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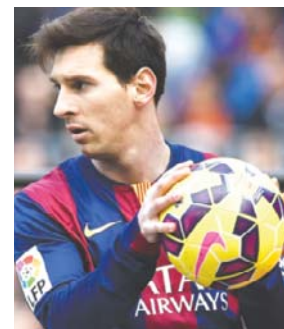
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# GATES TO VISIT KUWAIT AT AMIR'S INVITATION

PHILANTHROPIST, TECH GURU TO SPEAK WITH YOUTH



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## GOVT REQUESTS EXTRA KD 6BN FOR WEAPONS

**KUWAIT:** The government has asked the National Assembly for KD 6.2 billion (\$20.5 billion) in additional funds for defense purchases over the next 10 years, local media and a minister said yesterday. Kuwait is looking to upgrade its firepower amid increased security concerns in the region linked to the rise of the jihadist Islamic State group. The state is a member of the US-led coalition that has been bombing IS targets in Syria and Iraq since last year and is also taking part in a Saudi-led coalition pounding Iran-backed rebels in Yemen. But it is unclear if the additional funds are also linked to that.

State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah told reporters a bill has been sent to parliament requesting the additional funds, but he declined to specify the amount. Local dailies Al-Qabas and Al-Rai reported yesterday that the amount is KD 6.2 billion. The Assembly is expected to review the request soon. The government does not publish specific figures for its defense budget.

Several reports have recently linked Kuwait to several arms deals amid regional turmoil. The Eurofighter consortium said in September Kuwait agreed to buy 28 Typhoon warplanes in a deal worth €7.8 billion (\$8.9 billion). Last month, Kuwait signed €2.5 billion (\$2.8 billion) worth of fixed and provisional military deals led by the purchase of 24 Airbus-built Caracal helicopters. Paris said Kuwait would purchase the helicopters for €1.0 billion, with an option for a further six. Further deals included provision of French light armored vehicles and patrol boat maintenance. —AFP



**KUWAIT:** Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem attend a parliament session at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## MPs BLAST DOW DEAL AS 'THEFT OF CENTURY'

GOVT TO KEEP SELLING STAKES IN FIRMS

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** MPs yesterday began a debate over a highly controversial deal with US firm Dow Chemical, which resulted in Kuwait being ordered to pay a huge \$2.2 billion penalty. The Assembly agreed to continue the debate today to allow more

MPs to talk on the multibillion-dollar deal amid allegations of conspiracy, corruption and theft. Kuwait was ordered to pay the fine after it unilaterally scrapped the joint venture deal with Dow in late 2008 following a political dispute between the government and the then opposition lawmakers.

Continued on Page 13

**KUWAIT:** Bill Gates will visit Kuwait on Dec 7 at the invitation of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to participate in a dialogue session with Kuwaiti youth. Gates is one of the founders of Microsoft, the company that revolutionized computer industry. He also co-chairs the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation which aims at improving quality of life of people in developing countries, in addition to focusing on supporting initiatives to improve global health and education.

Dr Yusuf Hamad Al-Ibrahim, an advisor at the Amiri Diwan, said Monday the diwan will be organizing the dialogue session in which Gates would be engaged in a dialogue with Kuwaiti youth over "youth and international development". The dialogue session is within HH the Amir's patronage of youth activities and the development of their skills, Ibrahim told KUNA. He said the session would inspire the youth on the importance of development and voluntary action. — KUNA



**WASHINGTON:** Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, delivers the keynote address during the Financial Inclusion Forum yesterday at the Treasury Department. —AFP



**RIVESALTES, France:** A picture taken on Oct 14, 2015 shows an Airbus A340 airplane that belonged to former Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi on the premises of maintenance company EAS Industries, a subsidiary of Air France, near Perpignan's airport in southwestern France. — AFP

## FRENCH COURT RULES ON GADDAFI'S PLANE

**PERPIGNAN, France:** A French court yesterday lifted a freeze order on slain Libyan strongman Muammar Gaddafi's personal plane, following a bitter battle over the luxury aircraft between a Kuwaiti conglomerate and the Libyan government. Kuwait's Al-Kharafi group had the Airbus A340, seen as a symbol of Gaddafi's extravagance by the rebels who overthrew him, seized amid a near billion-euro debt related to a contract to build a beach resort in Libya.

