipulating general amnesty for a number of Kuwaiti prisoners. Shatti's action puts together opposition activists including several ex-MPs in jail for storming the national assembly building in 2011 and members of an Iran-linked cell who are serving years in jail for plotting attacks against Kuwait and possessing large quantities of arms.

Opposition lawmakers have insisted that the three draft laws should be discussed separately and the assembly is allowed to vote on each law alone and not together under the current format. Shatti charged his opponents that they are creating a dispute insisting that what he has done is in line with the constitution and existing laws. He insisted that Kuwaiti citizens are equal and must be treated equally as "you are not better than others and speaking about betrayal is rejected."

Last week, two members of the committee walked out of the meeting after Shatti insisted to combine the three bills, saying that it was a deliberate move to block the pardon legislation. Shatti said that the case of the cell is better than storming the assembly, adding that he will not go back on the decision.

Meanwhile, MP Mohammad Al-Huwailah yesterday asked Health Minister Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah about measures the ministry has introduced to face the global outbreak of the deadly coronavirus. He asked the minister if the ministry has prepared a plan to face the virus at land, sea and air terminals and the steps to be followed to test possible infections. Huwailah asked if the ministry has started working to make available medicines or vaccines when they become available. The disease has already killed 80 people in China and infected some 3,000 around the world.

In the meantime, head of the assembly women affairs committee MP Safa Al-Hashem said yesterday the panel approved a draft law for domestic violence which calls for setting up a special fund for victims of domestic violence and also provides legal protection for those who inform authorities about such violence. Hashem said the law also calls for establishing shelter centers in the country for domestic violence victims, adding that it applies to Kuwaitis as well as expatriates.

## Drugs found with airport passengers

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A female customs officer at Kuwait airport's Terminal 4 noticed a female passenger was looking nervous, so her luggage was searched and a piece of what is suspected to be hashish and two liquor bottles were found along with illicit tablets. In T5, two passengers, one arriving from Europe and the other from an Arab country, were arrested with suspected drugs. In T1, a passenger arriving from an Arab country was arrested with a piece suspected to be hashish.

### Rumors refuted

The Relations and Security Information at the Interior Ministry commented on social media claims that a Kuwaiti suffered a health problem at a police station because policemen refused to accept a complaint against an Asian. It said that a dispute broke out between the citizen and an Asian over the cost of painting the citizen's son's car, so they resorted to the police station to file a complaint. The citizen had a health problem there, so an ambulance was called. In another case, the department commented about a video showing a juvenile being attacked and threatened with a firearm. It said the clip was taken two years ago, then when it reappeared, the victim's father complained at Khaitan police station. The juvenile court took action, resulting in criminal security arresting five suspects, while three others are being sought.

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UK unveils a new visa scheme for scientists

## Pakistan police arrest Pashtun rights leader critical of military

Page 9

Page 8



**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi protesters cover their eyes to avoid tear gas amid clashes with security forces during an anti-government demonstration in Al-Khilani square in the capital Baghdad. — AFP

# Three rockets hit US embassy

## Thousands of protesters keep up anti-government sit-ins

**BAGHDAD:** Three rockets slammed into the US embassy in Iraq's capital on Sunday in the first direct hit reported after months of close calls, as thousands of protesters kept up anti-government sit-ins across the country. The attack marked a dangerous escalation in the spree of rocket attacks in recent months that have targeted the embassy or Iraqi military bases where American troops are deployed.

None of the attacks has been claimed but Washington has repeatedly blamed Iran-backed military factions in Iraq. On Sunday, one rocket hit an embassy cafeteria at dinner time while two others landed nearby, a security source said. A senior Iraqi official told AFP at least one person was wounded, but it was not immediately clear how serious the injuries were and whether the person was an American national or an Iraqi staff member working at the mission.

The US embassy did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The US State Department called on Iraq late Sunday to "fulfill its obligations to protect our diplomatic facilities". The attack took place earlier in the day than usual, with AFP reporters hearing the booms on the western bank of the river Tigris at precisely 7:30 pm

(1630 GMT). Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Mahdi and Speaker of Parliament Mohammed Halbusi both condemned the incident, saying it risked dragging their homeland into war.

Iraq has already been dragged into a worrying tit-for-tat between the United States and Iran over the last month. A similar attack on a northern Iraqi base killed an American contractor, and the US retaliated with a strike on an Iran-backed faction known as Kataeb Hezbollah. Less than a week later, a US drone strike killed Iranian general Qasem Soleimani outside the Baghdad airport — prompting Iran to fire ballistic missiles at an Iraqi base where US troops are stationed.

### 'Only for you, Iraq!'

Some 5,200 Americans are stationed in Iraq to lead the global coalition fighting the Islamic State militant group, but the US strike on Baghdad has rallied top Iraqi figures around a joint call to order them out. Vehemently anti-American cleric Moqtada Sadr organized a mass rally in Baghdad on Friday, where thousands of his supporters called for American troops to leave. Sadr had previously backed separate anti-regime protests sweeping Iraq's cap-

ital and south, even though he controls the largest bloc in parliament and top ministerial posts. Bolstered by his own protest on Friday, Sadr announced he was dropping support for the youth-dominated reform campaign rocking the country since October.

His followers, widely regarded as the best-organized and well-stocked of the anti-government demonstrators, immediately began dismantling their tents and heading home. Activists feared that without his political cover, authorities would move to crush their movement — and indeed, within hours, riot police tried to storm protest camps. Those efforts continued into Sunday, with security forces using live rounds and tear gas to try to flush protesters out of squares and streets they had occupied for months.

One protester was shot dead in Baghdad and another in the flashpoint southern city of Nasiriyah, medical sources said, and dozens more were wounded across the country. In the capital, riot police have tried to clear streets around the main protest camp of Tahrir Square but have yet to enter the symbolic area, where many protesters stood their ground even after tents there were dismantled. Just after midnight in Nasiriyah, unknown assailants stormed

the main protest camp in Habbubi Square and set the tents on fire, the flames lighting up the night sky, an AFP correspondent there said.

### UN hails 'Iraqi hopes'

Despite the renewed violence, thousands of students flooded the streets in the capital and across the south in a bid to keep national attention focused on their demands. "Only for you, Iraq!" read a sign held by a young protester in the shrine city of Karbala, hinting at the movement's insistence on not being affiliated with any political party or outside backer.

In Basra, hundreds of students gathered to condemn the riot police's dismantling of their main protest camp the previous day, according to an AFP correspondent. The youth-led protests erupted on October 1 in outrage over lack of jobs, poor services and rampant corruption before spiraling into calls for a government overhaul after they were met with violence. More than 470 people have died, a vast majority of them demonstrators, since the rallies began. Protesters are now demanding snap elections, the appointment of an independent premier and the prosecution of anyone implicated in corruption or recent bloodshed. — AFP

## The global spread of the coronavirus: Where is it?

**BEIJING:** A virus similar to the SARS pathogen has claimed 81 lives since emerging in a market in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, and spread around the world. Here are the places that have confirmed cases of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus:

### China

As of yesterday, more than 2,700 people have been infected across China, the bulk of them in and around Wuhan. Nearly all of the 81 who have died were in that region, but officials have confirmed at least five deaths elsewhere. The city of Macau, a gambling hub hugely popular with mainland tourists, has confirmed six cases as of yesterday. In Hong Kong, eight people are known to have the disease. Of those, six arrived via a newly built high-speed train terminal that connects with the mainland.

### France

There are three known cases of the coronavirus in France, the first European country to be affected by the outbreak. One person is sick in Bordeaux and another is ill in Paris. A third person, a close relative of one of the other two, has also been confirmed to have the virus. All three had recently travelled to China and have been placed in isolation.

### Japan

Japan's health authorities confirmed the country's fourth case on Saturday: a man in his 40s, visiting Japan from Wuhan, who is in hospital in a stable condition. Another man was hospitalized on January 10, four days after his return from a visit to Wuhan. And a further two people from the Chinese city — a man in his 40s and a woman in her 30s — have also been treated in hospital for fever.

### Australia

Australia confirmed its fifth case of the virus yesterday — a 21-year-old woman who recently arrived in Sydney on a direct flight from Wuhan. She is being treated in a Sydney hospital. One man in Melbourne and three men in Sydney earlier tested positive and were being treated in hospital isolation units after also arriving in the country from Wuhan.

### United States

The US has confirmed five cases of the virus in patients who had recently entered the country from Wuhan. A man aged in his 30s reported himself to authorities on January 19 after returning to his home near Seattle. On Friday, public health authorities said the virus had been detected in a Chicago woman in her 60s, and on Saturday a traveler



**DOHA:** Travelers coming from Asia walk past scanners for temperature screening upon their arrival at Doha international airport in the Qatari capital. — AFP

from Wuhan in California was confirmed as the third infected person on US soil. A second case was confirmed in California on Sunday, along with one in Arizona.

### Canada

Canada has reported a "presumptive" case of the virus in a man who returned to Toronto from Wuhan. The patient is aged in his 50s and has been placed in isolation.

### Malaysia

Malaysia confirmed its fourth case on Sunday. All are Chinese nationals on holiday from Wuhan who arrived in the country from Singapore. A 66-year-old woman and two boys, aged two and 11, were in stable condition, Malaysia's health minister said Saturday. The latest confirmed case is a 40-year-old man who entered the country on a bus with a Chinese tour group.

### Nepal

Nepal said a 32-year-old man arriving from Wuhan had the disease. The patient, who was initially quarantined, recovered and was discharged.

### Singapore

Singapore announced its fourth case of the coronavirus on Sunday. All four patients had arrived in the city-state from Wuhan over the last week.

### South Korea

South Korean media reported the country's fourth case yesterday. The latest patient is a 55-year-old Korean man who returned from Wuhan on January 20. He was quarantined and tested after experiencing symptoms. The other patients include two South Korean men, both aged in their 50s and working in Wuhan, who returned to the country earlier this week. Seoul reported the nation's first case on January 20 — a 35-year-old woman who flew in from Wuhan.

### Taiwan

Taiwan has uncovered four cases so far — the latest a woman in her fifties who was in Wuhan for a sight-seeing tour and returned home voluntarily on January 25.

### Thailand

Thailand has detected eight cases so far — three are receiving treatment in hospital and five have been discharged, according to the health minister's statement. All the infected persons are Chinese nationals, except for a 73-year-old Thai woman who came back from Wuhan this month.

### Vietnam

Vietnam confirmed two cases of the virus on Thursday. An infected man from Wuhan travelled to Ho Chi Minh City earlier this month and passed the virus on to his son. — AFP

## Jihadist attack on Mali military camp leaves 20 dead

**BAMAKO:** Twenty members of the security forces were killed on Sunday in a major assault by suspected jihadists at a military camp in Mali near the border with Mauritania. The attack on the Sokolo camp around dawn left "20 dead and five wounded" and "four dead on the enemy's side," the army said updating the toll late Sunday.

The victims were buried with military honors at Sokolo, the Malian armed forces said on Twitter. Sokolo is the last town before the Mauritanian border, near a forest considered a base for groups linked to Al-Qaeda. Malian officials blamed the attack on "terrorists", a term used for jihadist groups which have been operating in Mali for eight years, despite military interventions by the French, the UN and joint force of soldiers from five Sahel countries.

A local lawmaker said all those killed at Sokolo military camp were gendarmes, or paramilitary police officers. "The terrorists arrived on motorcycles," said the official, who asked not to be named for security reasons. Sokolo resident Baba Gakou said: "There were more than 100 attackers. They arrived at five in the morning. They cut off any withdrawal by the gendarmes." He added that the assailants left with all the weapons and vehicles at the camp. "They picked up all their dead. They did not touch anyone in the village," he said.

A local humanitarian source who managed to enter the camp after the suspected jihadists had left, described the scene as "complete chaos". "It looked like the attackers knew what they were doing," the source said. The armed forces tweet said troops were combing the area backed by a military aircraft following the assault. Mali has been struggling to contain an Islamist insurgency that erupted in the north in 2012 and has claimed thousands of military and civilian lives since.

The Bamako government announced Wednesday it would hold legislative elections in late March, after repeated postponements prompted by insecurity and political infighting. Holding the elections was a key recommendation from crisis talks in December aimed at exploring non-military solutions to the worsening violence. There are some 4,500 French troops in the Sahel region, plus a 13,000-strong UN peacekeeping force in Mali, but still the conflict has engulfed the centre of the country and spread to neighboring Burkina Faso and Niger. — AFP

International

# World marks 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz

## Poland, Israel condemn anti-Semitism at Auschwitz commemoration

**OSWIECIM:** The presidents of Israel and Poland called yesterday for greater global efforts to combat anti-Semitism as the world marked 75 years since the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp amid concerns over a resurgence of anti-Jewish prejudice. More than 1.1 million people, most of them Jews, perished in the camp's gas chambers or from starvation, cold and disease.

"Today we hear voices which spread hate, on the internet, on the street and in the centers of political power... Our duty is to fight anti-Semitism, racism and fascist nostalgia, those sick evils that... threaten to eat away at the foundations of our democracies," Israeli President Reuven Rivlin told a news conference at a venue near the camp, which is now a museum.

Polish President Andrzej Duda, who did not attend Israel's national Holocaust Memorial last Friday because he was not allowed to speak, thanked Rivlin for his presence at Auschwitz. "This presence is a sign of remembrance, it is a visible sign of opposition to inhuman treatment, hatred, against all forms of hate, especially racist hate," Duda told the same news conference.

Set up by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland in 1940, at first to house Polish political prisoners, Auschwitz became the largest of the extermination centers where Adolf Hitler's plan to kill all Jews - the "Final Solution" - was put into practice. Returning to the site where her relatives were murdered, 92-year-old Holocaust survivor Yvonne Engelman, who now lives in Australia, recalled the horrors of the camp. "We could hear children coughing, crying, choking from the gas and also the smelling of the human flesh and the great fear what we experienced is that

maybe you will be the next victim," she said.

### Anti-Semitism

Studies show that despite the experiences of those who suffered and died in the Holocaust anti-Semitic attitudes still persist. A 2019 survey by the US-based Anti-Defamation League showed that about one in four Europeans harbor "pernicious and pervasive" attitudes towards Jews, compared with 19% of North Americans. In Germany, 42% agreed that "Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust", it said. Two people were killed in a shooting near a synagogue in eastern Germany in October, in what officials called an anti-Semitic attack.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Israel's Rivlin are among more than a dozen heads of state due to take part in ceremonies starting at 1430 GMT yesterday at the "Gate of Death", where rail tracks led trains packed with victims into the camp. The commemorations take place as Poland seeks to highlight its own suffering during World War Two, in which six million Poles, including three million Polish Jews, were killed and Warsaw was razed to the ground.

For many non-Jewish Poles, Auschwitz remains the place where the Nazis jailed and killed Polish resistance fighters, the intelligentsia, Roman Catholic priests and innocent civilians. Critics say the nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) government is not doing enough to counter anti-Semitism and is instead focusing on what it sees as Polish heroism during the war and downplaying Jews' claims to postwar restitution of property seized from them. PiS says the West fails to grasp the extent of Poland's pain and bravery. —Reuters



**OSWIECIM:** A Holocaust survivor places flowers at the death wall at the memorial site of the former German Nazi death camp Auschwitz during ceremonies to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the camp's liberation in Oswiecim, Poland yesterday. —AFP

## What we know about Mideast peace plan

**JERUSALEM:** More than two years after he first proposed a plan to revive the long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace process, US President Donald Trump's proposal is finally set to be announced. It must address intractable issues that stymied peacemakers for generations, including the status of Jerusalem, a city claimed by both sides as their capital.

There is also deep-seated suspicion between the two sides, and no longer mutual acceptance that the United States is the natural broker of any solution. While Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are the closest of political allies, US relations with the Palestinians are at a nadir. Palestinian leaders refuse even to meet with the Trump administration, accusing it of pro-Israeli bias.

### What are the key issues?

The status of Jerusalem, including historical sites sacred to Judaism, Islam and Christianity. - Establishing mutually agreed borders. - Finding security arrangements to satisfy Israel's fears of attacks by Palestinians and hostile neighbors. - The Palestinian demand for statehood in territory - the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem - captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East War. - Finding a solution to the plight of millions of Palestinian refugees. - Arrangements to share natural resources, such as water. - Palestinian demands that Israel remove its settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. More than 400,000 Israelis now live among about 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank, with another 200,000 settlers in East Jerusalem.

### Why revive peace plan now?

Both Trump and Netanyahu face domestic troubles. Trump faces an impeachment trial and Netanyahu was indicted on corruption charges in November. Both deny wrongdoing. They also both face re-election campaigns - Netanyahu in March and Trump in November. Netanyahu twice tried and failed to secure a majority in the Israeli parliament last year. Trump has repeatedly delayed the launch of his plan to avoid causing election problems for Netanyahu because of the possibility it will require some concessions from Israel. He faces his own political clock and could ill-afford to wait for months for Israel to decide its next prime minister, according to a source familiar with the peace team's thinking.

