



**11** Burgan Bank reports net income of KD 19.2 million



**24** Mystery shrouds 'sabotage' of oil tankers in tense Gulf



**27** History made as women to referee men's AFC Cup clash



## Ramadan KAREEM

IMSAK	03:17
Fajr	03:27
Dhur	11:44
Asr	15:20
Magrib	18:33
Isha	20:00

# Spain pulls its frigate from US military build-up in Gulf

Saudi shuts oil pipeline after Houthi drone attacks • Kuwait condemns terror attack

## Amir expresses confidence in the army

**KUWAIT:** The region is witnessing conflicts which resulted in a state of instability and insecurity, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said. However, His Highness expressed full confidence in the Kuwaiti army's ability to "be vigilant and ready to defend the nation from all dangers."

His Highness the Amir made his remarks in an address to officers at the Kuwait Army Officers Club on Monday, during which he underlined that the government would spare no effort to the development of weapons and field training of the armed forces. His Highness the Amir reassured during a later visit to the Kuwait National Guard Presidency Headquarters that regional developments required vigilance.

Meanwhile, Army Chief of Staff General Mohammad Al-Khodhr praised His Highness the Amir for his endeavors that contributed to addressing many challenges in the region, particularly relentless efforts to reunite the Gulf countries, a matter that was supported by all countries of the world. He warned against the war of information through which social media were used to undermine national security.

"We are closely following the dangerous impacts of social media abuse, which have negative impact on national unity, and has become a tool to destroy and is used by saboteurs to spread rumors and foment sectarianism," he said. — KUNA (See Page 3)



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah addresses officers at the Kuwait Army Officers Club on Monday. — Amiri Diwan photo

**MADRID:** Spain has recalled a frigate accompanying a US aircraft carrier to the Middle East because of rising tensions between Washington and Tehran, the defense ministry said yesterday. "For the moment the frigate Mendez Nunez has left the combat group of the USS Abraham Lincoln," a ministry spokesman told AFP, confirming a report in the Spanish daily El Pais. "It's a temporary withdrawal, decided by Defense Minister Margarita Robles, as long as the American aircraft carrier is in this zone," the spokesman added.

He said the Spanish frigate had joined the aircraft carrier's strike group for a military exercise. "No possible confrontation or warlike action is envisaged (by Spain) and it is for this reason that the participation is suspended for the moment," he added. On May 5, the United States announced it was deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and a bomber task force to the Middle East in response to a "credible threat" from Iran.

Last Friday, the Pentagon announced the deployment of the amphibious assault ship the USS Arlington and a Patriot missile battery to the region. Washington reiterated that intelligence reports suggested Iran was planning some sort of attack in the region. Robles later told reporters in Brussels that the US decision to deploy the aircraft carrier to the Gulf "went beyond what was scheduled in the terms of a cooperation agreement that placed the Mendez Nunez frigate with the US fleet for training.

"This is not a problem of discrepancies with Iran or. It's a question of interpretation of a techno-military



**HARADH:** File photo shows a general view of an oil plant in Haradh. Two pumping stations on a major Saudi oil pipeline were attacked by drones yesterday. — AFP

agreement," she added. The Spanish frigate is currently in Mumbai, the minister said. The spike in tensions between the United States and Iran comes a week after Tehran announced it was suspending some of its commitments under the 2015 nuclear agreement. That came a year after President Donald Trump withdrew from the accord and slapped tough sanctions on the Islamic republic.

On Sunday and Monday, US allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates said oil tankers belonging to them were damaged in "sabotage attacks" in the Gulf. Neither country released further details.

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Ramadan Kareem

## Ramadan therapy

By Dr Teresa Leshner

**M**odern life, which is characterized by computerization, communication, and globalization, has made work easier and given us more leisure options, but has also contributed to mental and social problems. "Modern man" is often characterized by lack of purpose, distraction, low stamina, isolation, loss of community involvement, decreased empathy, and general depression.

Given the busy schedules that we often feel we have little control over, it's hard to make major lifestyle changes. But our Creator has prescribed a treatment for whatever social, emotional or personal challenge we face in life - it is called Ramadan. Feeling a lack of purpose in your life? Fast during Ramadan.

Nobody would undertake such a long and difficult commitment without a reason, whether or religious conviction, health benefits, personal challenge, or solidarity with Muslims. The Quran says, "Fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may learn God-consciousness" (2:183). If you sincerely fast, observing the restrictions on food, drink and sexual intimacy in daylight hours, you will develop a strong sense purpose - which for most is to obey and worship Almighty God.