The plane has been in the southern French city of Perpignan since 2012, soon after Gaddafi's regime fell, where it had been sent for three million euros' worth of maintenance work by Air France - as yet unpaid. "It is very satisfying to see the judge has recognized the fact this plane, which belongs to the Libyan state, has immunity from being seized," said Carole

Sportes, lawyer for the Libyan side.

In 2006 Al-Kharafi signed a contract with the Gaddafi regime to build a beach resort on Libya's Mediterranean coast, which it was to run for 90 years, but Tripoli cancelled the deal unilaterally in 2010. A Cairo court in 2013 ruled Al-Kharafi was owed €935 million over the broken contract and the company had the plane seized as part of efforts to recover the money.

Since Gaddafi was killed in oil-rich Libya's 2011 uprising, the country has slid into chaos, with the Islamic State group making inroads. Libya has had two administrations since Aug 2014, when a militia alliance overran the capital and set up its own parliament in Tripoli while forcing the internationally recognized government to take refuge in Tobruk, in the east. — AFP

## NUSRA FREES LEBANESE HOSTAGES

ISLAMISTS, IS LEADER'S EX-WIFE RELEASED IN SWAP

## US SPECIAL OPS TO FIGHT IS MILITANTS

**WASHINGTON:** The United States will deploy special operations forces to fight Islamic State jihadists in Iraq, with the ability to conduct raids over the border in Syria, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said yesterday. Speaking to the House Armed Services Committee, the Pentagon chief said a "specialized expeditionary targeting force" would be deployed to help Iraqi and Kurdish peshmerga forces battle the IS group. He did not say how many troops would be involved.



Ash Carter

capture ISIL leaders," he said. "This force will also be in a position to conduct unilateral operations into Syria."

President Barack Obama has said the United States would not send large-scale, "boots on the ground" deployments of American troops to fight IS jihadists, and instead would intensify its air campaign against the group. In late October, Obama authorized sending about 50 special operations forces to Syria in a non-combatant, advisory role to help coordinate local ground troops and anti-IS coalition efforts. This marked the first official deployment of US troops on the ground in Syria since an international coalition formed last year to counter the jihadist group.

Carter said the Pentagon is "prepared to expand" the role of these troops in Syria. "American special operators bring a unique suite of capabilities that make them force multipliers," Carter said.

Continued on Page 13

**BEIRUT:** Al-Qaeda's Syrian wing freed 16 Lebanese soldiers and policemen yesterday in exchange for the release of jailed Islamists including the ex-wife of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi. The Nusra Front seized the Lebanese 16 months ago during an attack on the Lebanese border town of Aarsal mounted together with the Islamic State jihadist group which is still believed to be holding nine soldiers captured in the incursion.

The exchange, brokered by Qatar, cast new light on the Gulf state's channels to the Nusra Front, a powerful player in the Syrian civil war that has been designated a terrorist group by the United Nations and United States. Live TV footage from an area between Lebanon and Syria showed the Lebanese captives in vehicles accompanied by masked men armed with assault rifles and waving the Nusra Front flag before they were released to the Red Cross.

Thirteen Islamists in Lebanese jails, including Saja Al-Dulaimi, the ex-wife of Baghdadi, were also released. Dulaimi, fully

veiled, was shown in live TV footage from the area with her four children who were with her in prison. Nusra Front fighters were shown kissing and hugging the sons of Dulaimi, who was arrested by the Lebanese authorities a year ago. Speaking to Al Jazeera, she said her wish was to return to Beirut and then to leave to Turkey.

"We accomplished the entire agreement with Nusra. We received our heroic soldiers and we are on our way back to Beirut," top Lebanese security official Abbas Ibrahim, who oversaw the swap, told Reuters by telephone. "This joy not complete until the return of those kidnapped by Daesh. We are ready to negotiate with Daesh if we find someone to negotiate with," he said. Daesh is an Arabic name for Islamic State.