### What's in the Trump plan?

The proposal is dozens of pages long but little has been revealed about its contents. Palestinian and Arab sources who were briefed on the draft fear it seeks to bribe Palestinians into accepting Israeli occupation, in what could be a prelude to



**SHADMOT MEHOLA:** Photo shows a view of the Israeli settlement of Shadmot Mehola in the Jordan valley in the occupied West Bank. —AFP

Israel annexing about half of the West Bank including most of the Jordan Valley, the strategic and fertile easternmost strip of the territory. Palestinians say the Jordan Valley, nearly 30 per cent of the West Bank, would be a vital part of their future state, as the breadbasket of the West Bank and its border with Jordan. Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, the plan's principal author, launched the first stage in Bahrain in June. It called for a \$50 billion investment fund to boost the Palestinian and neighboring Arab state economies.

### What are its chances?

The last Israeli-Palestinian peace talks

collapsed in 2014. Continuing obstacles include the expansion of Israeli settlements on occupied land and generations of mutual distrust. The last two decades have also seen the rise to power in Gaza of the armed Islamist movement Hamas, which is formally committed to Israel's destruction and is in the midst of a decades-long power struggle with the western-backed Palestinian Authority, headed by President Mahmoud Abbas. The elephant in the room is the two-state solution - the long-standing international formula to bring about peace by creating an independent Palestinian state living side-by-side with Israel. —Reuters

## Syria regime forces set to enter key rebel hub

**NEAR MAARET AL-NUMAN:** Syrian regime forces were poised yesterday to soon enter Maaret al-Numan, a town of symbolic and strategic importance that is deserted after months of bombardment, in the country's last major opposition bastion. Maaret Al-Numan is a strategic prize lying on the M5 highway linking Damascus to Syria's second city Aleppo, a main artery coveted by the regime.

It is also the second biggest city in the beleaguered northwestern province of Idlib, the last stronghold of anti-regime forces and home to some three million people - half of them displaced by violence in other areas. Damascus loyalists have since Friday seized around 14 towns and villages around the city, reaching its eastern outskirts, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said yesterday. They have also cut a section of the M5 highway leading north from Maaret al Numan to Idlib city, according to the

Observatory and the pro-government Al-Watan newspaper.

Retaking full control of the highway is essential to the government's efforts to rekindle a moribund economy. The fighting has forced hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee their homes, with hundreds of vehicles yesterday packing a road leading out of the flashpoint region under heavy bombardment. "Maaret al-Numan is nearly besieged," said Observatory head Rami Abdul Rahman, explaining that regime forces were now stationed south, east and north of the city.

### Pincer movement

Abdul Rahman said Damascus loyalists were now pushing from the west and northwest in a bid to tighten the noose around the opposition holdout. An AFP correspondent in the region said regime forces were also trying to reach the city's southwestern edges to prevent rebels and jihadists from falling back.

Idlib and nearby areas of Hama, Aleppo and Latakia provinces are dominated by the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) jihadist group, led by members of the country's former Al-Qaeda franchise. In recent months, the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad has chipped away territory under jihadist control in the four provinces, despite several ceasefire agreements. Assad has repeatedly vowed to reassert



**HAZZANU, Syria:** Syrians arrive in trucks transporting their belongings to Hazanu in the northern countryside of Idlib city yesterday after fleeing its southern countryside during an ongoing offensive by regime forces on the northwestern region. —AFP

control over the whole of Syria. An AFP correspondent said Maaret al-Numan had become a ghost town, but the Observatory maintained that some civilians had remained in the area despite the escalation.

Fearing further regime advances, residents of several towns and villages located north of Maarat al-Numan, have started to flee, according to the Observatory and an

AFP correspondent. Pick-up trucks carrying entire families from the town of Saraqib and the Jabal al-Zawiya region packed a road leading north towards the border with Turkey, said an AFP correspondent. The vehicles were crammed with mattresses, clothes and household appliances, many of them belonging to families who had previously fled Maaret al-Numan. —AFP

## How world discovered the Nazi death camps

**PARIS:** Images of what the Allies found when they liberated the first Nazi death camps towards the end of World War II brought the horror of the Holocaust to global attention. Many of the ghastly pictures were at first held back from the broader public, partly out of concern for those with missing relatives. The concentration and extermination camps were liberated one by one as the Allied armies advanced on Berlin in the final days of the 1939-1945 war. The first was Majdanek in eastern Poland, which was freed on July 24, 1944 by the advancing Soviet Red Army. But in France, it was only the following year that media coverage was encouraged by the provisional government led by General Charles De Gaulle set up after the liberation of France.

### 'Death Marches'

In June 1944, as it became clear that Germany was losing the war, Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler ordered some camps be evacuated before they were reached by Allied troops, and that their prisoners be transferred to other locations. This mainly concerned camps in the Baltic states most exposed to advancing Soviet troops. Officers of the Schutzstaffel (SS) paramilitary in charge were ordered to cover up all traces of crimes before fleeing. The sprawling Auschwitz-Birkenau complex in southern Poland, liberated by the Red Army on January 27, 1945, was gradually dismantled from mid-1944 and its more than 60,000 prisoners evacuated. When the Soviets arrived, only 7,000 prisoners remained, unable to walk and follow their comrades on what became known as "Death Marches" to other camps.

### Images not widely shared

The discovery of the first camps had little impact on the public at large because the images were not widely shared. Russian and Polish investigators photographed the camps at Majdanek and Auschwitz, and US army photographers made a documentary on Struthof, the only Nazi concentration camp based in what is now France. But France in particular did not want them broadcast to avoid alarming people with relatives missing after being deported, captured or conscripted. A turning point came on April 6, 1945 with the discovery of Ohrdruf, an annex of the Buchenwald camp in Germany.

### 'Indescribable horror'

When American forces accompanied by US war correspondent Meyer Levin and AFP photographer Eric Schwab entered Ohrdruf, they came across a still-blazing inferno and skeletal prisoners executed with a bullet to the head. The Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, Dwight Eisenhower, visited the camp on April 12, describing afterwards "conditions of indescribable horror". The Allied leadership decided immediately that all censorship should be lifted so the world could see evidence of the Nazi atrocities. That evening France's communist daily Ce Soir published on its front page a picture of a mass grave. Days later Eisenhower said journalists should visit camps "where the evidence of bestiality and cruelty is so overpowering as to leave no doubt in their minds about the normal practices of the Germans". —AFP



**GAZA:** Palestinian demonstrators carry a banner from Gaza's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine group denouncing the latest Middle East peace plan by US President Donald Trump. —AFP

## Palestinian PM calls on world to boycott Trump peace plan

**RAMALLAH:** Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Shtayyeh yesterday urged international powers to boycott US President Donald Trump's "peace plan" which they see as biased towards Israel. "This a plan to protect Trump from impeachment and protect (Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu from prison. It is not a Middle East peace plan," Shtayyeh told a cabinet meeting. "This plan gives Israel sovereignty over Palestinian territory," he said.

Trump is expected to unveil his "peace plan" for the Middle East after hosting in Washington Netanyahu and his political rival Benny Gantz. It comes as Trump is facing an impeachment trial in the Senate while Netanyahu, who is facing indictment over corruption allegations, will contest an election next month which Gantz is hoping to win. "We call on the international community to not be partners in this because it contravenes international law," Shtayyeh

told the Palestinian cabinet. "The rights of the Palestinian people are not for sale."

The Palestinians have not been invited to Washington, having cut all ties with the Trump administration over its pro-Israel stance. The plan is widely expected to be the most favorable towards Israel ever proposed by the United States, with alleged leaks - denied by Trump - suggesting it could declare settlements in the occupied West Bank legal. The US proposal could also pull back from the creation of a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital after Trump in 2018 recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. —AFP

## International

# Meghan's dad to Meghan: Would be great to see you, even in court

## Meghan's split hurt the queen: Meghan's father

**LONDON:** Meghan Markle's estranged father Thomas said yesterday that he was prepared to face his daughter in court and that she and her husband Prince Harry had hurt Queen Elizabeth by abruptly stepping back from royal duties. Harry, the British monarch's grandson, and Meghan, duchess of Sussex, agreed with the queen this month that they would no longer work as royals after their surprise announcement that they wanted to carve out "a progressive new role" which they hope to finance themselves.

"I think they've hurt the queen, I think they've hurt the royals, and it just doesn't work," Markle told ITV's Good Morning Britain program. "I'm a little embarrassed for them and feeling really sorry for the queen." "The break from the royals is going to cause far more problems." Harry has spoken of his sadness at being forced to give up his royal duties in a deal with the queen, saying there was no other option if his wife Meghan were to seek an independent future away from stifling media intrusion.

Under the arrangement, Harry will remain a prince and the couple will keep their titles of Duke and Duchess of Sussex as they begin a new life split between Britain and North America, where they will spend the majority of their time. "This decision to make a break from the royals is very confusing, I don't think anyone understands or can figure out how this happened or why it happened - it makes no sense," Markle said. Markle, who lives in Mexico, has given a number of TV interviews in which he has criticized his daughter, saying they were the only way he could communicate with her.

Meghan has not publicly commented on the situation

with her father, but friends of hers told People Magazine last year Markle had not tried to get in touch with her and she was devastated by his actions. He missed the couple's glittering wedding in 2018 due to health problems and has been estranged from his daughter since then. He said he had never met Harry or his grandson, the couple's baby son Archie. The Sussexes are now in Canada as they plan their future.

### 'I really miss my daughter'

However, Markle could face Meghan in court. She is suing The Mail on Sunday newspaper over its publication of a private letter she sent to him, in breach of her copyright and human rights. The paper aims to use his evidence in the legal battle. "If it comes to meeting them in a courtroom, that's great - at least I finally get to see them, but I don't want to face off or have a battle with them," Markle said. He added that he had asked the newspaper to publish the letter. Harry has accused the tabloid press of bullying his wife, likening their treatment to that which his mother Princess Diana suffered. Supporters of the couple say some negative coverage has been fuelled by racism.

However, Markle said he did not think that Meghan had faced racist media coverage in Britain: "I don't buy that." "I really miss my daughter," Markle added, saying she had "ghosted" him. "I love my daughter and I certainly would love my grandson and I'd love Harry if I met him, I'm sure," he said, adding that the prince, sixth-in-line to the British throne, should have come to visit him to ask for his daughter's hand in marriage. When asked what he would say now to Prince Harry, he said: "Man up and come down and see me." —Reuters



**NORTH SAANICH:** The residence of Prince Harry and his wife Meghan is seen in Deep Cove Neighborhood from a boat on the Saanich Inlet, North Saanich, British Columbia. —AFP

## UK unveils new visa scheme for scientists after Brexit

**LONDON:** Britain has announced a new fast-track visa scheme for top scientists, researchers and mathematicians as it prepares a new immigration system for life outside the European Union. Prime Minister Boris Johnson revealed the plan just days before Brexit finally takes place on January 31. Concerns about mass migration were a driving force in the 2016 campaign to leave the EU, and Johnson has promised to end free movement with the bloc.

But he said on Sunday: "As we leave the EU, I want to send a message that the UK is open to the most talented minds in the world, and stand ready to support them to turn their ideas into reality." EU free movement will continue for 11 months after Brexit during a transition period designed to allow London and Brussels to agree a new future partnership.

The government hopes to introduce a new points-based immigration system on January 1, 2021, for EU and non-EU citizens, but the details are still being worked out. The newly announced Global Talent visa system will come into effect from next month, to replace the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa. Only around 550 of the old visas were issued in 2018-19, well below the cap of 2,000, and officials hope the new, uncapped scheme will be more enticing.

It is open to a wider range of applicants, and offers an easier route to settling in Britain. The government also unveiled an extra £300 million (356 million euros, \$392 million) to fund "experimental and imaginative mathematical sciences research" over the next five years. "The UK has a proud history of scientific discovery, but to lead the field and face the challenges of the future we need to continue to invest in talent and cutting-edge research," Johnson said in a statement. —AFP

## Electric shock: Could Brexit scar Britain's energy landscape?

**LONDON:** Britain's exit from the EU, which will finally happen on Friday, has sparked fears of disruption to its electricity market, from higher bills to supply issues and stalled de-carbonisation efforts.

Britain depends on the European Union for much of its electricity supply. Its own generation fell in 2018 by 1.6 percent, according to the latest available statistics. This reduction stems from the gradual shutdown of coal-fired power plants, which is yet to be fully compensated by a rise in wind power. Imports of electricity and gas have increased in response, predominantly from France, the Netherlands and Ireland, which now account for almost 40 percent of Britain's energy consumption.

Britain's imminent departure from the 28-member EU and its single electricity market therefore represents a risk for an already fragile network, which suffered a big blackout in August. It will continue to benefit from existing arrangements during a post-Brexit transition phase, while it seeks a new agreement on everything from energy to security cooperation with Brussels.

But it is not clear if these talks will entirely resolve the issue. British industry regulator Ofgem has said "alternative trading arrangements will need to be developed", without giving further details. —AFP

## Fishermen angling for big catch post Brexit

**NORTH SHIELDS:** Just before dawn, the Good Fellowship trawler casts its nets deep into the North Sea's cold swirling waters, fishing for prawns off England's northeast coast. Britain finally departs the European Union on Friday but remains bound by the bloc's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) until the end of a transition period on December 31.

The Good Fellowship's captain, David Shiel, is cautiously hopeful that Brexit can help reverse decades of decline in the UK's once-booming fishing industry that has been blamed partly on EU membership allowing foreign vessels to fish in British waters. In pitch blackness, the small vessel embarks upon a day-long trip from the port town of North Shields - situated at the mouth of the River Tyne - to fish off the coast of England's northeastern region, almost all of which voted for Brexit. As dawn breaks, the three-man crew shoots heavy nets into the dark coastal waters eight miles out to sea.

And as the nets scrape along the bottom of the seabed, scooping up prawns largely destined for dining tables and restaurants in Italy, France and Spain, Shiel says the time has come for the UK to take back control for its own fishing fleet. "Our own fleet surely has to come first," he tells AFP, after steering his ship

out of North Shields - whose historic Fish Quay dating back to the 13th century is the base for 33 vessels and around 350 fishermen.

### Key Brexit role

While fishing accounts for less than 0.1 percent of UK economic output, it played a key role in the 2016 referendum in favor of exiting the EU. The CFP permits European Union vessels equal access to the fishing grounds of other member states, provided that they comply with quotas. Shiel, 52, who lives in the northeast town of Seahouses, argues that this permits rival EU fishermen to catch an unfair amount of fish from UK waters.

Following Brexit, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government is planning legislation to exclude foreign vessels. However, a Brussels-based EU diplomat told AFP that finding an accord on fishing access to British waters was a prerequisite for striking an overall deal on Britain's new trade relationship with the bloc.

Indeed, many UK trawlermen believe they could be sacrificed for Britain winning deals for its key service sectors, led by London's financial industry. "We've got to be looking at a bigger picture to get better sustainable fishing for our own country," insists Shiel. "The trouble is once again we've been promised and promised and at the last minute they'll sell you down the river, because they've got no spine - any of them," he adds in reference to Britain's politicians.

EU boats take roughly six times more fish from UK waters than British boats do from EU waters. At the same time, 90 percent of the fish caught off North Shields by British boats are prawns for



**AT SEA:** Fishermen work aboard the Good Fellowship fishing trawler, while its nets trawl the sea bed for prawns and other crustaceans, in the North Sea, off the coast of North Shields, in northeast England. —AFP

export - with around two-thirds going to France, Spain and Italy - according to Andy Dixon, who manages Caley Fisheries' North Shields division. Britain meanwhile tends to import most of the fish that it consumes - including tuna, cod and haddock.

### 'Fine balance'

"There needs to be a fine balance made" by the UK government to deliver both Brexit and continued market access to Britain's exported fish, Dixon tells AFP after hosting the port's daily fish market auction. Dixon hopes Johnson can be trusted not to betray UK fishermen. "We have to trust him, really. You just hope we don't get sold down the river. It's

## Tripoli airport hit by rocket fire; UN slams Libya arms violations

**TRIPOLI:** The Libyan capital's sole functioning airport came under renewed fire Sunday, as fighting broke out hours after the UN mission in the country condemned ongoing violations of an arms embargo. The UN mission in Libya, UNSMIL, condemned "in the strongest possible terms" the rocket strikes on Tripoli's Mitiga airport, which has been hit by repeated attacks in recent months.

UNSMIL said in a statement Sunday evening that the strikes had wounded at least two civilians as well as damaged the tarmac and a number of buildings at the airport. World leaders met in Berlin last weekend and committed to ending all foreign meddling in Libya and to upholding the 2011 UN Security Council weapons embargo as part of a broader plan to end the country's conflict. They also agreed to a permanent ceasefire and steps to dismantle numerous militias and armed groups, while pushing a political process under the UN.

But fighting broke out on Sunday in the Abu Grein region, 130 kilometers west of Sirte, according to sources on both sides of the conflict. Libya has been mired in chaos since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising that killed longtime dictator Muammar Gaddafi, with two rival administrations latterly vying

for power. The conflict deepened last year when military strongman Khalifa Haftar, who controls much of the south and east of Libya, launched an assault in April to seize Tripoli, base of the UN-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA).