You will also become a more sincere person, since fasting cannot really be observed by another person - only you and God. Ramadan is the perfect time to ask, "What is the purpose of my existence?" Most people nowadays are distracted due to busy schedules, incessant phone messages and emails, and the demands of media for our attention. We lack focus and can hardly finish one task from start to finish without distractions.

Some people cannot even eat a meal without their phones nearby so they can check WhatsApp messages. If this describes you, I recommend fasting the month of Ramadan, which will eliminate one major distraction in our lives - eating - during daylight hours, which increases productivity and focus on other activities. And then, when the meal is finally served after sunset, I guarantee you will put your phone away so you can enjoy your breakfast.

We generally have less physical strength and lower stamina than our parents and grandparents had due to our sedentary lifestyles and the prevalence of desk jobs. Fasting Ramadan will improve your fortitude and determination; how else would you be able to refrain from satisfying your basic needs and desires for such long periods? How else would you be able to ignore hunger, thirst and fatigue while you carry on with life's usual demands? Ramadan is a perfect time to show yourself what you're capable of.

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## WhatsApp calls for update after security breach

**JERUSALEM:** WhatsApp said yesterday a security breach on its messaging app had signs of coming from a government using surveillance technology developed by a private company and may have targeted human rights groups. WhatsApp, which is part of Facebook, said it had notified the US Department of Justice to help with an investigation, and encouraged all WhatsApp users to update to the latest version of the app, where the breach had been fixed.

WhatsApp, one of the most popular messaging tools in the world, is used by 1.5 billion people monthly. It has touted its high level of security and privacy, with

messages on its platform being encrypted end to end so that WhatsApp and third parties cannot read or listen to them. The company said it was still investigating the breach but believed only a "select number of users were targeted through this vulnerability by an advanced cyber actor."

But its advice to all users to update came "out of an abundance of caution" and a recommendation by Citizen Lab, a research group at the University of Toronto. It did not disclose how many users were affected. A WhatsApp spokesman said the attack was sophisticated and had all the hallmarks of a "private company working with governments on surveillance."

WhatsApp said it was "deeply concerned about the abuse" of such surveillance technologies and that it believed human rights activists may have been the targets. "We're working with human rights groups on learning as much as we

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## The Moon 'shrinking'

**WASHINGTON:** The Moon is steadily shrinking, causing wrinkling on its surface and quakes, according to an analysis of imagery captured by NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) published Monday. A survey of more than 12,000 images revealed that lunar

basin Mare Frigoris near the Moon's north pole - one of many vast basins long assumed to be dead sites from a geological point of view - has been cracking and shifting.

Unlike our planet, the Moon doesn't have tectonic plates; instead, its tectonic activity occurs as it slowly loses heat from when it was formed 4.5 billion years ago. This in turn causes its surface to wrinkle, similar to a grape that shrivels into a raisin. Since the moon's crust is brittle, these forces cause its surface to

break as the interior shrinks, resulting in so-called thrust faults, where one section of crust is pushed up over an adjacent section.

As a result, the Moon has become about 150 feet "skinnier" over the past several hundred million years. The Apollo astronauts first began measuring seismic activity on the Moon in the 1960s and 1970s, finding the vast majority were occurred deep in the body's interior while a smaller number were on its surface.

The analysis was published in Nature

Geoscience and examined the shallow moonquakes recorded by the Apollo missions, establishing links between them and very young surface features. "It's quite likely that the faults are still active today," said Nicholas Schmerr, an assistant professor of geology at the University of Maryland who co-authored the study. "You don't often get to see active tectonics anywhere but Earth, so it's very exciting to think these faults may still be producing moonquakes." — AFP



**HERZLIYA, Israel:** An Israeli woman uses her smartphone in front of the building housing the Israeli NSO group in Herzliya, near Tel Aviv. — AFP

## Opposition MPs urge PM to quit

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** In a series of dramatic developments yesterday, the National Assembly approved a request by the government to refer a grilling against the Prime Minister to study if the grilling was in line with the constitution. Opposition MPs immediately called the measure as illegal, called on HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah to step down and held Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and pro-government lawmakers responsible for violating the law.

The Assembly decision was taken in a secret session demanded by the government and came after a debate, Ghanem told reporters. He said the Assembly approved the government request and the grilling has been referred to the committee without providing further details. He also declined to say how long the committee was given to study the issue.

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**KUWAIT:** MPs chat during a session of the National Assembly in Kuwait City yesterday. — KUNA