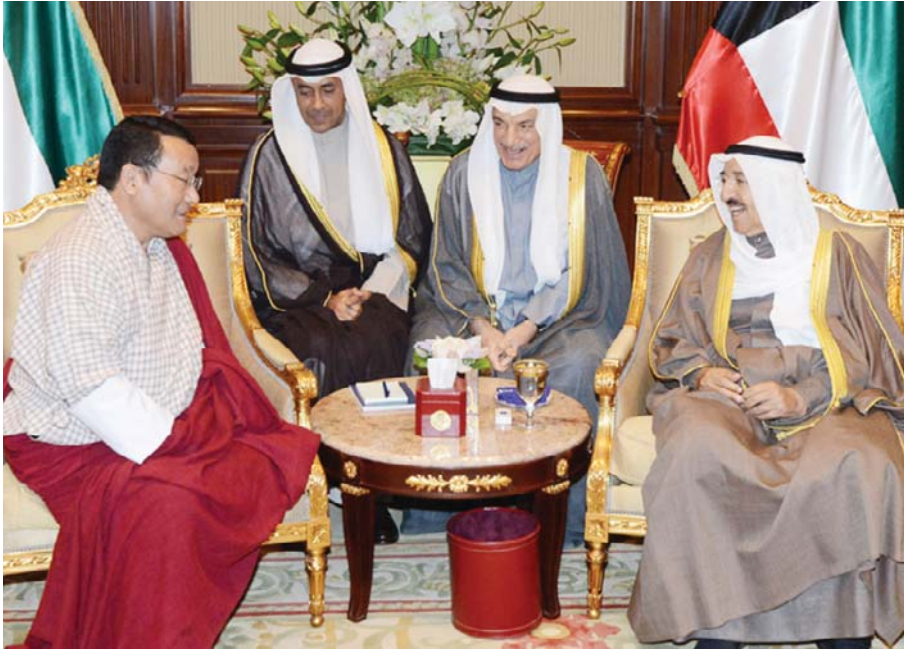
The Nusra Front fighters chanted "God is Great" as they arrived with the captives in preparation for the swap. One of the captives, interviewed by Al Jazeera, said the group had treated them well.

Continued on Page 13



**BEIRUT:** Lebanese policemen and army soldiers who were kidnapped by Nusra Front gather for a family picture with Lebanese officials and Lebanese Prime Minister Tammam Salam (center back) at the government palace after they were freed yesterday. — AP





KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Ambassador of Bhutan to Kuwait Tashi Phuntsog. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the Tunisian ambassador Ahmad Bin Al-Sagheer.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the Swiss ambassador Aldo de Luca.

# AMIR RECEIVES NEW ENVOYS' CREDENTIALS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace the credentials of the new ambassador of the Tunisian Republic, Italian Republic, Swiss Confederation, Japan, and Republic of Malawi to the State of Kuwait.

The ceremony was attended by acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah, Deputy Amiri Diwan affairs Minister Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of Amiri Diwan Ibrahim Mohammad Al-Shatti, Director of the Office of His Highness the Amir Ahmad Fahad Al-Fahad and the Advisor at the office of His Highness the Amir Mohammad Abo Al-Hassan, Chief of Amiri Protocol and Chamberlains Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister for the

Protocol Affairs Ambassador Dhari Ajran Al-Ajran, and Commander of the Amiri Guard Brigadier-General Fahad Al-Zaid.

Later, His Highness the Amir received Ambassador of Bhutan to Kuwait Tashi Phuntsog on the occasion of the end of his tenure. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Bhutan's ambassador Phuntsog, as well as China's new ambassa-

dor to Kuwait Wang Di, Egypt's new ambassador Yasser Atef and new Bosnian Ambassador Mohammad Halilovic. The audiences were attended by His Highness the Crown Prince's Protocol Chief Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Early yesterday, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince separately received His Highness Sheikh Nasser

Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. In other news, His Highness the Amir is set today to patronize the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences' prizes distribution ceremony for the year 2014/2015. The event takes place at 10:30 am this morning at Dar Salwa Hall. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the Italian ambassador Giuseppe Scognamiglio.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the Malawi ambassador Wilfred Ali.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets China's ambassador to Kuwait Wang Di.



KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem received in his office yesterday Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Governor Mohammad Al-Hashel, who offered him a commemorative coin issued by the CBK to mark the first anniversary of the UN honoring of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a 'Humanitarian Leader' in 2014. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Head of the Kuwaiti National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah received British Ambassador to Kuwait Mathew Lodge yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations as well as issues of common interest. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Border Security Affairs Major General Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah met a US Central Command delegation yesterday including Rear Admiral Valerie Huegel, Director, US Central Command Deployment and Distribution Operations Center in Kuwait, and Rear Admiral Keith Jones, Commander, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group.