### 'Blatant violations'

On Saturday, the UN had said it "deeply regrets the continued blatant violations of the arms embargo in Libya". "Over the last 10 days, numerous cargo and other flights have been observed landing at Libyan airports in the western and eastern parts of the country, providing the parties with advanced weapons, armored vehicles, advisers and fighters," it added. UNSMIL said the ceasefire, which had provided much-needed respite for civilians in Tripoli, was now at risk of collapse.

"This fragile truce is now threatened by the ongoing transfer of foreign fighters, weapons, ammunition and advanced systems to the parties by member states, including several who participated in the Berlin conference," it said. On Sunday, Germany's foreign ministry backed the UNSMIL statement and voiced concerns about "a series of unconfirmed but credible reports of embargo violations on both sides".

Haftar has the backing of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Russia while the GNA is supported by Qatar and Turkey. On Sunday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan travelled to Algiers for talks with his Algerian counterpart on Libya's crisis and the January 12 ceasefire, which Moscow and Ankara brokered. Algeria shares a common border with Libya of some 1,000 kilometers.



**MITIGA:** Photo shows a view of the Libyan capital Tripoli's Mitiga International Airport. Rocket fire forced the suspension of all flights into and out of Tripoli's sole functioning airport. —AFP

Ahead of his departure, Erdogan lashed out at Haftar, calling him a "putschist" and claiming he was "constantly behind violations of the ceasefire". The UN says the fighting since last April has killed more than 280 civilians and over 2,000 combatants, while thousands have been wounded on both sides. More than 170,000 Tripoli residents have been displaced. Renewed clashes around Tripoli on Saturday killed at least one civilian - a Moroccan national - and wounded seven others, GNA health ministry spokesperson Amin Al-Hashemi said.

### 'Stable ceasefire'

The UN is hoping to hold inter-Libyan talks soon in Geneva to consolidate the sagging truce, as its mission in the country

happened before," he says. "It's a big, big thing that fishing is on the agenda. We are an island. We are surrounded by sea. It's all our water."

Barrie Deas, head of the UK body the National Federation of Fishermen's Organizations, insisted that the British fishermen had felt "betrayed" by the granting of equal EU access in 1973. "That was seen as a betrayal because the fishing industry was sacrificed for other national political and economic objectives," said Deas. Back at the Fish Quay, veteran trawlerman Thomas Glenny says he rues the day that the UK joined the bloc, adding that he was not hopeful of a brighter future. "I just hope it does work out for us - but it won't." —AFP

warns of "a renewed and intensified round of fighting". A military commission established at the Berlin summit - comprising five GNA loyalists and five Haftar delegates - has been tasked with defining ways of making the truce hold. "What's important now is to achieve a stable ceasefire, which the military committee '5 + 5'... wants to negotiate in the coming days," the German foreign ministry said. Ankara dispatched troops in a training capacity, it said - to support the GNA earlier this month in a move criticized by European powers and US President Donald Trump.

Western powers are keen to stabilize Libya - home to Africa's largest proven crude reserves - because of concerns Islamist militants and migrant smugglers, already active, will take advantage of the chaos. —AFP







# Business

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2020

**12** Lebanese MPs debate 2020 budget as protesters throw stones at police



**13** KFH realizes a net profit of KD 251.0m in 2019 for shareholders: Al-Marzouq



**14** Subdued oil prices, output weighing on Kuwait's near-term growth prospects



## Oil drops below \$60 on China virus

### Saudis say coronavirus impact on oil demand limited

LONDON: Crude prices extended declines yesterday, dropping below \$60 for the first time in nearly three months, as the death toll from China's coronavirus rose and more businesses were forced to shut down, fuelling expectations of slowing oil demand. Brent crude was down \$1.51 a barrel, or 2.5 percent, to \$59.18 at 1254 GMT, its lowest since late October and the biggest intra-day fall since Jan 8. US crude was down \$1.37, or 2.53 percent, at \$52.82. Both contracts had earlier fallen by more than 3 percent.

Global stock exchanges also fell as investors grew increasingly anxious about the widening crisis. Demand spiked for safe-haven assets, such as the Japanese yen and Treasury notes.

The death toll from the coronavirus rose to more than 80 and the Chinese government extended the Lunar New Year holiday to Feb. 2, trying to keep as many people as possible at home to prevent the virus from spreading further. The rapid spreading of

the virus fuelled fears of slowing oil demand and raised speculation that OPEC and its allies including Russia, a group known as OPEC+, would consider deepening production cuts. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, allies in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), tried to play down the impact of the virus yesterday, with Riyadh, the de-facto OPEC leader, saying the group could respond to any changes in demand.

Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al-Saud said yesterday he felt confident the new virus would be contained. Markets are being "primarily driven by psychological factors and extremely negative expectations adopted by some market participants despite (the virus') very limited impact on global oil demand," the minister said.

"Such extreme pessimism occurred back in 2003 during the SARS outbreak, though it did not cause a significant reduction in oil demand," Prince Abdulaziz said in a state-



ment. The OPEC+ group has been withholding supply to support oil prices for nearly three years and on Jan 1 increased an agreed output reduction by 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 1.7 million bpd through March.

OPEC+ "have the capability and flexibility needed to respond to any developments, by taking the necessary actions to support oil market stability, if the situation so requires,"

Prince Abdulaziz said. Brent crude oil prices have dropped by more than 14 percent since a spike in tensions between the United States and Iran briefly lifted prices above \$70 a barrel on Jan. 8.

#### Shares dive

World shares slipped to their lowest in two weeks yesterday as worries grew about the economic impact of China's spreading coronavirus, with demand spiking for safe-haven assets such as Japanese yen and Treasury notes. The death toll from the coronavirus outbreak in China rose to 81 and the virus spread to more than 10 countries, including France, Japan and the United States. Some health experts questioned whether China can contain the epidemic.

By midday in London, MSCI's All-Country World Index, which tracks shares across 47 countries, was down 0.6 percent to its lowest since Jan 9. In Europe, stock markets slumped at the start of trading, tracking their

counterparts in Asia. The pan-European STOXX 600 index fell 2 percent to its lowest level since Jan. 6, and the Euro Stoxx 50 volatility index jumped to its highest level since December.

"The coronavirus is an economic and financial shock. The extent of that shock still needs to be assessed, but it could provide the spark for an arguably long-overdue adjustment in the capital markets," Marc Chandler, chief market strategist at Bannockburn Securities, told clients.

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei average slid 2.0 percent, the biggest one-day fall in five months. A Tokyo-listed China proxy, ChinaAMC CSI 300 index ETF, fell 2.2 percent. Many markets in Asia were closed for the Lunar New Year holiday.

US S&P 500 mini futures were last down 1.36 percent, suggesting an open in the red on Wall Street later. The VIX volatility index, also known as Wall Street's "fear gauge", hit its highest levels since October. — Reuters

## Praise be to Allah 2019 Results

بيت التمويل الكويتي  
Kuwait Finance House



		2019	2018	%
Net Profit for Shareholders	"KD Million"	251.02	227.41	10.4%
Earnings per Share	"Fils"	36.45	33.06	10.3%
Financing Income	"KD Million"	931.57	862.06	8.1%
Total Operating Income	"KD Million"	814.40	746.01	9.2%
Net Operating Income	"KD Million"	510.13	453.55	12.5%
Total Assets	"KD Billion"	19.391	17.770	9.1%
Financing Receivables	"KD Billion"	9.337	9.190	1.6%
Depositors' Accounts	"KD Billion"	13.553	11.780	15.0%
Total Shareholders' Equity	"KD Billion"	2.060	1.894	8.8%

### To Investors

KFH Board of Directors is pleased to inform the investors that it has been resolved to distribute profits corresponding for the financial year ended 31st Dec. 2019 as follows:

	2019 %	2018 %
Investment Deposits "Al-Khumasiya"	3.120	3.125
Investment Deposits "Al-Mustamera"	2.620	2.625
Investment Deposits "Al-Sedra"	2.075	2.100
Investment Deposits "Al-Dimah" 12 Months	2.475	2.500
Investment Deposits "Al-Dimah" 6 Months	2.150	2.300
Long Term Investment Plans	2.100	2.125
Investment Saving Account	0.800	1.250

Profits will be credited to their bank accounts

### To Shareholders

KFH Board of Directors is pleased to inform the shareholders that it has been resolved to distribute profits corresponding for the financial year ended 31st Dec. 2019 as follows:

	2019	2018
Cash Dividends	20%	20%
Bonus Shares	10%	10%

This recommendation is subject to the approval of General Assembly and other regulatory entities.



# KFH realizes a net profit of KD 251m in 2019 for shareholders: Al-Marzouq

20% cash dividends, 10% bonus shares, and 36.45 fils earnings per share



Hamad Al-Marzouq

- Financing income increased by 8.1 % to reach KD 931.6 million
- Net operating income increased by 12.5% to reach KD 510.1 million
- Sustainable growth is in line with the ambitious strategy and sound activities
- High credit ratings and positive outlook
- The highest levels of innovation and excellence in customer service
- Prudent risk management and strong buffers against market fluctuations
- The first to offer innovative financial solutions
- High liquidity and geographical spread
- Qualitative leaps in the adoption of "FinTech" technology
- 98% of new hires during 2019 were Kuwaitis
- A prominent role in sustainable community development

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Chairman Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq, said that KFH has, by the grace of Allah, realized a net profit of KD 251.0 million for the year 2019 for KFH shareholders compared to KD 227.4 million last year i.e. an increase of 10.4 percent. Financing income reached KD 931.6 million, i.e. an increase of 8.1 percent compared to last year. Net operating income increased to reach KD 510.1 million, i.e. a growth of 12.5 percent over the last year.

Cost to income ratio dropped to reach 37.36 percent for the year 2019, compared to 39.20 percent last year. Earnings per share for 2019 reached 36.45 fils compared to 33.06 fils in 2018 i.e. an increase of 10.3 percent. KFH distributions for the year 2019 were as follows: 3.120 percent for "Al-Khumasiya" investment deposit, 2.620 percent for "Al-Mustamera" investment deposit, 2.075 percent for "Al-Sedra" investment deposit, 2.475 percent for the 12-month Dimah investment deposit, 2.150 percent for the 6-month Dimah investment deposit, 2.100 percent for long term investment plans and 0.800 percent for saving investment account.

The Board of Directors has proposed 20 percent cash dividends to shareholders and 10 percent bonus shares subject to general assembly and concerned authorities' approval. Total assets increased to reach KD 19.391 billion, i.e. an increase of KD 1.621 billion or 9.1 percent compared to 2018.

Financing portfolio increased to reach KD 9.337 billion, i.e. an increase of KD 146 million or 1.6 percent compared to 2018. Investment in Sukuk reached KD 2.276 billion an increase of KD 713 million i.e. a growth of 45.6 percent compared to end of last year and the majority of the balance represents sovereign sukuk. Depositors' accounts increased to reach KD 13.553 billion, i.e. an increase of KD 1.772 billion or 15.0 percent compared to 2018.

Shareholders' equity increased to reach KD 2.060 billion i.e. an increase of KD 166 million or 8.8 percent compared to 2018. KFH's capital adequacy ratio (CAR) reached 17.67 percent, (after the proposed dividends) i.e. higher than the required limit of 15 percent, thus reiterating the strength of KFH financial position.

#### Sound performance

Al-Marzouq added in a press release that the sound financial statements KFH achieved in 2019 clearly show that it has succeeded in enhancing its world-leading position in the Islamic finance industry, confirming its strength and financials and achieving rewarding returns for shareholders and depositors. Also, KFH succeeded in achieving the highest levels of innovation and excellence in cus-

tomers service.

"These strong results confirm KFH's ability to adapt to conditions and challenges that the regional and global markets witnessed in 2019. The prudent and conservative approach that KFH follows in risk management created strong buffers against market fluctuations and geopolitical developments regionally and globally." He noted.

#### Ambitious Strategy... Acquisition brings several benefits

Al-Marzouq confirmed that KFH's growing financial indicators are in line with the Group ambitious strategy and its performance in general. They also reflect KFH's strong activity, high cost efficiency, its successful strategy of achieving sustainable growth by focusing on the core banking activities.

He added that the KFH achieved continuous growth in net income, supported by the increase in operating income and net profit. Al-Marzouq said that KFH succeeded in offering a wide range of services, products and financial solutions that are unique to the Kuwaiti market and a new addition to the competitive advantages KFH enjoys.

Al-Marzouq said that KFH's acquisition of Ahli United Bank B.S.C. (AUB) brings many benefits in terms of improving profitability. Studies prepared by consultants have shown that the expected increase in future earnings per share as a result of this acquisition (EPS Accretion) will be the highest compared to the acquisition deals in the Gulf region and the Middle East. In addition, the merger will have positive effects for KFH shareholders due to the expected increase in profits and dividends.

He confirmed that the acquisition will improve the quality of the new entity's assets, high capital base, liquidity levels, and capital efficiency at rates that exceed the regulatory requirements. The deal will also generate the largest and best Islamic bank in the world in terms of assets, as KFH will occupy leading deserved position with a value of assets of about \$ 101 billion.

#### Group subsidiaries... Strength elements

Al-Marzouq highlighted that the high liquidity

levels that KFH enjoys are one of its main strengths along with Group's geographical spread in Turkey, Germany, Bahrain, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia as well as the diversified investment and banking services that are aligned with latest financial technology.

#### Digital transformation

Al-Marzouq said: "KFH has made qualitative leaps in implementing the strategy of digital transformation, by adopting the latest financial technology innovations in FinTech, AI and banking robotics while achieving excellence in Mobile Banking service in accordance with the highest standards of quality and professionalism. These advanced steps contribute to providing the customer with an exceptional and sustainable digital experience and drives the digital development in the banking industry."

"Located in different prominent areas, KFH opened 10 Digital Self-Banking Stations "KFH Go" which won the "Best Product in the Middle East" Award from EMEA Finance magazine in recognition of KFH's efficient services in response to customer expectations." He added.

Al-Marzouq emphasized that KFH invests in technology to enhance its digital capabilities, adding that digitization and advanced services and products serve customers and contribute to the development of the local banking sector as well as intersect with Kuwait Vision 2035 which seeks to transform the country into a knowledge-driven economy based on innovation and technology.

#### High credit ratings

He pointed out to the high credit ratings with positive outlook of KFH from the international rating agencies, indicating Moody's Investors Service, ("Moody's") has affirmed the A1 / Prime-1 long and short-term domestic and foreign currency deposit ratings of KFH. The rating agency has also affirmed KFH's Baseline Credit Assessments (BCA) and Adjusted BCAs at baa3. The outlook on KFH's long-term ratings has been changed to positive from stable following KFH's shareholders approving the acquisition of Ahli United Bank B.S.C.

#### Development projects and Kuwait Vision 2035

Emphasizing the role of the private sector in the Kuwaiti economy, Al-Marzouq pointed out the leading role of KFH in supporting the local economy and the National Development Plan through financing mega projects. This is particularly part of Kuwait Vision 2035 to transform the country into a regional and global financial and commercial hub. He added that "KFH has a diversified financing portfolio including various vital sectors such as energy, water, power, infrastructure and construction. Al-Marzouq pointed out KFH's leading role in Sukuk issuances for local and international companies and governments, stressing the full readiness to continue financing public development projects.

#### Attracting Kuwaiti talents

Al-Marzouq said that KFH has achieved remarkable progress in the implementation of the human resources strategy, where 98 percent of new hires during 2019 were Kuwaitis. Total hires of Kuwaitis were 337 out of 343. Moreover, 84 percent of new hires were Kuwaitis below 30 years of age in 2019.

"Under training programs, KFH offered 15,856 seats for 3120 staff during 2019. This confirms its leadership as the most prominent private sector institution in recruiting and qualifying Kuwaiti youth, as part of a comprehensive strategy for talent training and development." He said.

#### Sustainable community development

Al-Marzouq explained that "KFH" has made great achievements on the level of social responsibility and sustainable development strategy. In 2019, KFH's social initiatives included various aspects such as society, environment, health, education, people with special needs, youth, sports, innovation, entrepreneurship as well as the volunteering activities. In this regard, KFH won prestigious awards.

#### Global awards

Al-Marzouq said that KFH won prestigious awards from international magazines and institutions such as the Euromoney Award for Excellence 2019 - "Best Bank in Kuwait" and the World's Best Islamic Financial Institution 2019 award from Global Finance Magazine and many other global awards. Al-Marzouq expressed his confidence that KFH will continue to boost its financial results and strong performance, extending his thanks to stakeholders and customers for their support and trust in KFH's operations and activities and to the regulatory authorities. He commended the executive management and staff for their outstanding efforts, stressing the need to maintain KFH leadership.

“KFH's acquisition of Ahli United Bank B.S.C. (AUB) brings many benefits in terms of improving profitability”





What's On



# LuLu Hypermarket launches 'India Utsav 2020'

LuLu Hypermarket, the leading hypermarket chain in the region, launched its 'India Utsav 2020' promotion on 23 January, at its Al Rai outlet. The event was inaugurated by Indian Ambassador to Kuwait K. Jeeva Sagar in the presence of top LuLu Hypermarket management, officials, special invitees and a large gathering of well-

wishers. During the week-long promotional campaign, held at all Lulu outlets from 22 to 28 January, a range of Indian products, including fashion clothing, are on offer at very special prices.

A major attraction of the 'India Utsav 2020' promotion are the various Indian food stalls offering a

variety of delicious Indian dishes. The different outlets of LuLu Hypermarket have also been decked-out with cardboard cutouts of traditional Indian monuments from around the country to reveal the huge tourism potential of the country.

Promotions such as the 'India Utsav 2020', which provide shoppers with an opportunity to avail of a

wide variety of Indian products at very competitive prices, further cements LuLu Hypermarket's reputation for providing high-quality products at attractive prices. The campaign also underlines the hypermarket's commitment to a customer-centric approach that has made it the destination of choice for discerning shoppers in the country.



## Sheraton Kuwait wins first rank at HORECA Kuwait 2020



The chefs of Sheraton Kuwait Hotel were once more crowned with the highest number of gold medals in this year's hospitality exhibition "HORECA Kuwait 2020", which was attended by numerous Chefs. Like every year, culinary experts from around the world participated in this exhibition, along with VIP guests and attendees.

Cluster Executive Chef Joachim Textor and Cluster Director Food & Beverage Frank Noack with the Chef's team created and presented everything with luxurious touches, the highly acclaimed performance of the

Sheraton Kuwait team stood out during the event.

All the attending judges unanimously agreed that the culinary team's performance was excellent while presenting their winning creations with elegance, due to the top quality materials and standards that were exhibited by them while competing.

Sheraton Kuwait has been awarded a trophy for winning the overall battle of HORECA. Gathering over 8 gold, 7 silver, and 16 bronze medals along with numerous appreciation certificates that were distributed over by the organizers to the participating Chefs.

Fahed Abushaar - Complex General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait, Mounir Amer - General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, and all the Department Heads commended the Culinary Team that participated in the HORECA Exhibition. All efforts were highly praised for the exceptional performance and outstanding skills. Abushaar especially recognized the efforts of Chef Joachim Textor and Frank Noack for their successful team management and guidance which strengthened the presence of Sheraton Kuwait and maintained the highest level of performance.

## Grand Hyper opens its 19th store in Kuwait

Grand Hyper, the retail wing of Regency Group opened their 61st outlet as a part of their aggressive expansion in the GCC region. Grand currently has 18 outlets in Kuwait and Salmiya Hypermarket is the 19th store. Situated on Salem Al Mubarak street, Block 7, Salmiya with an area of 22,000 sqft, the store celebrated the grand opening on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

On the date of opening of the new outlet, Anvar Ameen, Managing Director said "It gives us much pleasure to announce the opening of our new store at Salmiya which is yet another milestone achievement of Grand Hyper. Kuwait has always been the favorite country for the group and the group has big plans of expansion just for this country thereby recalled as the most preferred brand partner of any customer for their domestic purchase at any point of time.

Ayyoob Kachery, Regional Director said "With 19 stores in count, the vision and mission of the brand remain focused on unparalleled customer service and customer delight, thereby yielding equal acceptance by both Kuwaiti nationals and expats. This has inspired the Group to further expand its reach in Kuwait." Mohammed Suneer, Chief Executive officer - Kuwait region said, "This new store at Salmiya is a New Year's gift from the group to the people of Kuwait at a much-welcomed location that would cater the majority of expats who live in the country."

Rahil Bassim, Chief Operating Officer, said "The new milestone achieved is just because of the focus we have in fetching the best products around the



globe under one roof and making it available to the customers at a much competitive price."

Thehaseer Ali, General Manager, said "This is indeed a part of our expansion plan with a vision to have the store presence at every nook and corner of the country enabling customers to reach the Grand store for their convenient purchase."

The promoters conveyed their sincere gratitude and best wishes to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, generous Kuwaiti public and business friendly systems. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah's wise leadership has steered Kuwait to self-sufficient and investor friendly destination, one of many reasons for promoters to favor Kuwait over other GCC countries.

Grand Hypermarket has a strong reputation and trust in Kuwait market as a brand, and has been working towards extending a strong presence across the GCC and continues striving towards being the most preferred retailer among customers. The foremost

focus remains providing customers with a wide range of products including food stuffs, world-class electronic appliances, home appliances, footwear, health and beauty items and fashion wears and accessories from leading European designers among others. Perishable goods, farm produces and meat are shipped by air on a daily basis to ensure they are available fresh to the end users. These are procured from internationally-recognized farms to ensure world-class standards. Making high quality products affordable for the everyday consumer is what sets Grand Hypermarket apart from the rest. The wide network of stores helps the brands stays close to its valued customers in Kuwait.

The new store at Salmiya, delivers a delightful shopping environment by providing a wide range of high-quality products at much competitive price, further entrenching Grand Hypermarket's position as one of the finest and most preferred brands for purchase among the expats and locals in the State of Kuwait.

## MoneyGram partners with LuLu Financial Holdings



MoneyGram International, Inc. a global leader in cross-border P2P payments and money transfers announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with LuLu Money, a leading name in the world of non-banking finance, dealing primarily in foreign exchange and global money transfers.

LuLu Money will utilize the MoneyGram API-driven platform to gain access to leading consumer-centric capabilities and further its global network. The partnership is predicted to capture the majority of the market share in these locations.

The new agreement will extend the MoneyGram and LuLu Money presence in the Asia-Pacific region and Oman, as MoneyGram money transfers will be available through an extensive network of LuLu Money branches, liaison offices, and 50,000+ trusted agents. Currently, remittance outflows to East Asia and the Pacific account for \$149 billion and are forecasted to increase in the coming years. Additionally, according to a recent UN Report, technological innovation in the remittance marketplace could help enable financial inclusion for hundreds of millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region.

"This partnership will revolutionize how the region manages its high volume of remittances, launching unique services into the market, changing the way people approach digital transactions and remittances. We believe this marks a new era for digital money transfers and remittances in the Asia-Pacific region and the world," said Adeb Ahmed, Managing Director of LuLu Financial Group.

Speaking on the sidelines of the signing, Alex Holmes, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer at MoneyGram said, "LuLu Money has made a major push to digitize its money transfer business through this partnership. MoneyGram looks forward to working with them to create new innovative products and services that extend our digital reach and bring financial inclusion to customers throughout the Asia-Pacific market."

This digital transformation will complement LuLu Money to help with customer acquisition and business volume growth.

Health & Science

AVEVA reveals key investment priorities for organizational digital transformation agendas

ABU DHABI: AVEVA, a global leader in engineering and industrial software, reveals global survey findings identifying the key investment drivers of digital transformation across 1,240 EMEA, North America and APAC decision makers across nine industry verticals.

Middle East Organizations Demonstrate Lower Demand for AI than Global Trend

The Middle East demonstrated less demand for AI (45 percent vs global mean 75 percent) and Advanced Process and Engineering Design (44 percent vs global mean 74 percent) yet led global demand in five technologies, more than any other nation:

- 3D Visualization (59 percent vs global mean 27 percent)
• IoT / Edge (56 percent vs global mean 30 percent)
• Enterprise mobility (51 percent vs global mean 31 percent)
• Model Simulations (50 percent vs global mean 25 percent)
• Laser Scanning (41 percent vs global mean 21 percent)

"New emerging technologies like AI are taking time to gain traction in the Middle East so the research findings mirror what we are witnessing in the market. AI has the potential to disrupt markets in the Middle East by creating innovative new services and entirely new business models. We are already witnessing its impact in Europe and North America across several industries and market sectors and we are confident that the trend will follow in the Middle East region. With the eruption of AI, some of the market leaders five to ten years' time may be organizations that are not even key players today," commented Mohamad Awad, Regional VP for the Middle East, AVEVA.

Global Findings Unveiled:

The research also identified three key global investment priorities for organizations when it comes to embarking upon the digital transformation journey:

1. Making sense of data utilising artificial intelligence and real time data visualization

The research highlighted a strong demand for technologies that provide predictive outputs from large data flows, with AI and Analytics listed as the most important enabler (75 percent), closely followed by Real-Time Data Visualization (64 percent), Augmented, Virtual or Mixed Reality (60 percent) and Big Data Processing (59 percent).

AI was a top three enabler across all industries globally, with the greatest importance assigned in Power and Utilities (81 percent) and Oil & Gas (particularly upstream 79 percent and midstream 78 percent).

Japan (88 percent) and China (84 percent) prioritised AI highest, with the UK (79 percent) and US (77 percent) following closely behind.

2. Fostering collaboration through Advanced Process and Engineering Design

Advanced Process and Engineering Design was the second most important technology (74 percent) and was in the top three technology priorities across all industries globally, scoring highest among Engineering, Procurement and Construction professionals.

This was perceived as an essential technology for global production, ranked as the most important enabler for Marine Ship Building (75 percent), Buildings/Infrastructure (74 percent) and Packaged Goods (73 percent), with Oil and Gas and Energy all ranking the technology highly.

Japan (85 percent) and Germany (82 percent) are early adopters with high importance attributed across all regions.

3. Stepping up cyber security and safety capabilities

Cyber security was the third most prioritised technology enabler (71 percent) and in particular a focus for Mining (76 percent), Downstream Oil and Gas (75 percent), Power &



Mohamad Awad

Utilities (70 percent) and Marine (70 percent) and the highest priority for Planning & Scheduling specialists.

Improving Safety and Security through technology investment was a priority across all regions, with the Middle East (68 percent), Australia (63 percent) and India (60 percent) particularly highlighting this issue.

For global corporates the two most valuable assets are their people and their data. Businesses today have great

responsibility to protect employees and customers, with technology that provides the foresight to critical failures before they occur. Lisa Johnston, CMO, AVEVA commented, "As digital transformation moves to the forefront of the industrial agenda, the power of technology to unify data and break silos is allowing specialists to collaborate and change business models. The world's most capital-intensive projects, from sustainable energy production and mining to smart factories and connected cities are now being designed, planned and delivered by global multidisciplinary teams all connected seamlessly through technology."

Other findings from the research included:

Asset Performance Managers (APM) were found to have the most demanding desires for technology investment, requiring a far-reaching product set and visionary approach. APM was set apart from all other professional categories in the strength of their demand for technology to create new services or products; use data to drive new revenue streams; and to

enable collaboration with AI and Analytics their most important enabler. APM also identified technology as providing a great potential to upgrade both safety and security and emergency response times.

Face to face engagement and trust remain key vectors for driving sales success. Face to face meetings with a vendor, either at a vendor event or as an introductory meeting, are most influential across all categories, with personal referrals also particularly meaningful. Experience with a vendor is highly prioritized in UK, China and India while France, Japan and Australia place considerable weight on case studies from the vendor.

Remote Operations Centers and Learning Management and Training scored highest for relevance across global industries. China and Japan see a Command Center as most relevant, while the US and Australia cite Supply Chain Optimization is key to their business.

Delivering cost reduction and enhancing safety prioritized by high growth organizations. The countries prioritizing cost reduction have been fast to scale over the past decades - China (61 percent), India (58 percent) and the Middle East (60 percent) indicated that significant margin improvement is possible in these geographies from software solutions. This demand for greater efficiency mirrored a requirement to invest in technology to promote safety as these economies continue to mature (China 51 percent, UAE 68 percent and India 60 percent).

"This research was an opportunity to hear from both our existing as well as potential new customers across the globe and our findings mirror the growing demands for technology solutions in the market globally today. Emerging technologies like AI, Machine Learning and Edge Computing which are transforming the technology landscape with vast data streams delivering operable output as well as true business outcomes for our customers today," concluded Lisa Johnston.

CLINIC PAGE advertisement featuring a doctor and a patient, with the Kuwait Times logo and phone number 248 33 199.

OPHTHALMOLOGY advertisement listing services such as filler injections, phacoemulsification, LASIK, and retinal eye examination, with contact information for Taiba Hospital.

OPHTHALMOLOGY advertisement featuring Dr. Hatem Al-Kandari, Consultant Ophthalmologist, with contact information for Taiba Hospital.

Advertisement for Ophthalmology Services featuring Dr. Rany Essam Mitwally, Senior Registrar, and other specialists, with social media links and contact details.

To advertise on this Page advertisement featuring a doctor's hands holding a tablet, with contact number 24833199 ext:101,102.

To advertise on this Page advertisement with contact information: Call: 24833199 ext:101,102 or Direct line: 24835616 / 24835617 or email: ads@kuwaittimes.com

Advertisement for ENT services featuring Dr. Tammam Abou Ali, Consultant ENT, Head & Neck, Facial Plastic Surgeon, listing various surgical procedures and contact information.

Advertisement for EXIR Medical Subspecialties Center, featuring various specialists like Dr. Kiran Turaka, Dr. Zareena Zahir, Dr. Hasan Khan, and Dr. P. Seshendra Nath, with contact details.



# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

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- ◆ Member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery
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General Surgery Consultant  
http://www.international-clinic.com  
Tel: 1886677

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

◆ Colonic Hydrotherapy & Fecal Incontinence Treatment  
◆ Laparoscopic mini bypass  
◆ Transanal minimally invasive surgery

**Academic Certificates, Trainings & Fellowships:**

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

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

مسشفى دار الشفاء  
Dar Al Shifa Hospital  
Tele:1802 555

daralshifa  
Email: aalhaddad@daralshifa.com

**DR. FAHAD AL-MUKHAIZEEM**  
Consultant Pediatrician

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

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

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

**Academic Certificates - Training**

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

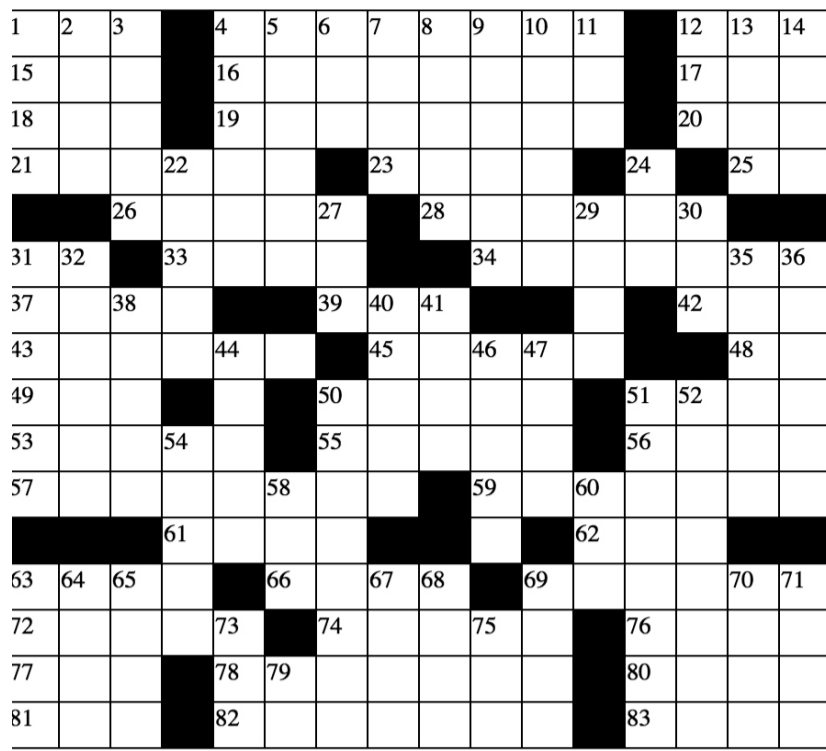
**Scope of clinical Practice.**

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

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

Stars

CROSSWORD 2421



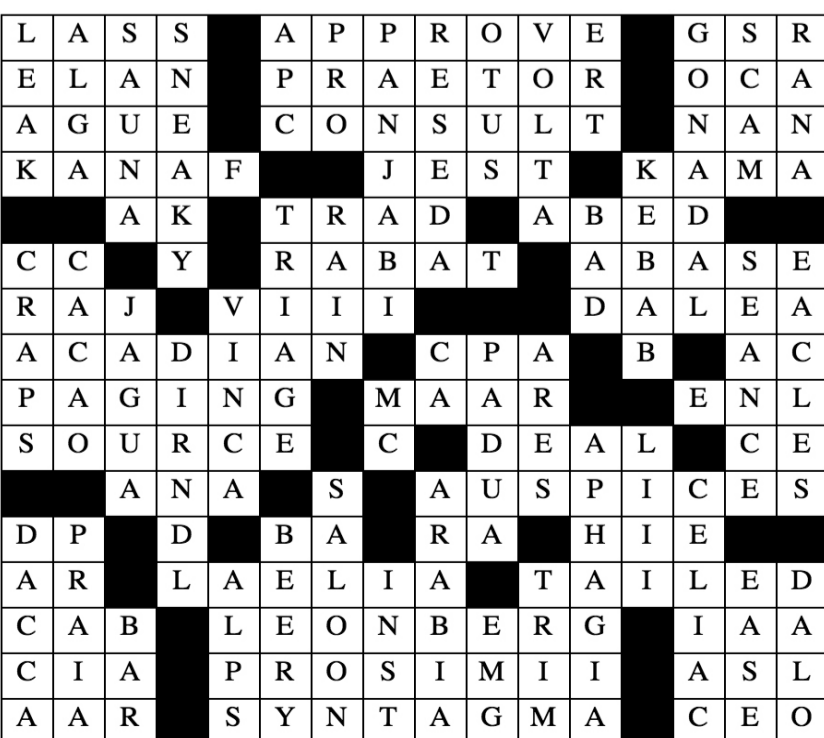
ACROSS

- 1. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
4. A gift or money given (as for service or out of benevolence).
12. The compass point that is one point south of due east.
15. The month following February and preceding April.
16. Excessively fastidious and easily disgusted.
17. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
18. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
19. Relating to or characteristic of cubism.
20. A master's degree in business.
21. Relating to the blood vessels or blood.
23. Any of various minerals consisting of hydrous silicates of aluminum or potassium etc. that crystallize in forms that allow perfect cleavage into very thin leaves.
25. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
26. Strong lightweight wood of the balsa tree used especially for floats.
28. Any of several sorghums cultivated as a source of syrup.
31. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
33. An intuitive awareness.
34. Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
37. A sock with a separation for the big toe.
39. (computer science) A measure of how dense information is packed on a storage medium.
42. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
43. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
45. Consisting of or made of wood of the oak tree.
48. A unit of luminous flux equal to the amount of light given out through a solid angle of 1 steradian by a point source of 1 candela intensity radiating uniformly in all directions.
49. The former capital and 2nd largest city of Brazil.
53. Lighted up by or as by fire or flame.
55. Jordan's port.
56. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
57. Carpenter bees.
59. North American republic containing 50 states -48 conterminous states in North America plus Alaska in northwest North America and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.
61. An informal conversation.
62. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
63. A branch of the Tai languages.
66. A legally binding command or decision entered on the court record (as if issued by a court or judge).
72. African mahogany trees.
74. Informal language consisting of words and expressions that are not considered appropriate for formal occasions.
76. A contagious skin infection caused by the itch mite.
77. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
78. Type genus of the Sciaenidae.
80. Made by polymerizing butadiene.
81. The compass point that is one point north of due west.
82. A diver who searches for molluscs containing pearls.
83. A primeval personification of air and breath.