## PAKISTAN KEEN TO ENHANCE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP WITH KUWAIT: AMBASSADOR

**KUWAIT:** Pakistan's Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Islam Khan asserted yesterday his country's keenness to strengthen economic relations with Kuwait. In a statement to KUNA after inaugurating a Pakistani commercial exhibition in the country, Khan said that bilateral relations with Kuwait have stood the test of time, with both sides striving to enhance cooperation in various economic fields.

Khan also disclosed that a number of Kuwaiti businessmen had recently visited Pakistan in order to explore the country's industrial potential. The Pakistani ambassador revealed that the embassy is introducing various initiatives aimed at bolstering relations with Kuwait. Amongst those initiatives is a Pakistani exhibition to be held in Kuwait next year with a view to promoting Pakistani products in the Kuwaiti market.

Moreover, Khan said that a memorandum has been signed between the two countries that would help facilitate further cooperation in numerous economic fields. Kuwait and Pakistan have long enjoyed amicable relations which are deep-rooted in religion and history. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Islam Khan is seen during the inaugurating of the Pakistani commercial exhibition. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and several official of the Supreme Council for Planning received the Deputy Chairman of the China Development Bank and the accompanying delegation. Sheikh Nasser welcomed the visiting delegation and the two parties discussed several issues of common concern. — KUNA



## VISA SUSPENSION FROM KUWAIT ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION: AMBASSADOR

**KUWAIT:** Ambassador of Switzerland to Kuwait Aldo de Luca said yesterday that the suspension of the visa issuance from Kuwait is “purely administrative” and does not entail for residents of Kuwait any necessity whatsoever to travel to Qatar in order to submit their visa applications.

Swiss Embassy's visa section has closed down and that the processing of visa applications through its services is discontinued as of Dec 1, 2015, he said. The visa application center previously located in the premises of the Embassy will remain in Kuwait and will be subcontracted to the company “VFS”, whose counters are located in Al-Qibla area, Kuwait City, de Luca said in statement to KUNA.

The authority henceforth in charge of issuing visas for residents of the State of Kuwait is the Embassy of Switzerland in Doha, Qatar, and the move had already been advertised in the local media twice in the past few days, he said.

The VFS Company in Kuwait has committed itself to swiftly handle the transmission of visa applications to the Embassy of Switzerland in Doha in an immediate and confidential manner, thereby guaranteeing the protection of personal data, he added.

This change is part of a comprehensive reorganization of Switzerland's diplomatic and consular representation network worldwide, according to the Swiss ambassador, who added that similar moves in Kuwait and in other parts of the world are mainly designed to cut costs and eliminate inefficiencies.

He also stressed the need to ensure effectiveness and ease of travel to its territory in an increasingly globalized world, Switzerland is streamlining its procedures in order to respond to a continuous rise of the number of visa applications which, without the necessary streamlining measures, would entail even lengthier processing times and delays.

The Swiss authorities are confident that the changes will work to the satisfaction of the customers of the country's Embassies worldwide. The Embassy of Switzerland in Kuwait will continue to actively promote business contacts between both countries and looks forward to an increase in the number of visitors and tourists from Kuwait to Switzerland, Ambassador de Luca concluded. — KUNA

## KUWAITIS WIN AWARDS AT FGCC EVENT IN DUBAI

**DUBAI:** Two Kuwaiti business personnel won awards at an event organized by the Federation of GCC Chambers of Commerce (FGCC) in Dubai late Monday. Speaking to KUNA, businesswoman Muntaha Al-Ejail said that she had won an award at the FGCC sixth ceremony honoring Middle East business leaders. She noted that she had won the award due to her contributions to the fashion scene and industry in the region.

Ejail said that she was honored to have won the award and expressed her gratitude to all that made this accomplishment possible. Meanwhile, businessman Hamad Al-Mgahwi said that he had won an award for establishing a telecommunication and smart application company which has local, regional and international branches. He affirmed that anything is possible if youth in the region put their hearts and mind into the projects they seek to develop, noting that the award was a reflection of his hard work and determination. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah inaugurates the global informatics forum 2015. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah speaks at the forum.

# GLOBAL INFORMATICS FORUM 2015 KICKS OFF

**KUWAIT:** Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah has emphasized the significance of the global informatics forum 2015, as it is held at a time when competitiveness in knowledge economy is escalating. The forum comes in response to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's view, namely supporting youth initiatives and promoting promising digital projects, he added.

The forum is organized by Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award, in cooperation with the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) and the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, the minister said. The main theme of the

event, held under patronage of His Highness the Amir, is “prerequisites for success of digital projects in knowledge economy.”

According to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the gathering aims to develop a business environment that enhances institutional capabilities and human skills. This forum seeks to keep pace with advanced communities and promote innovation and creativity. It enjoys support of the government led by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Head of the organizing committee Bassam Al-Shammari told the opening ceremony that the forum functions like a platform for public, private and educational institutions to develop a knowledge system and unify initiatives responding to youth

expectations.

The two-day forum will shed light on prerequisites that secure success of digital projects in knowledge economy, bringing together scores of digital entrepreneurs, local and foreigners, together with government and investment bodies, with the chief aim of creating of Kuwait a distinguished center for innovation and creativity, Shammari noted.

On the sidelines of the informatics forum, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah opened an exhibition under “market of ideas” where 40 developers from around the globe will be reviewing their startups. Discussions will also address scientific studies on knowledge economy.

Organizing the forum in two months is clear evidence that there are competent

youth in Kuwait, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Informatics Award, Sheikh Aida Salem Al-Ali said. In a statement on the sidelines of the exhibition, Sheikh Aida expressed pleasure of the forum, considering it a quantum shift in the activities organized by the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award.

The first session of the forum focused on available opportunities in digital services in the Kuwaiti and Gulf markets, together with exploring relevant experience that could be imported from other countries. The main topic of the second session held on the first day was “a sound idea is the base of a successful digital project.” The day was concluded with a specialized workshop on guidance on concluding an idea for a successful digital project. — KUNA



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah interacts with an activity at the event.



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah listens to a demonstration by a participant at the forum.

## KUWAIT FOLLOWS AMBITIOUS PLAN TO PRESERVE CULTURAL HERITAGE: MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** The urban and architectural modernity in the Arab World have been suffering negligence for decades, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said. This is why Kuwait is working in line with an ambitious plan to preserve its cultural heritage, Sheikh Salman told the opening of an international conference that kicked off yesterday.

The three-day conference is organized by Kuwait's National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) in cooperation with the UNESCO's World Heritage Centre under the main theme of safeguarding the heritage of urban and architectural modernity in the Arab World.

The event aims to set executive work programs and launch innovative initiatives to preserve the copious cultural heritage in the Arab countries, Sheikh Salman said. He added that the NCCAL was able in cooperation with the UNESCO's World Heritage Centre to add Sheikh Abdullah

Al-Jaber, Failaka Island and Kuwait Towers to the UNESCO tentative list to become World Heritage sites.

Sheikh Salman lauded UNESCO efforts, in collaboration with other organizations, to broaden the international agreements on promoting knowledge and encouraging scientific research as well as advising governments on preservation of national urban and cultural heritage. In 1960, Kuwait issued the first law on antiquities in the Gulf area, to regulate excavations and protect monuments, in a bid to preserve the country's cultural heritage, the minister said.

Meanwhile, Director of the UNESCO's World Heritage Centre Mechthild Rosler said that protecting cultural heritage for future generations is preservation of civilization. Rosler added that heritage preservation aims to maintain the identity of each region, pointing to the significance participation of universities and urban and civil institutions in the conference. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah attends the conference. — KUNA

## INFORMATION MINISTER ENDORSES STATE AWARDS

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah endorsed yesterday the recent awards given by the state which acknowledge exceptional talent in the fields of arts, literature and science.




In a press statement after the awards had been distributed, Sheikh Salman said that such awards aim to highlight Kuwaiti creativity and accomplishments in various fields. Moreover, Sheikh Salman added that these awards are given to motivate the youth to prosper in their respective fields, which would in turn help them better serve their society.