DOWN

- 1. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
2. A quantity of no importance.
3. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
4. The scene of any event or action (especially the place of a meeting).
5. Separate by avulsion.
6. (informal) 'johnny' was applied as a nickname for Confederate soldiers by the Federal soldiers in the American Civil War.
7. Not to be placated or appeased or moved by entreaty.
8. Razor clams.
9. A situation comedy.
10. Minute blackish gregarious flies destructive to mushrooms and seedlings.
11. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
12. Any of various trees of the genus Ulmus.
13. A small cake leavened with yeast.
14. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
22. A crime syndicate in the United States.
24. The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.
27. A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
29. (Scottish) A narrow secluded valley (in the mountains).
30. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
32. Make more complex, intricate, or richer.
35. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
36. A large fleet.
38. Cooking by direct exposure to radiant heat (as over a fire or under a grill).
40. Music performed for dancing the polka.
41. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
44. Of or relating to Czechoslovakia or its people or their language.
46. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
47. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
50. Genus of North American plants with showy pealike flowers and an inflated pod.
51. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
52. Cosmopolitan genus of ferns.
54. Abounding in rocks or stones.
58. An awkward stupid person.
60. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
64. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
65. Earn on some commercial or business transaction.
67. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
68. A unit of weight used in east Asia approximately equal to 1.3 ounces.
69. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
70. An inflammatory disease involving the sebaceous glands of the skin.
71. A branch of the Tai languages.
73. Of southern Europe.
75. The compass point that is midway between north and northeast.
79. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A conflict between career obligations and home responsibilities could present itself today, Aries. You're likely to feel totally powerless in the situation, so it could cause you to feel irritable and be more snappish than usual.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Long-distance phone calls from people living in distant states could bring some rather disconcerting news your way. This might arouse some anger within you, and you might be tempted to take it out on the caller.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Nightmares that come your way today are likely to cause you to wake up feeling extremely angry for no tangible reason. You might want to take a close look at your dreams and try to analyze them so that you'll learn the source of your ire and how best to expunge it.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

A partner, either your life partner or a colleague, is likely to be in an irritable mood today, which you could find a bit upsetting. Bear in mind that this person's mood probably has little if anything to do with you, Cancer, or anything you've said or done.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Too many unfinished tasks or chores today might have you feeling pressured to get them done, creating unnecessary stress and strain. Pace yourself and don't panic if you have to let some of them go for today.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Emotional levels run high among members of a group you're affiliated with as disagreements turn into quarrels. Stay out of this, Virgo, it won't do you any good. Write down your impressions and share them with the others at another time when tempers have cooled down.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Pressures to get unfinished tasks completed and new ones begun cause emotions to run high. Everyone, yourself included, is likely to feel nervous and stressed out, and quarrels may break out.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Frustrated energy resulting from inability to put your plans into action could have your nerves on edge today, Scorpio, and you might be tempted to get into petty quarrels with those around you. Try to find alternative outlets for your energy so as to avoid this trap.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Overwork and the resulting stress and nerve strain might result in fevers or headaches today, Sagittarius. Therefore, it might be a good idea to start out the day pacing yourself and concentrating on whatever tasks are the most pressing.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

If you're involved in a class or if you find yourself in any kind of group activity or social situation, be prepared for quarrels to break out among the people there. You could find this extremely useless and counterproductive, and you might be tempted to try to break in and put a stop to it.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Frustration and upset with others in your circle could tempt you to go out and get rid of that energy by spending a lot of money. You might overindulge in food or drink, or you could give in to impulse buying.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

An increased level of irritability and frustration could tempt you to take it out on friends, children, or your significant other. You're probably feeling especially energetic, with little if any outlet for that energy, Pisces. On days like this you might want to consider jogging, going to the gym, or taking an aerobics class.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Weather

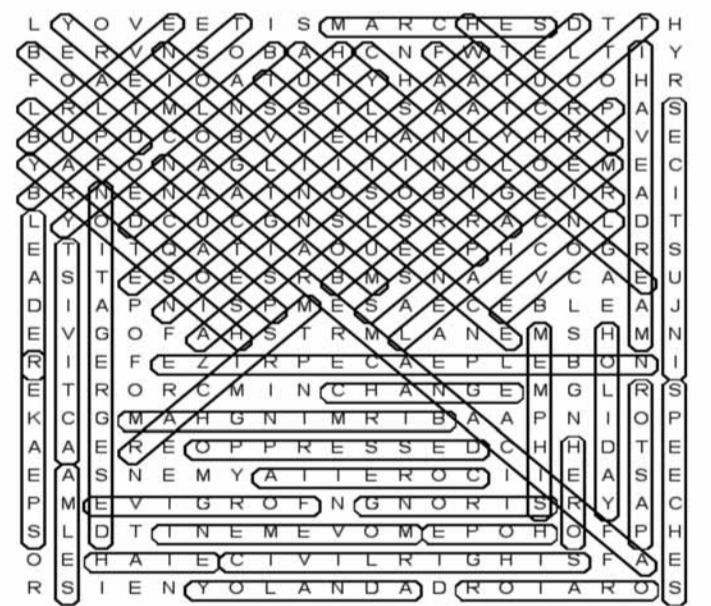
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional weather word.



- BAROMETER, BLIZZARD, CELSIUS, CLOUDS, COLD, CYCLONE, DOWNPOUR, DRIZZLE, DROUGHT, FAHRENHEIT, FLOOD, FLURRIES, FOG, FORECAST, FREEZE, FROST, HAIL, HOT, HUMIDITY, HURRICANE, ICE, LIGHTNING, MIST, MONSOON, OVERCAST, RAIN, SHOWER, SLEET, SNOW, SQUALL, STORM, SUNNY, TEMPERATURE, THERMOMETER, THUNDER, TORNADO, TSUNAMI, TYPHOON, VISIBILITY, WINDY

Yesterday's Solution

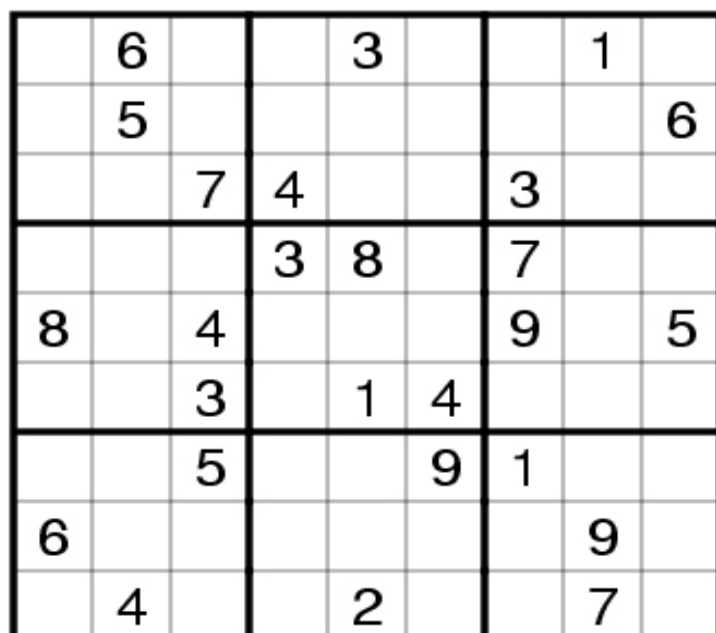
Martin Luther King Jr.



- ACTIVIST, AFRICAN AMERICAN, ASSASSINATED, ATLANTA, BALCONY, BAPTIST, BIRMINGHAM, BOLD, BRAVE, BUS BOYCOTT, CHALLENGE, CHANGE, CIVIL RIGHTS, CORETTA, DESEGREGATION, EQUALITY, FATHER, FORGIVE, HATE, HERO, HISTORY, HOLIDAY, HOPE, HUSBAND, I HAVE A DREAM, INJUSTICES, LEADER, LOVE, MARCHES, MEMPHIS, MICHAEL, MONTGOMERY, MOVEMENT, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, NON VIOLENCE, OPPRESSED, ORATOR, PASTOR, PEACEFUL, PROGRESS, PROTEST, RACISM, SELMA, SPEAKER, SPEECHES, STRONG, TRUTH, WASHINGTON, YOLANDA

Hidden sentence: Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into friend.

Daily SuDoku



very hard

Yesterday's Solution



medium

# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2020



Host US singer-songwriter Alicia Keys speaks about late NBA legend Kobe Bryant during the 62nd Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. — AFP



Mohamed Kamal, a 59-year-old dye worker, hangs dyed yarns out to dry in the sun at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop in the Egyptian capital Cairo's centuries old district of Darb Al-Ahmar. — AFP photos



Workers carry away dyed yarns at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop.



Salama Mahmoud Salama, an 83-year-old dye workshop owner and operator, works with his relatives at his traditional hand-dyeing workshop.



Workers dye yarns at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop.

## DYE WORKSHOP A COLORFUL DIP INTO OLD CAIRO CRAFT

In Cairo's centuries-old Darb Al-Ahmar district, Salama Mahmoud Salama's traditional dye workshop is a multi-coloured hive of workers busy with all kinds of fabrics. They lay out the long, flowing threads, to be used for everything from hand-made shoes to rugs and drapes, and dip them in large, hot color baths. They have no gloves or masks to protect them from the dyes and fumes. "We start by leveling the cotton out,

then immersing it in dye and adding salt to get the color right," 83-year-old Salama says one busy morning.

The workshop in Islamic Cairo has been going strong for almost 120 years. "We rinse the wet threads before flattening them out in an electric presser and then leave them out to dry," he adds. Of the 23 historic dye workshops that used to service the city, only a handful remain. While industrial dye factories usually work

with at least a ton of yarn at a time, Salama says he can color as little as half a kilogram (just over a pound).

His loyal clients come from all over Egypt, and even from Sudan and the United States. But he says competition from foreign products has hurt the homegrown textile industry. "In a popular store in Al-Azhar (in the heart of Islamic Cairo) a wool sweater sells for 200 pounds (\$12.60), but you can find something similar on the

street that's made in China for 30 pounds (\$1.90)." The rise in the dye prices globally has also taken a toll on the niche industry. To stay competitive, Salama has started using firewood instead of fuel to heat the baths. Still, he is optimistic about the future of his craft. "As long as people need clothes, this job will never die," he says with a glint in his eye. — AFP



Workers dye yarns in a vat at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop.



Workers dye yarns in a vat at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop.



A worker carries undyed yarns to be processed at a traditional hand-dyeing workshop.



Images for the late Nipsey Hussle and Kobe Bryant are projected onto a screen while YG, John Legend, Kirk Franklin, DJ Khaled, Meek Mill, and Roddy Ricch perform onstage during the 62nd Annual GRAMMY Awards. — AFP photos

# Billie Eilish dominates the Grammys as music world mourns Kobe



US singer-songwriter Billie Eilish (left) and Finneas O'Connell pose in the press room with the awards for Album Of The Year, Record Of The Year, Best New Artist, Song Of The Year and Best Pop Vocal Album during the 62nd Annual Grammy Awards.

Pop iconoclast Billie Eilish cleaned up at the Grammys on Sunday, winning five awards, as the music world mourned the loss of L.A.'s hometown basketball hero Kobe Bryant with a series of emotional tributes. Eilish, 18, swept the "big four" prizes—Album of the Year, Song of the Year, Record of the Year and Best New Artist—in an industry acknowledgment of her wave-making role as the new reference point for pop's future. "What's next? I don't know—be in this moment is all I'm thinking about," Eilish told reporters backstage.



Billie Eilish performs onstage.

Lizzo—one of her main competitors, who won three awards—kicked off the glitzy gala at the Staples Center by dedicating it to Bryant, in the very arena where the NBA icon made history with the Los Angeles Lakers. "Tonight is for Kobe," shouted the 31-year-old twerking flautist, hours after his death in a helicopter crash was confirmed. His 13-year-old daughter and seven others also died in the incident.

Lizzo then launched into an eye-popping medley performance of her top hits that set the tone for the night. She handed over to host Alicia Keys, who offered another love letter to Bryant's memory:

"We're all feeling crazy sadness right now. Earlier today, Los Angeles, America and the whole world lost a hero."

"And we're literally standing here heartbroken in the house that Kobe Bryant built," said Keys, before launching into a soulful rendition of "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye (To Yesterday)" with the group Boyz II Men. "He would want us to keep the vibrations high," Keys later said, before singing a humorous yet soothing opening monologue at the piano. A mushrooming crowd of people, many of them in tears, gathered near the arena to mourn the 41-year-old Bryant. Flags were flying at half-mast.

### 'Lift each other up'

But the show went on, with an understated performance from Eilish who thanked her fans and fellow nominee Ariana Grande—in accepting her haul of trophies. "Mainly I think the fans deserve everything," she said, standing alongside her brother Finneas O'Connell, who shared in her Grammy glory while also winning his own producing and engineering awards. "I feel like they have not been talked about enough tonight because they're the only reason any of us are here at all. So thanks to the fans." And she gave a shoutout to Grande, who despite five nominations went home empty-handed, saying that Grande's "thank u, next," had been a lifesaver for her. "I think it deserves more than anything in the world, I love you so much," Eilish said.

Lil Nas X took home two Grammys for his pop culture phenomenon "Old Town Road," while Lizzo won three out of her eight nominations. "This whole week, I'd be lost in my problems, stressed out—and then in an instant all of that can go away and your priorities really shift," the 31-year-old superstar said, alluding to Bryant's death. "Let's continue to reach



US rapper Lil Nas X (center) and South Korean boy band BTS perform onstage.



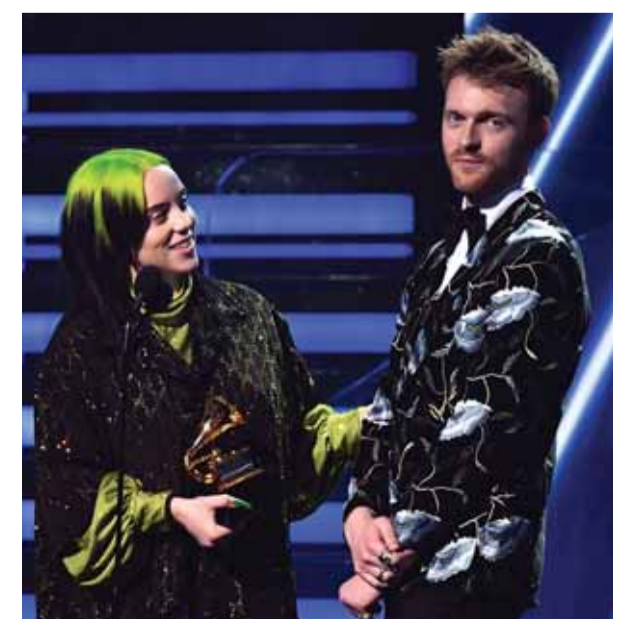
US rapper Lil Nas X poses in the press room with the awards for Best Music Video and Best Pop Duo/Group Performance.



US rapper Lil Nas X performs onstage.



(From left) YG, John Legend, Kirk Franklin and DJ Khaled perform onstage.



US singer-songwriter Billie Eilish (left) and brother US producer Finneas accept the award for Song Of The Year for 'Bad Guy'.

# Lifestyle | Awards



Dj Khaled poses in the press room with the award for Best Rap/Sung Performance.



US rapper Tyler, the Creator poses in the press room with the award for Best Rap Album for "Igor".



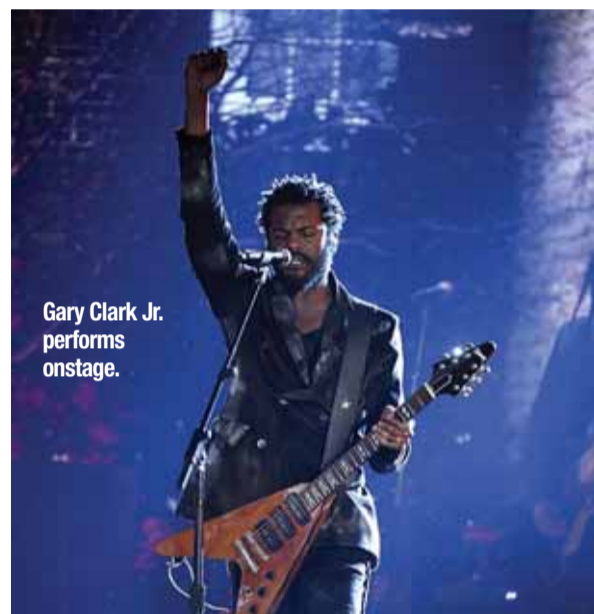
US musician Gary Clark Jr. poses in the press room for Best Rock Song, Best Rock Performance and Best Contemporary Blues Album.



US rock band Vampire Weekend accepts the award for Best Alternative Music Album for 'Father of the Bride'.



Rosalia performs onstage.



Gary Clark Jr. performs onstage.

### Backstage controversy

A message of love pervaded the night, particularly in light of Bryant's death and a moving all-star tribute to the late rapper Nipsey Hussle. That message overpowered the considerable pre-show backstage drama. Just days before the gala, the Recording Academy's suspended CEO Deborah Dugan—the first woman to lead the embattled institution behind the Grammys—filed an explosive discrimination complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

She says she was suspended after raising concerns over sexual harassment, voting irregularities and other misconduct within the Academy—one of music's most influential organizations, but one long accused of

favoritism and a lack of diversity. Dugan also alleged that her predecessor, Neil Portnow, had raped a foreign female musician—an allegation he has rejected as "ludicrous and untrue." The controversy went more or less unmentioned on Sunday, with only a few vague onstage allusions to the crisis.

### Stage on fire

Often remembered as much for its performances as its winners, the Grammys included a boudoir-inspired medley show from Grande, along with a rollicking genre-blending rendition of "Old Town Road" that featured K-pop sensation BTS, country star Billy Ray Cyrus and the eclectic DJ Diplo. Gary Clark Jr. who won three Grammys including best

rock song for his anti-racist "This Land," gave several showstopping performances, and his success was seen by many as an overdue recognition of black influence on rock.

Wearing a blond bowl-cut wig, Tyler, the Creator delivered an intriguing art-pop rap performance complete with stage-shaking camera work and pyrotechnics. Usher drove the crowd crazy in leading a tribute to the late legend Prince, performing songs including "Little Red Corvette," "When Doves Cry" and "Kiss." FKA Twigs joined him in lingerie to deliver a pole-dancing performance—and none other than Prince's protégée Sheila E was on the drums. — AFP



US musical duo Dan + Shay pose in the press room with the award for Best Country Duo/Group Performance.



Lizzo, winner of Best Pop Solo Performance, Best Traditional R&B Performance and Best Urban Contemporary Album, poses in the press room.



Danny Carey (left) and Justin Chancellor of Tool, pose in the press room with the award for Best Metal Performance for '7empest'.



US singer-songwriter Lizzo performs onstage.



Angelique Smith and Samiel Asghedom, mother and brother of the late rapper Nipsey Hussle, and Hit-Boy accept Best Rap Performance for 'Racks in the Middle' onstage.



Cuban singer Aymee Nuviola poses in the press room with the award for Best Tropical Latin Album for 'A Journey Through Cuban Music'.



US producer Finneas accepts the award for Producer of the Year, Non-Classical.



Video director Calmatic (second left), Saul Levitz (left), Candice Dragonas (second right) and Melissa Larsen pose in the press room with the award for Best Music Video for 'Old Town Road' (Lil Nas X and Billy Ray Cyrus).

## List of winners

**RECORD OF THE YEAR**  
Billie Eilish - Bad Guy

**ALBUM OF THE YEAR**  
Billie Eilish - When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?

**BEST NEW ARTIST**  
Billie Eilish

**BEST RAP/SUNG PERFORMANCE**  
DJ Khaled featuring Nipsey Hussle & John Legend - Higher

**SONG OF THE YEAR**  
Billie Eilish - Bad Guy

**BEST RAP ALBUM**  
Tyler, The Creator - Igor

**BEST COMEDY ALBUM**  
Dave Chappelle - Sticks & Stones

**BEST COUNTRY DUO / GROUP PERFORMANCE**  
Dan + Shay - Speechless

**POP SOLO PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR**  
Lizzo - Truth Hurts

**BEST POP DUO/GROUP PERFORMANCE**  
Lil Nas X featuring Billy Ray Cyrus - Old Town Road

**BEST POP VOCAL ALBUM**  
Billie Eilish - When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?

**BEST DANCE/ELECTRONIC ALBUM**  
The Chemical Brothers - No Geography

**BEST ROCK PERFORMANCE**  
Gary Clark Jr - This Land

**BEST ROCK SONG**  
Gary Clark Jr - This Land

**BEST METAL PERFORMANCE**  
Tool - 7empest

**BEST ROCK ALBUM**  
Cage The Elephant - Social Cues

**BEST ALTERNATIVE MUSIC ALBUM**  
Vampire Weekend - Father of the Bride

**BEST R&B PERFORMANCE**  
Anderson .Paak featuring Andre 3000 - Come Home

**BEST TRADITIONAL R&B ALBUM**  
Lizzo - Jerome

**BEST URBAN CONTEMPORARY ALBUM**  
Lizzo - Cuz I Love You (Deluxe)

**BEST R&B ALBUM**  
Anderson .Paak - Ventura

**BEST RAP PERFORMANCE**  
Nipsey Hussle featuring Roddy Ricch & Hit-Boy - Racks In The Middle

**BEST RAP SONG**  
21 Savage featuring J. Cole - A Lot

**BEST COUNTRY SOLO PERFORMANCE**  
Willie Nelson - Ride Me Back Home

**BEST COUNTRY SONG**  
Tanya Tucker - Bring My Flowers Now

**BEST COUNTRY ALBUM**  
Tanya Tucker - While I'm Livin'

**BEST LATIN POP ALBUM**  
Alejandro Sanz - #Eldisco

**BEST LATIN ROCK, URBAN OR ALTERNATIVE ALBUM**  
Rosalia - El Mal Querer

**BEST TROPICAL LATIN ALBUM**  
Marc Anthony - Opus (TIE)  
Aymee Nuviola - A Journey Through Cuban Music (TIE)

**PRODUCER OF THE YEAR, NON-CLASSICAL**  
Finneas

**BEST GOSPEL ALBUM**  
Kirk Franklin - Long Live Love

**BEST CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ALBUM for KING & COUNTRY -**  
Burn The Ships

**BEST COMPILATION SOUNDTRACK FOR VISUAL MEDIA**  
Lady Gaga & Bradley Cooper - A Star Is Born

**BEST WORLD MUSIC ALBUM**  
Angelique Kidjo, "Celia"

## Michelle Obama wins Grammy for best spoken word album

Lil Nas X, Lady Gaga, Beyonce and... Michelle Obama? Yep. The former first lady can now add Grammy winner to her resume, after snagging the award on music's biggest night for Best Spoken Word Album, for the audiobook of her memoir "Becoming." Her win on Sunday gives the Obama household its third Grammy: former president Barack Obama has already snagged two Grammys in the same category for his books.

She faced an eccentric group of rivals that

include Michael Diamond and Adam Horowitz of the Beastie Boys for "Beastie Boys Book" and John Waters, the director-performer known for his transgressive cult films, for "Mr. Know-It-All." Released in late 2018, "Becoming" saw the former first lady slam President Donald Trump for questioning her husband's citizenship and promoting the notion that he was born abroad.

"The whole [birther] thing was crazy and mean-spirited, of course, its underlying bigotry

and xenophobia hardly concealed," Obama wrote. America's first black first lady also dug into her personal life in her book, expounding on issues including a miscarriage, using in-vitro fertilization to conceive her daughters and marriage counseling. — AFP

In this file photo former US first lady Michelle Obama attends the United State of Women Summit at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. — AFP





File photos shows Cameroonian fashion designer Imane Ayissi acknowledges the audience at the end of the Women's Spring-Summer 2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show in Paris. — AFP photos



File photo shows Indian fashion designer Rahul Mishra acknowledges the audience at the end of the Women's Spring-Summer 2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show.

## First Indian and black African enter fashion's elite club



Models present creations by Imane Ayissi.

Rahul Mishra and Imane Ayissi made history Thursday by becoming the first Indian and black African designers to show their clothes on the elite Paris haute couture catwalk. Only a little more than a dozen of the world's most prestigious luxury labels—including Dior, Chanel and Givenchy—have a right to call their clothes haute couture. All the clothes must be handmade—and go on to sell for tens of thousands of euros (dollars) to some of the richest and most famous women in the world. Mishra, an advocate of ethical “slow fashion” who blames mechanisation for much of the world's ills, said “it felt amazing and very surreal to be the first Indian to be chosen.”

“They see a great future for us which will make us push ourselves even harder,” the 40-year-old told AFP after his debut show was cheered by fashionistas. Both Mishra and Cameroon-born Ayissi, 51, are champions of traditional fabrics and techniques from their homelands and are famous for their class lines.

### 'Immense' for Africa

Ayissi said his selection was “immense” both for Africa and himself. “I am so proud that I can show my work and showcase real African fabrics and African heritage,” he told AFP backstage as celebrities, including the chic head of Unesco, Audrey Azoulay, congratulated him. Mishra broke through on the Paris ready-to-wear scene after winning the International Woolmark Prize in 2014, the top award that also launched the careers of such greats as Karl Lagerfeld and Yves Saint Laurent.

The purity of his often white creations with their detailed but understated embroidery has won him many fans, including Vogue's legendary critic Suzy Menkes. The doyenne of fashion's front row called him an Indian “national treasure”. But this time, Mishra turned up the color palette somewhat with dresses that subtly evoked the jungle paradises and pristine underwater world off the Maldives he worries that one day we might lose.

### Delhi smoke dreams

Appalled by the smoke and pollution that meant he had to keep his four-year-old daughter indoors in Delhi for nearly 20 days in November, Mishra

said he imagined a “pure virginal and untamed planet... with ecosystems crafted out of embroidered flora and fauna”. “I am very emotional about it. Sometimes it makes me cry. All our children should be growing up in a better world,” he added. “When I take Aarna (his daughter) to the foothills of the Himalayas and the sky turns blue, she is so happy. “Once, when she saw the River Ganges, she said: ‘Can you please clean it for us so can go for a swim?’”

Mishra said he was reducing the quantity of clothes he was producing while at the same time increasing their quality, with humming birds, koalas and other animals hidden in the hundreds of hand worked embroidered leaves and flowers of his “jungle dresses”. The designer has won ethical and sustainability awards for his work supporting local crafts people in rural India. “My objective is to create jobs which help people in their own villages,” Mishra said. “If villages are stronger, you will have a stronger country, a stronger nation, and a stronger world,” he added.

### Making a stand

Ayissi takes a similar stand, refusing to use wax prints popular in West Africa which he dismisses as “colonial”. Dutch mills flooded Africa with cotton printed with colorful patterns borrowed from Indonesian batik in the 19th century, and still dominate the market. “When we talk about African fashion, it's always wax, which is a real pity,” he told AFP, “because it's killing our own African heritage.”

Ayissi, a former dancer who worked with singers such as Sting and Seal, told AFP he wanted to open up “a new path for Africa” and find an “alternative way of doing luxury fashion”. He has gone back to using prestigious local materials, like the strip fabric kente woven by the Akan people of Ghana and the Ivory Coast, which was originally worn only by nobles.

The son of an undefeated African boxing champ and a former Miss Cameroon, he also uses applied techniques from Benin and Ghana. Haute couture shows only take place in Paris and the criteria to enter and remain in fashion's elite club are strictly enforced by French law. — AFP



Models present creations by Rahul Mishra.

## France Michelin Guide overshadowed by shock downgrade

It is the annual event that has accomplished chefs quaking in their toques: Yesterday's 2020 edition of the Michelin restaurant guide for France reveals the winners and losers of its coveted ratings stars. This year's edition of the so-called gastronomy “bible” caused a stir even before its official release, when it was revealed Michelin has stripped renowned chef Paul Bocuse's flagship restaurant of one of its three stars.

The red guide, which can make or break culinary reputations, angered many in the industry by downgrading the iconic Auberge du Pont de Collonges—the oldest three-starred restaurant in the world created by Bocuse, nicknamed the “pope” of French cuisine. He died in 2018. But Michelin boss Gwendal Poullennec defended the move by insisting stars are not “inherited”, and “must be earned every year”. “We obviously understand the emotion that the loss of a star can provoke, but there is no exceptional treatment,” he told AFP.

“All establishments are evaluated anonymously by our inspectors every year... whether you are an iconic chef or a young chef who takes the risk of being plunged into debt by opening a restaurant,” Poullennec told AFP no other three-starred restaurants ran the risk of being downgraded in this year's guide.

According to Michelin, restaurants are selected on four criteria: the quality of the ingredients used, mastery of flavour and cooking techniques, the personality of the chef reflected in their cuisine, and lastly value for money and consistency between visits. One star denotes “high quality cooking”, two stars “excellent cooking”, and three stars “exceptional cuisine”.

### Cooking under pressure

Of 30,000 restaurants listed worldwide, only about 130 have attained the highest distinction. Critics say the process has rendered Michelin stars untenable as more and more diners balk at spending a fortune on a meal. A handful of

French restaurateurs have in recent years relinquished their prized three-star status because of the stress of being judged by Michelin inspectors. The 2003 suicide of three-star chef Bernard Loiseau was linked, among other reasons, to speculation that his restaurant was about to lose its three-star status.

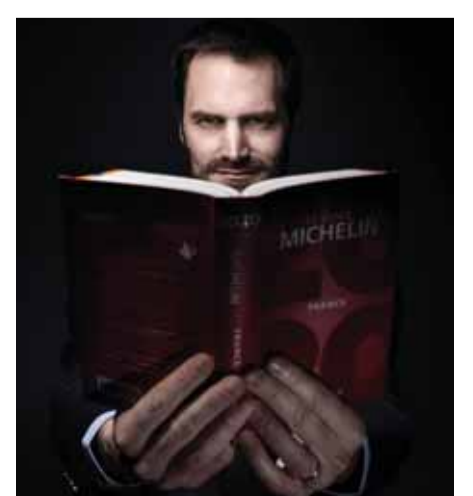
Last year, Michelin downgraded three three-starred restaurants: the Auberge de L'III in Alsace, which held the highest accolade for half a century, Pascal Barbot's Parisian restaurant l'Astrance, and Marc Veyrat's Alpine restaurant the Maison des Bois, which was awarded its third star just a year earlier. Veyrat sued the guide for suggesting—wrongly, he insists—that he had used cheddar cheese in a soufflé. His lawsuit was rejected.

### From France to Japan

The guide was born in a very different guise, when brothers Andre and Edouard Michelin, founders of the eponymous tyre company,

brought out a travel guide in 1900 to encourage motorists to take to the road and so boost business. There were fewer than 3,000 cars in France at the time. Initially free, the red guidebook included maps, a how-to on changing tyres and lists of petrol stops, mechanics, hotels and eateries along the route.