The recipients of the awards have been announced as Yaqoub Al-Subaie in the field of poetry, Abdulla Al-Ghunaim in literature and linguistic studies and Sami Al-Saleh in Arts. Fadhel Al-Abbar and Jamila Jouhar clinched the Applied Arts award while director Kamal Alabduljalil won the television production award and

Ahmad Al-Khalaf bagged the cinematic production award.

Meanwhile, Mishary Al-Obaid and Abdulaziz Al-Mutairi won awards for best short stories while the best theatrical production award went to Sami Ibrahim Bilal and Amal Al-Randi claimed the juvenile award for best literary piece.

Dr Abdulla Al-Hajri won the historical studies award with the tandem of Abdulla Ghloum Al-Saleh and Dr Maha Naji Ghannam bagged awards in the field of sociology. Owaid Al-Mashan bagged an award in the field of psychology while Dr Ahmad Al-Refaie won an award in economics. The political science award went to Dr Faisal Busulaib. All the winners will be feted in a lavish ceremony planned for January where the gala will shed light on the identities of the recipients of such prestigious awards, Sheikh Salman added. — KUNA






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KUWAIT: The Foreign Minister's Assistant for Ceremonial Affairs Dhari Al-Ajran and Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Vasile Sofineti cut the ceremony's cake.



A general view of guests in attendance, including senior officials, diplomats, and media personalities.



Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Vasile Sofineti welcomes Saudi Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Fayez. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

## 'KUWAIT, ROMANIA COORDINATE ON FINDING MISSING CITIZEN' ROMANIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATES NATIONAL DAY

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Security forces in Kuwait and Romania established a high level coordination in order to locate Kuwaiti citizen Mohammad Al-Baghli who went missing in the European country earlier this

year, a Kuwaiti official said yesterday, stressing that security delegations from both countries had exchanged visits for this reason. The Foreign Minister's Assistant for Ceremonial Affairs Dhari Al-Ajran made that statement during a ceremony organized by the Romanian Embassy in Kuwait to

celebrate its national day, during which he hailed the strong bilateral relations between the two countries.

### Climate

Commenting on Kuwait's participation in the climate conference in Paris, Ajran said

that both His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister were invited, but His Highness the Amir had other obligations that prevented him from attending. He also stressed that Kuwait is highly concerned with

environmental issues. On his part, the Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Vasile Sofineti strongly hailed both countries' historic and cordial relations, noting that Kuwait was the first GCC state to forge diplomatic relations with Romania on June 10, 1963.

## KD 43 MILLION COURTHOUSE TO BE COMPLETED BY 2017

**KUWAIT:** A Ministry of Public Works official announced yesterday that 18 percent of construction for the Hawally Courts Complex has been completed, with the project costing KD 43 million (\$141 million). In a press statement, spokesman for the Ministry of Public Works and Assistant Undersecretary of Planning and Development Abdulmohsen Khaled Al-Enezi revealed that the grand project consists of a courts complex and a multistorey parking lot. The courts complex covers 13000 square meters, featuring 52 courtrooms, Enezi added.

The administrative section of the complex will be built on 39,000 square meters to accommodate 1334 employees, Enezi

announced. The parking lot, equipped with maximal security measures, contains 1200 parking spots, he added.

Moreover, Enezi revealed that the courts complex contains 25 floors, three basements, a ground floor and a mezzanine while the parking lot would have three basements, a ground floor, a mezzanine and five floors. The entire complex stretches on 9000 square meters while the construction site is 121,924 square meters. The contract for the project is estimated to cost around KD 43 million. The complex, once finished, is expected to be one of the country's landmark buildings, he said, adding that the estimated date of completion is tentatively set for January 31, 2017. — KUNA



An artist's rendition for the Hawally Courts Complex.

## KIB SUPPORTS ENGINEERING AND PETROLEUM COLLEGE STUDENTS

**KUWAIT:** As part of the Kuwait International Bank's (KIB) leading social responsibility program that aims at supporting the community's various activities and initiatives, the bank has provided financial support to the students of College of Engineering and Petroleum in Kuwait University who are undertaking their final graduation project. This will give them the opportunity to participate in the "Engineering Design Exhibition" organized annually by the university.