The first run of 35,000 copies was such a success that guides for Belgium, Germany, Portugal and Spain followed. The three-star ranking for restaurants was introduced in 1931. In 2005, the Michelin Guide branched out of Europe with a New York guide, followed in 2007 by editions for San Francisco then Las Vegas and Los Angeles. It moved to Asia with a Tokyo version in 2008 when 90,000 copies, in English and Japanese, flew off the shelves in 48 hours. More than 30 million Michelin Guides have been sold, according to its website. — AFP



Michelin guide international Director Gwendal Poullennec poses during a photo session. — AFP







Sports

# Aussie Leishman wins at Torrey Pines as Rahm, McIlroy denied

## Tiger Woods miss the green on his opening approach

**SAN DIEGO:** Australia's Marc Leishman fired eight birdies in a seven-under par 65 on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour title at Torrey Pines by one stroke from overnight leader Jon Rahm.

Leishman started the day four shots behind Spain's Rahm, but his storming run on Torrey Pines' South Course gave him a 15-under total of 273.

Rahm, meanwhile, fired a two-under 70 for 274, two shots in front of American Brandt Snedeker and Rory McIlroy — the Northern Ireland star who could have regained the world number one ranking with a victory.

"Playing well helps," said Leishman, who has come from behind in all five of his PGA Tour victories.

"I didn't actually hit it that well off the tee today, so I don't know what the knack is. Putting, always, you're not going to win tour events if you're not putting well."

"I putted probably as good as I've ever putted today," added Leishman, who had five birdies on the front nine.

He drained par-saving putts at the 12th and 14th, and rebounded from his only bogey of the day at 17 with a birdie at the last that proved enough for victory.

Leishman's victory came on Australia Day — also the same day that fellow Aussie Lucas Herbert claimed

his first pro victory at the Dubai Desert Classic.

McIlroy and Rahm struggled in the final group, Rahm playing his first five holes in four-over with two bogeys and a double-bogey.

An eagle and four of his five birdies on the back nine — including three birdies to end his round — weren't enough to compensate.

McIlroy, meanwhile, began bogey-bogey on the way to 69. Tiger Woods missed the green on his opening approach and began with a bogey but dropped his approach inches from the cup at the second to set up a birdie and added another tap-in birdie at the par-5 sixth to pull within three strokes of the lead.

The 15-time major champion finished with four birdies in a two-under 70 that left him tied for ninth on 279. He remains in search of a record 83rd career PGA Tour victory — having tied Sam Snead's mark at the Zozo Championship in Japan in October.

As he came off the course Woods learned of the death in a helicopter crash of Kobe Bryant — the NBA great who started his pro career the same year as Woods.

"People were yelling, 'Do it for Mamba.' Now I understand," Woods said. "Unbelievably sad." — AFP



**SAN DIEGO:** Marc Leishman of Australia poses with the Torrey Pines trophy after winning the final round of the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines South in San Diego, California. — AFP

## Playoff push ramps up as NHL returns to action

**ST LOUIS:** The NHL playoff race can turn upside down during the stretch run, as the St. Louis Blues proved last season. The Blues rallied from last place in the league in January to reach the playoffs and rolled through four postseason rounds to win the Stanley Cup. That run provides fuel for this season's race, which still includes most of the league.

"With the Blues, they found their groove and they kept going last year and rode that wave," said Toronto Maple Leafs forward Mitch Marner, whose team sat four points out of the playoffs entering this season's All-Star break. "We need to find that groove and keep pushing. The teams right behind us and right in front of us are doing the same thing."

Only the Detroit Red Wings, New Jersey Devils and Ottawa Senators are out of the Eastern Conference race. Only the Anaheim Ducks and Los Angeles Kings appear to be done in the Western Conference, though the San Jose Sharks are sinking fast.

Otherwise, postseason berths are up for grabs for teams that can gain traction and sustain it into April.

For instance, the surprising Columbus Blue Jackets won six consecutive games coming into the All-Star break. They currently sit in the first wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

"We're coming together pretty nicely," Blue Jackets defenseman Seth Jones aid. "I think we were playing pretty good hockey earlier in the year and we weren't getting the results. As of late, really the past eight weeks, we really came into our own."

In the Metropolitan Division, the second-place Pittsburgh Penguins and sixth-place Philadelphia Flyers are separated by just seven points. In the Pacific Division, the top five teams are separated by just one



**ST LOUIS:** Ryan O'Reilly #90, Alex Pietrangolo #27, David Perron #57 and Jordan Binnington #50 of the St. Louis Blues pose for photos prior to the 2020 Honda NHL All-Star Game at Enterprise Center in St Louis, Missouri. — AFP

point. The Vancouver Canucks lead the division, but the Edmonton Oilers, Calgary Flames, Arizona Coyotes and Vegas Golden Knights are right behind them.

"We've been there at the top for a while now," Coyotes coach Rick Tocchet said. "Now we're in a situation if we have a bad week, we could be in fifth place. There are 31 games left and it's all downhill. We have some young guys, I think they understand it's going to be hard. If you think it's hard now, it's going to be really hard." Head-to-head games will decide the divisional races. "You know what happens at the end of the year, everybody starts playing each other, so that heightens it even more," Flames defenseman Mark Giordano said. "The divisional games, the head-to-heads if you can win them in regulation, it does a lot for you. Those are emotional games. You've got to be able to control your emotions, be disciplined."

Last season, the Flames were the anti-Blues. They dominated their side of the league for much of the season, then faded late and took a quick exit from the playoffs. "It's about putting it together at the right time," Giordano said. "I feel like last year we had a great start and an unbelievable first half and sort of lost that confidence that we had down the stretch and it carried over in the playoffs. So hopefully this year is a complete opposite."

Winning the big head-to-head games, as the Blues did a year ago, can solidify a team for the postseason grind. "It's going to be a fight to the end," Golden Knights winger Max Pacioretty said. "We're expecting these last 30 games to be really intense, but on the bright side, if you're able to get in, if you're able to get through these games, that should prepare you for the playoffs." — Reuters

## Tokyo 2020 to power Olympic torch with hydrogen

**TOKYO:** Hydrogen will be used for the first time to power the Olympic torch during its journey through Japan, organisers said yesterday, as part of Tokyo 2020's efforts to hold an environmentally friendly Games.

Organisers aim to offset all carbon emissions generated during the Games and also use the Olympics to boost awareness of environmental issues in Japan. The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee said certain stages of the torch relay will use hydrogen, which emits no carbon dioxide when it is burned, and it will also fuel the ceremonial Olympic Cauldron featuring in the Games' opening and closing ceremonies.

Hydrogen will be used to power the torch on its journey through the prefectures of Fukushima and Aichi, as well as parts of Tokyo, with gas used in other stages of the relay. "During its preparations for the Games, Tokyo 2020 has consistently promoted energy conservation and the use of renewable energy with the aim of supporting the realisation of a carbon-neutral society," the organisers said in a statement.

About 500 hydrogen-powered fuel cell vehicles will also be used during the Olympics, which run from July 24 to Aug 9. Other initiatives to cut the environmental impact of the Games include beds made from recyclable cardboard in the athletes' village, Olympic medals made from recycled consumer electronics and the torches themselves, formed of aluminium waste. The torch relay begins in Fukushima on March 26 and will visit all 47 of Japan's prefectures ahead of the July 24 opening ceremony. — Reuters

## Klopp insists no first-teamers will play in Cup replay

**SHREWSBURY:** Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp says no first-team players will be involved in their FA Cup fourth-round replay with third-tier Shrewsbury Town next month because it clashes with the inaugural Premier League break.

Klopp's much-changed side were forced to a replay by third-tier Shrewsbury on Sunday as they let slip a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 in a pulsating tie at New Meadow. He has never taken Liverpool into the fifth round of the FA Cup since arriving in October 2015, but now appears ready to sacrifice the chance of ending that poor record.

Shrewsbury's players and fans celebrated wildly at the prospect of a trip to Anfield, but Klopp was not amused. The new Premier League winter break means all clubs will have a blank weekend. Liverpool, who lead the table by a massive 16 points, would have had no league game between facing Southampton on Feb. 1 and Norwich City on Feb. 15.

Now they will host Shrewsbury in the week beginning Feb 3. "In April 2019, we got a letter from the Premier League where they asked us to respect the winter break, not to organise friendlies and not to organise competitive games in respect of it," Klopp told reporters. "I have said to the boys already, two weeks ago, that we will have a winter break, so it means we will not be there — it will be the kids who play that game because they cannot deal with us like nobody cares about it. I know it is not very popular, but that's the way I see it. The Premier League asked us to respect the winter break and that's what we'll do. If then the FA do not respect it then we cannot change. But we will not be there." Klopp also confirmed that Liverpool's under 23s coach Neil Critchley would manage the team in that game. Critchley took charge of the League Cup quarter-final tie against Aston Villa this season when Liverpool's first team squad were in Qatar for FIFA's World Club Cup. Villa won 5-0. — Reuters



**MONACO:** Toyota Hyundai i20 WRC France's Sebastien Loeb reacts on podium after the 88th Monte-Carlo Rally, the inaugural race of the 2020 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), in Monaco on January 26, 2020. — AFP

## Hyundai bring Breen in for Loeb in Sweden

**PARIS:** Sebastien Loeb has been dropped from the Hyundai lineup for the second round of the World Rally Championship in Sweden on February 13-16, the team announced yesterday. Hyundai had originally named the 45-year-old Frenchman as one of their drivers but have replaced him with Irishman Craig Breen.

Estonian Ott Tanak, who is reigning world champion, and Belgian Thierry Neuville will drive the other two cars. "We have taken the decision to add Craig to our line-up for Rally Sweden alongside Thierry and Ott in a bid to field the most competitive package possible for the event with the best available options for road position," said Team Principal Andrea Adamo.

"We opted to bring in Craig based on his performance in Sweden in 2018 when he finished in second place, and the potential he showed in our i20 Coupe WRC last season."

As in 2019, Loeb has agreed to lineup in six races with Hyundai this season. He finished sixth in the season-opening Monte Carlo Rally as Neuville won while Tanak crashed out. The Swedish rally is in doubt because of adverse weather conditions.

"We have been forced to postpone our planned pre-event test in Sweden, due to take place this week, because of a lack of snow and ice currently in the region," Hyundai said. — AFP

## Jackson's two TD passes lead AFC past NFC, 38-33

**ORLANDO:** Lamar Jackson threw two touchdown passes, Deshaun Watson and Ryan Tannehill passed for one touchdown apiece, and the AFC held on for a 38-33 win over the NFC on Sunday afternoon at the Pro Bowl in Orlando, Fla.

Jackson led all signal-callers with 185 passing yards to help the AFC win its fourth consecutive Pro Bowl since the game returned to a head-to-head conference format. T.J. Watt provided a defensive highlight for the AFC when he returned a fumble 82 yards for a touchdown.

Kirk Cousins came off the bench to lead the NFC with 181 passing yards and a pair of touchdowns. He followed Russell Wilson and Drew Brees, who threw for one touchdown apiece but each fell short of 100 passing yards.

Jackson was named as the Pro Bowl's offensive MVP, while Calais Campbell was named as defensive MVP. Mark Andrews, DJ Chark Jr., Jack Doyle and Andre Roberts each hauled in touchdown catches for the AFC.

Davante Adams had two touchdown catches to lead the NFC. Michael Thomas and Amari Cooper also had touchdown receptions in a losing effort. The AFC built a 24-14 halftime lead but slipped behind 27-24 in the third quarter after back-to-back NFC touchdowns. Tannehill completed a 60-yard touchdown strike to Chark to put the AFC back on top for good.

The NFC tried a Pro Bowl experimental rule after pulling within five points late in the fourth quarter. Instead of trying an onside kick, the NFC opted to start on its own 25-yard line for a 4th-and-15 play.

The decision did not pay off as Cousins' long pass attempt was intercepted by the Baltimore Ravens' Earl Thomas. The game kicked off shortly after news spread of Kobe Bryant's death in a helicopter crash. The NFL honored Bryant with a moment of silence before kickoff, and players paid tribute to him during the game.

Packers linebacker Za'Darius Smith gathered several NFC teammates for a Bryant tribute after a fumble recovery. The players mimicked Bryant's famous fadeaway jump shot. "It is heartbreaking," the Texans' Watson said during a sideline interview with ESPN. "For us to find out in the locker room before we came out, a lot of guys were just very emotional." — Reuters



Sports

# England beat South Africa by 191 runs to take series 3-1

## England complete task with a day to spare

**JOHANNESBURG:** England bowled South Africa out for 274 runs yesterday to win the fourth test at The Wanderers by 191 runs and ensure an emphatic 3-1 series victory. Mark Wood took four wickets as the home team crumbled in the evening session after threatening to offer stoic resistance earlier in the day.

England completed the task with a day to spare with South Africa falling well short of their 466 run target in what would have been the highest fourth innings test chase. The success is a massive boost for a young English team who overcame several obstacles on a tough tour and calms questions over Joe Root's captaincy.

"It took a lot to pick ourselves up after losing the first test and that's been extremely pleasing. It's taken a big effort from every one and it's a very exciting time for English cricket," said Root as he took the series trophy. For South Africa it marked a 108-year low as they lost for the eighth time in their last nine tests for their worst run since 10 defeats in 11 tests between 1910 and 1912. Wood took 4-54 — finishing with nine wickets in the game — and Stuart Broad and Ben Stokes added two more for England as they took the last six South African wickets for 39 runs.

The home team were facing a near impossible target of 466 and provided a flicker of resistance but lost wickets at crucial intervals. "England were better than us in every department with both ball and bat," said home skipper Faf du Plessis.

"We have to give them credit for being the better team." Rassie van der Dussen scored 98, falling agonis-

ingly short of a maiden test century, before being tricked into offering an easy catch, just five balls after Du Plessis had been bowled by Stokes for 35.

Their 92-run partnership for the third wicket kept alive unlikely home hopes after South Africa were 90-2 at lunch. Quinton de Kock hit another swashbuckling knock, but by the time he fell for 39 runs, with eight wickets down, the contest was already over.

Van der Dussen was given out leg before wicket to Chris Woakes with just the third ball he faced on Monday and almost ran out of time as he dithered over whether to review, but then won a reprieve as the ball was shown to be missing the wickets.

He took advantage to hit 15 fours and two sixes in a boundary-filled innings and will be livid with the way he went out, essentially ending hopes of fairytale for both himself and his team. — Reuters

### SCOREBOARD

England beat South Africa by 191 runs on the fourth day of the fourth and final Test at the Wanderers Stadium yesterday.

**England 400 and 248**

**South Africa 183 and 274** (H. van der Dussen 98; M. Wood 4-54).

**Result:** England won by 191 runs.

**Series:** England won 3-1.

**Toss:** England.



**JOHANNESBURG:** England's captain Joe Root (back row C) holds the Basil D'Oliviera Test series trophy with the England cricket team at the end of the fourth day of the fourth Test cricket match between South Africa and England at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg yesterday. — AFP

## Williams century gives Zimbabwe upper hand against S Lanka

**HARARE:** A fine second Test century by Sean Williams enabled Zimbabwe to dominate the opening day of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Harare yesterday, as they reached 352 for six at the close.

The Zimbabwe captain, who won the toss and chose to bat first, made 107 from 137 balls, an innings which swung between the swashbuckling, with 10 fours and three sixes, and the pragmatic.

He was well backed up by Brendan Taylor who made a run-a-ball 62 and Sikandar Raza who hit two sixes and four fours in his 72.

Looking to bounce back from last week's 10-wicket defeat at the same venue in the first Test, Zimbabwe pressed on in the evening with Regis Chakabva on 31 and debutant Tinotenda Mutombodzi on 10.

After the early losses of Prince Masvare and Craig Ervine, Taylor began the counter-attack, hitting 10 fours and one six over long-off from left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya in his brisk knock.

Taylor scored the lion's share of the runs in a 65-run partnership with opener Kevin Kasuza who played in spite of being 'substituted' for the second innings in last week's first Test after being hit on the head while fielding at short leg. Kasuza batted through the morning before losing his off stump to Suranga Lakmal for 38.

Lakmal, who bowled superbly in the first Test, produced another fine delivery to remove Taylor, nipping one back to peg him leg before.

Williams began swiftly galloping to 36 from just 36 balls. He slowed slightly to reach his third Test half-century and found a handy partner in Raza.

Together they added 159 for the fifth wicket as the



**HARARE:** Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza (R) plays a shot during the first day of the second Test cricket match between Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka at the Harare Sports Club in Harare yesterday. — AFP

Sri Lankans struggled to plug the gaps in the field. The breakthrough came when Raza, on 72, miscued a pull off Embuldeniya and drolled a catch to Angelo Mathews at long-on.

Williams went on to bring up his second Test century — his first was against New Zealand in Bulawayo four years ago — by sweeping Embuldeniya for four.

He gave it away in the next over, however, when he attempted to slog a straight ball from Dhananjaya de Silva over midwicket and was bowled.

Sri Lanka took the new ball immediately but were unable to make further inroads as Chakabva and

Mutombodzi batted watchfully through to the close.

The visitors had begun the day well with Lahiru Kumara finding the edge of Masvare's bat for nine before Irvine nudged De Silva to short leg where Oshada Fernando snapped up a sharp catch.