The Team Leader Corporate Communications of KIB, Fahad Al-Sarhan, said that KIB aims to frequently support university students' projects and activities which benefit Kuwait's youth segment in general. Indeed, this stems from the series of initiatives that are developed and run by the bank as part of its CSR program. He stressed the fact that the bank's initiative towards empowering and funding the students' creative talents, ideas, and career competence is based on our firm beliefs that Kuwait's future and prosperity depend on their development and potential.

Sarhan added that every year, KIB selects a number of graduation projects

to support the students of College of Engineering and Petroleum, referring to one of the projects called the "Compressed Air Engine" that was sponsored by the bank and designed by the mechanical engineering students Mohammed Saif, Yousef Al-Qabandi, Yousef Al-Attal, and Walid Al-Saleh. The students used compressed air cylinders as alternative energy to gasoline. Moreover, the engine was designed and manufactured from eco-friendly materials, as it converts the latent energy in the air into dynamic energy without releasing carbon pollution that increases the temperature.

Sarhan concluded "KIB is constantly keen on communicating with youth segment, by offering tailored products and solutions that address their modern lifestyle and needs." Shabab Account, is one of these products that gives them a chance to save and invest for a promising future. He suggested that whoever is interested to find out more about KIB's services and products can contact the 24/7 "Al-Dawli Weyak" service on 1866866, or visit the bank's website at [www.kib.com.kw](http://www.kib.com.kw)



Zain Bahrain Chairman Shaikh Ahmed Bin Ali Al Khalifa thanks Engineer Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed, Bahrain's Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications.

## ZAIN KICKS OFF FIFTH TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

**MANAMA:** Zain Group kicked off its fifth Zain Technology Conference (ZTC) yesterday at ART Rotana Amwaj Islands Hotel in Bahrain, with this year's theme being under the title of 'Transforming Our World'. This reflects Zain's strategic aspirations of delivering on a compelling digital lifestyle to its customers.

The opening ceremony was attended by over 600 delegates including Engineer Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications; Zain Bahrain Chairman, Shaikh Ahmed Bin Ali Al Khalifa; Zain Group CEO, Scott Gegenheimer; Zain Bahrain General Manager, Mohammed Zainalabedin; as well as Zain Group CTO Hisham Allam.

The packed three-day event makes ZTC 2015 one of the biggest technology exhibitions held in the Kingdom, with over 65 global technology providers and vendors participating and showcasing their latest digital innovations and technologies. The conference officially kicked off today, and incorporated a number of keynote presentations including an opening address by Dr. Jean-Pierre Siri, Executive Director of Legal Affairs at Bahrain's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA), and further presentations by Ericsson, Huawei, Nokia Networks, and research firm Gartner. These prepared addresses are being followed by 95 pre-arranged breakout sessions to address the latest trends in the sector.

A wide range of technology and business topics are being discussed at the event including the Road-map to 5G, Core Virtualization Evolution, Business Enablement Solutions, Big Data Analytics & Cloud Services, Customer Quality of Experience, Services Innovation, Energy Efficiency, and Site Optimization.

### Digital lifestyle

On this occasion, Engineer Kamal bin Ahmed Mohammed, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications said "With the continuous development of telecommunications technologies, consumers and businesses are increasingly drawn to adopting a digital lifestyle. This generates greater demand for telecommunications solutions which in turn necessitates the need for the provision of a sound regulatory framework and infrastructure. As the policy maker for the sector, the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications works with the TRA to provide support to telecom companies and service providers in providing integrated solutions in more efficient, productive, and innovative ways, in order to position Bahrain amongst the most advanced countries in the field."

"We are extremely proud of the highly successful grand opening of Zain Technology Conference 2015, one of the biggest technology conferences in the region, and the most important for Zain," commented Shaikh Ahmed Bin Ali Al Khalifa, Chairman of Zain Bahrain. "Hosting such events is in line with the Kingdom's Economic Vision 2030, which was launched back in October 2008 by His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, adopting globalization and increased competition and sustainability through innovation, supported by the clear direction outlined for the continued development of the Kingdom's economy."

Shaikh Ahmed also noted that the Kingdom's



Zain Group CEO, Scott Gegenheimer speaks at the event.

economy is fully supported by the esteemed government, led by His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister and the support of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister. He also extended his thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Engineer Kamal Bin Ahmed Mohammed, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications for being the patron of the event.