Zimbabwe made two changes to the side that lost the first Test with Carl Mumba replacing the injured Kyle Jarvis and all-rounder Mutombodzi, who bowls leg-spin, coming in for his Test debut ahead of Ainsley Ndlovu. Sri Lanka made one change with left-arm pace bowler Vishwa Fernando coming in for Kasun Rajitha. Sri Lanka lead the two-Test series 1-0. — AFP

## Real Madrid go top with gritty win over Valladolid

**VALLADOLID:** Real Madrid moved top of La Liga for the first time since October on Sunday after grinding out a 1-0 win away at Real Valladolid to make Barcelona pay for their surprise defeat to Valencia.

It is 16 weeks since Madrid last finished a round top of the pile and it looked like a scrappy contest as the Jose Zorilla would end goalless until Nacho headed in the winner with 12 minutes remaining. Victory means Zinedine Zidane's side pull three points ahead of Barca, whose 2-0 loss away at the Mestalla on Saturday under new coach Quique Setien could prove a turning point in a nip-and-tuck title race.

Madrid now have the luxury of hosting their struggling city rivals Atletico Madrid, who are 10 points back after a goalless home draw with Leganes earlier on Sunday, with a cushion next weekend, not to mention on the back of a 19-game unbeaten run.

That streak included them drawing a game they arguably should have won at Camp Nou in December and then lifting the Spanish Super Cup earlier this month in Saudi Arabia. As Barcelona pursue a more entertaining style of football under Setien, Madrid march on, gaining momentum with wins that based largely on solidity and a stubborn defence. Their form has been even more impressive given the absence of key players, with Eden Hazard, Karim Benzema and Gareth Bale starting only four times together this season.

Real Valladolid, who are owned by the former Brazil and Real Madrid striker Ronaldo, are being drawn into a relegation fight after winning only one of their last 12. They stay 16th, five points above the bottom three.

Valladolid's Joaquin Fernandez was lucky not to be sent off early on for a two-footed challenge on Rodrygo, which only earned him a yellow card, despite the protests of



**VALLADOLID:** Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Rodrygo (L) vies with Real Valladolid's Ghanaian defender Mohammed Salisu during the Spanish league football match Real Valladolid FC against Real Madrid CF at the Jose Zorilla stadium in Valladolid. — AFP

Madrid's players.

Casemiro thought he had scored when he nodded in at the back post but VAR showed him to have been just off-side and Valladolid arguably finished the first half the stronger. Thibaut Courtois made a good save to deny Michel and then had to backpeddle to prevent Raul Garcia's cross dropping in under his crossbar.

After a scrappy opening 45 minutes, Madrid improved in the second period as the lively Rodrygo tested Jordi Masip and Benzema twice should have scored. First, he failed to volley in an excellent Isco cross from close range and then rose high to meet Rodrygo's delivery but headed wide of the post.

Valladolid were retreating and, in the 78th minute, Madrid struck. Toni Kroos' corner was cleared back out to him and at the second time of asking, he picked out Nacho, who diverted a smart header into the far corner. Nacho ran over to Zidane on the touchline to hug his coach. There was a late siege as Valladolid came again in the final minutes, the stadium erupting after Sergi Guardiola tapped in at the back post. But his outstretched right foot was off-side, and Madrid breathed a sigh of relief. — AFP

## Neymar dedicates goal to Bryant as PSG go 10 pts clear

**PARIS:** Neymar dedicated his second goal in Paris Saint-Germain's 2-0 win at Lille to basketball legend Kobe Bryant, whose death in a helicopter crash earlier on Sunday shocked the world, as his double shot the French champions 10 points clear at the top of Ligue 1.

The world's most expensive player slotted home the 52nd-minute penalty and went over to television cameras by the side of the Stade Pierre Mauroy pitch to make the number 24 with his fingers in honour of Bryant's shirt number.

"It's deeply saddening for the world of sport and for all of us," said Neymar to Canal+ after the win, which put PSG 10 points clear at the top of the league. "Not just for basketball fans, but for everything he did for sport."

He had already put his side ahead with a fine strike in the first half before putting the game out of reach and increasing the gap between them and second-placed Marseille. His 12th league goal of the season tipped the balance in the Parisians' favour after a positive start for the home side, who were unbeaten at home ahead of the match.

The Brazilian almost immediately slipped through Mbappe but the onrushing Mike Maignan stopped the France World Cup winner from clinching his 14th top-flight effort of the campaign. Mbappe was stopped again by Maignan when he got his body in the way of a fierce close-range effort, but the away side were given a penalty soon after for a clear Gabriel handball just before the forward's shot.

Neymar squeezed his spot-kick just beyond Maignan, who got his hand to the shot but looked on in horror as it made its way in off the post. "We deserved to win, I think we played well," said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel.

"We controlled the match and counter-attacks and this is not easy to do against a good team like Lille." Lille stay seventh after the defeat, two points away from the European places.

Neymar's tribute came on what was already an emotional day in French football, with Nantes and Bordeaux also honouring their former striker Emiliano Sala, a year after his death in a plane crash. The clubs remembered Argentine forward Sala before the Derby de l'Atlantique at the Stade de la Beaujoire.

Bordeaux won 1-0 courtesy of a late goal by Jimmy Briand as Nantes played most the second half with 10 men after the dismissal of Andrei Grotto. The 28-year-old Sala was killed last January when the small plane taking him to join Cardiff City after being bought from Nantes for £15 million (\$19.5 million) crashed off the Channel island of Guernsey.

Nantes wore a special white and pale blue shirt inspired by Argentina while Bordeaux's kit featured an Argentine flag beneath the club crest flanked by the player's initials. Proceeds from the sales of the strips will go to the two Argentine clubs Sala played for in his youth. A portrait of Sala was also displayed in the centre circle during the warm-up and there was a minute's applause ahead of kick-off. Supporters laid flowers outside the ground and broke out into a song commemorating Sala in the ninth minute, representing the shirt number worn by the player which has since been retired by Nantes.

Sala left his homeland to join Bordeaux in 2012 and then played for Nantes between 2015 and 2019. Earlier Karl Toko Ekambi scored on his Lyon debut Sunday in a 3-0 victory over bottom club Toulouse.

Cameroon striker Toko Ekambi, who joined on loan this week from Villarreal until the end of the season, sealed the win six minutes later as Lyon climbed up to fifth in Ligue 1.

Toko Ekambi came on as a first-half substitute after a scary incident involving France Under-21 forward Martin Terrier. Terrier was stretched off after fainting on the pitch, but Lyon said at half-time the player had regained consciousness. — AFP

## Pakistan, Bangladesh Twenty20 rained off

**LAHORE:** The third Twenty20 international between Pakistan and Bangladesh was abandoned without a ball being bowled yesterday because of bad weather in Lahore, giving the home side a 2-0 series victory.

Murky conditions and drizzle delayed the scheduled 13:00 pm (0830 GMT) toss at the Gaddafi stadium pitch, but play was called off three hours later. Pakistan won the first match by five wickets on Friday and the second by nine wickets the next day.

The series win helped Pakistan hang on to their number one ranking in Twenty20 internationals with 270 points, leading Australia by just one point. Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said the series win will help the team's confidence.

"Our bowling was outstanding in both the games... helped us keep them down to low totals," said Babar who lost 2-0 in Australia last year in his first series as skipper. Bangladesh skipper Mahmudullah said the loss was disappointing.

"Before the series we knew that Pakistan will be favourites because they are world number one and we are nine. "We managed to put a good fight in the first match, but in the second match they won convincingly because they have a good bowling side."

Bangladesh will fly out late yesterday but return on February 5 to play the first of two Tests, in Rawalpindi. They play a one-day international on April 3 in Karachi, and the second Test starting April 7. — AFP

**25** Aussie Leishman wins at Torrey Pines as Rahm, McIlroy denied



**26** Bryant's death leaves sports world stunned



**27** England beat South Africa by 191 runs to take series 3-1



## Nadal settles Kyrgios score

Vintage Wawrinka upsets Medvedev



MELBOURNE: Spain's Rafael Nadal hits a return against Australia's Nick Kyrgios during their men's singles match on day eight of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne yesterday. — AFP

MELBOURNE: Rafael Nadal won a grudge match with Nick Kyrgios to reach the Australian Open quarter-finals and keep the heat on Roger Federer's record for Grand Slam titles yesterday. The world number one, labelled "super salty" by Kyrgios after he criticised the Australian's behaviour last year, fought off a furious challenge to go through 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4).

As the tennis world mourned the death of Kobe Bryant, Kyrgios arrived at Rod Laver Arena wearing an LA Lakers shirt, and 15-year-old Coco Gauff had tributes to the basketball great scrawled on her trainers during the doubles. There was also controversy as Australia's Margaret Court, often criticised for her deeply conservative views, was honoured for her 1970 calendar-year Grand Slam. Nadal and Kyrgios had been feuding after some bad-tempered matches but the Spaniard said he was impressed by what he'd seen from the often-temperamental Australian at this tournament.

Kyrgios fought back to challenge Nadal in a high-

octane clash played in good spirit, with a polite handshake afterwards — a far cry from some of their previous exchanges. "When he is playing like today with this positive attitude he gives a lot of positive things to our sport," said the Spaniard.

"He's one of the highest talents we have on our tour and I like the Nick Kyrgios during the whole of this tournament." The 19-time Grand Slam winner will next play Austria's Dominic Thiem — his victim in the last two French Open finals — as the clay king targets Federer's all-time record of 20 Major titles.

Elsewhere, powerful Swiss Stan Wawrinka beat fifth seed Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 2-6, 4-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-2 to set up a quarter-final with Germany's Alexander Zverev, who overcame close friend Andrey Rublev 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. And Simona Halep rose to number two in the world with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Elise Mertens, taking a big step forward in a rapidly clearing women's draw.

The Wimbledon champion from Romania, who

avoided an exodus of top seeds in the previous round, will next play Estonia's Anett Kontaveit, a 6-7 (4/7), 7-5, 7-5 winner against Iga Swiatek of Poland.

"She's strong. I'm here just to face any challenge I have. So I'm not thinking negative," Halep said of Kontaveit. "I just want to go there and to give my best." Angelique Kerber, the 2016 champion, was the latest big name to fall as she went down to Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/4), 6-2.

Pavlyuchenkova's quarter-final will be against Garbine Muguruza, the two-time Grand Slam champion who is resurgent since reuniting with coach Conchita Martinez, beating Kiki Bertens 6-3, 6-3. "It's like couples, we all want Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston to get back together, right?" joked Martinez, the 1994 Wimbledon champion.

Earlier, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe were among the big names to criticise Court, the 24-time Major-winner whose 1970 sweep of the Grand Slam

titles was marked with a short ceremony at Rod Laver Arena. Navratilova said the devout Christian's deeply conservative views were "actually hurting people", while fellow American legend McEnroe called Court a "crazy aunt".

The Australian once praised South Africa's apartheid system, said "tennis is full of lesbians" and described transgender children as "the work of the devil". "There's only one thing longer than the list of Margaret Court's achievements: it's her list of offensive and homophobic statements," McEnroe said in a video for Eurosport.

In the quarter-finals, six-time champion Roger Federer will play America's Tenny's Sandgren and title-holder Novak Djokovic, going for his eighth title, is against big-serving Canadian Milos Raonic.

Australia's women's world number one Ashleigh Barty plays two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova, and Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, the top-ranked player from Africa, takes on America's Sofia Kenin. — AFP

## Pelicans get first win with Zion

NEW ORLEANS: Zion Williamson had his first double-double as an NBA player, and the New Orleans Pelicans won for the first time with him in the lineup, 123-108 over the visiting Boston Celtics on Sunday. Williams, the top pick in the 2019 NBA draft, had 21 points and 11 rebounds in his third game after preseason knee surgery. Jrue Holiday scored a team-high 25 points, and Derrick Favors added 15 points and 10 rebounds. Lonzo Ball added a career-high 15 assists to go with eight points. All-Star guard Kemba Walker led the Celtics with 35 points, Gordon Hayward scored 23, and Jaylen Brown, returning from a two-game absence due to an ankle injury, added 20. Before the singing of the national anthem, the Pelicans held a 24-second moment of silence in honor of former Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who died along with one of his daughters, Gianna, and seven others in a helicopter crash near Los Angeles on Sunday morning. When the game began, the teams followed the lead of the Spurs and Raptors earlier in the day by dribbling out the shot clock in Bryant's honor on their first possessions.

**PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS 139 - INDIANA PACERS 129**

Damian Lillard continued his scoring spree with 50 points, matched his season high of 13 assists and grabbed six rebounds to lead Portland past visiting Indiana. Lillard made 14 of 23 shots from the field — including 8 of 12 from 3-point range — to become the first player in franchise history to record three straight efforts of 40 points or more. CJ McCollum scored 28 points and made six 3-pointers for the Trail Blazers after missing the previous three games because of an ankle injury. Jeremy Lamb

scored 28 points and Domantas Sabonis had 27 points, 14 rebounds and a career-best 11 assists for the Pacers, who lost for just the second time in their past nine games. Indiana dropped its 11th straight game at Portland.

**ATLANTA HAWKS 152 - WASHINGTON WIZARDS 133**

Trae Young responded in an emotional way to the reported death of Kobe Bryant by producing 45 points and 14 assists to help Atlanta defeat visiting Washington Sunday. Young began the game wearing No. 8, Bryant's original jersey number, before changing into his usual No. 11. Young wore Bryant's No. 24 on the back of his shoes. It was the eighth time this season Young has scored 40-plus points. He was 13 of 24 from the floor, 13 of 16 from the line and had six rebounds. Five other players scored in double figures: De'Andre Hunter with 25, Kevin Huerter with 18, John Collins with 16, Bruno Fernando with 14 and Cam Reddish with 13. Fernando had 12 rebounds. Bradley Beal had 40 points and six assists for Washington, which had six other players score in double figures. Troy Brown Jr. finished with 19 points.

**LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS 112 - ORLANDO MAGIC 97**

Kawhi Leonard scored 31 points and grabbed 14 rebounds, and Landry Shamet and Montrezl Harrell added 19 points each as Los Angeles used a third-quarter charge to notch the road victory. Lou Williams scored 15 points as the Clippers improved to 4-1 on their season-long six game road trip. Leonard extended his career-long streak of 30-point games to eight. Michael Carter-Williams scored 15 points as the Magic lost their third consecutive game and fell for the fifth time in their past six games. Orlando lost twice to the Clippers during that stretch, falling 122-95 at Los Angeles on Dec. 16.

**NEW YORK KNICKS 110 - BROOKLYN NETS 97**

Reggie Bullock fueled a decisive third-quarter run by hitting back-to-back 3-pointers — including the basket

that gave New York the lead for good — in its victory against visiting Brooklyn. Julius Randle had 22 points and 15 rebounds as the Knicks won for just the third time in 13 games. Marcus Morris Sr. scored 21 points, Taj Gibson scored 11 points and Bullock added 10 points. Mitchell Robinson (12 points) and Frank Ntilikina (11 points) each scored double digits off the bench. Spencer Dinwiddie scored 23 points for the Nets, who have lost six of seven and are 3-14 since Christmas. Taurean Prince had 14 points while Rodions Kurucs scored 12 points. Joe Harris and Garrett Temple added 11 points apiece.

**DENVER NUGGETS 117 - HOUSTON ROCKETS 110**

Nikola Jokic had 24 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists. Jerami Grant scored a season-high 25 points and host Denver beat short-handed Houston. Michael Porter Jr. and Monte Morris scored 17 points each. Will Barton had 11 and Malik Beasley 10 for Denver. The Rockets played without NBA leading scorer James Harden due to a left thigh contusion that head coach Mike D'Antoni said might keep him out of Monday's game at Utah.

**TORONTO RAPTORS 110 - SAN ANTONIO SPURS 106**

Pascal Siakam scored 35 points, 30 of them in a dominating first half, and Fred VanVleet hit the decisive 3-pointer in the final minute as visiting Toronto earned a victory over San Antonio. It was Toronto's seventh straight win, tying its season best. The last team to beat the Raptors was San Antonio, which defeated the Raptors 105-104 in Toronto on Jan. 12. Toronto led by 19 points in the first quarter, by a dozen at halftime but by just a point heading into the final period. The Spurs then scored 12 of the first 15 points of the period to take an eight-point advantage before the Raptors answered with a 14-0 run.

**MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES 114 - PHOENIX SUNS 109**

Ja Morant scored 23 points to lead three Memphis



NEW ORLEANS: Brandon Ingram #14 of the New Orleans Pelicans drives against Jaylen Brown #7 of the Boston Celtics during the second half at the Smoothie King Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. — AFP

players scoring 20-plus and the host Grizzlies held off Phoenix. On a day with news of NBA legend Kobe Bryant's death, Sunday's game opened with Memphis taking a 24-second shot-clock violation. Phoenix reciprocated with an eight-second backcourt violation. The gestures recognized Bryant's two professional jersey numbers, 8 and 24. Following the somber tribute, Memphis jumped ahead 30-18 after the first quarter. Morant, Jaren Jackson Jr. and Dillon Brooks carried much of the scoring load from the outset, and both Jackson and Brooks finished with 20 points. — Reuters