### Active participant

Scott Gegenheimer, Zain Group CEO said, "We are pleased to be hosting ZTC 2015 in Bahrain once again, having held our very first technology conference in the Kingdom back in 2009. We are also proud to be an active participant in the Kingdom's ICT sector, having invested over \$100 million in the last year alone to revamp our 4G

network to better serve our customers, reflecting Zain's faith in the Kingdom's future prosperity. Digital innovation and its implementation to enhance our customers' mobile experience lies at the heart of Zain's vision."

Zain has recognized the enormous growth opportunities available in the B2B, Enterprise, Smart City spaces, and these sectors have become major areas of focus for the Group, requiring the full support of all its partners. Demand for mobility, broadband, virtualization, cloud based services and enhanced customer experience are drivers for transformation in the modern ICT space and Zain is on a perennial mission to deliver cutting-edge apps, services and devices to support these mega-trends.

The conference is comprehensively covered live on Zain Group's social media channels, covering many aspects of the event.



ZTC's delegation attends the event.



## Crime

Report

DEAD CHILD RECOVERED  
OFF SALMIYA BEACH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Salmiya Sea Rescue divers found the body of a dead child after they responded when they heard children screaming for help near a beach. The body was handed to criminal evidence.



## Accident

Two women were trapped during an accident between two buses on Fourth Ring Road yesterday. Hawally firemen rushed to the site and freed the two. The injured were taken to Mubarak Hospital by paramedics.



## Apartment fire

Firemen rescued six persons from a fire which broke out in a Salmiya apartment yesterday. The victims were trapped because of smoke. Salmiya and South Salmiya technical rescue responded and began evacuation of the building, and six persons including an 8-month-old infant suffered smoke inhalation and were taken to hospital in stable condition.



## Warehouse fire

Fire broke out in education ministry warehouses in Subhan in an uncovered area of 6,000 square meters, while the fire was in an area of 200 square meters. The fire was contained and kept from spreading in a record time by fire centers from Subhan, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and backup.

## Contrabands possession

An Egyptian man was taken to the Drug Control General Directorate (DCGD) for trading in drugs. A police patrol noticed the suspect on foot between buildings in Mahboula. He did not have an ID with him, so he was searched and 500 grams of heroin as well as six tablets were found with him. He also was found wanted by residency affairs detectives. Meanwhile, Capital security campaigns resulted in the arrest of three men with liquor, and they were in an abnormal condition. When police went to their house, they discovered liquor making equipment there. Separately, a Kuwaiti and his companion were caught under the influence of drugs. They had 200 illicit tablets in addition to other substances and drug paraphernalia.

## Fugitives caught

A Kuwaiti man was caught in Bneid Al-Gar and found wanted on a KD 1,125 debt, while another in Rawda was wanted for a KD 700 debt. Also, a Filipina was also arrested over a KD 480 debt.

COURT ADJOURNS ABDALI  
CELL SESSION TO DEC 8

**KUWAIT:** The Criminal Court, chaired by Judge Mohammad Al-Duaij, yesterday adjourned its session on case number 55/2015 on the Abdali terrorist cell with 26 defendants to December 8, to hear the final testimony.

In a closed-door session on November 5, the court listened to the testimony of defense witnesses. Two days earlier, 3 November, the court listened to testimony of the Public Prosecution, in a session that was turned into a closed-door one. Earlier, on 21 October, the court listened in a closed-door session to the testimony of medical examiners.

On a session dated 13 October, the court listened to testimony of ballistic officer. On October 6th, the tribunal listened to the criminal inspection officer in a closed-door session. On October 4th, it refused to release defendants and listened to the State Security officer, who was summoned to testify in a closed-door hearing.

Meanwhile, the court released four of the accused on a KD 500 bail each with a travel ban on them, compelling the defendants to attend next sessions. Some 26 people are charged in the case, all Kuwaitis, except for an Iranian.

The first hearing in the case was convened on 15 September. The Public Prosecution had called for pre-trial detention of all the suspects, accused of carrying out hostile acts against the State of Kuwait, furtive contacts with Iran and Hezbollah and the possession of firearms, guns, ammunition and tapping devices. — KUNA

KUWAIT AGGRIEVED PARTY IN  
LAWSUITS AGAINST RAJA'AN  
AUTHORITY SEEKS AID TO REGULATE PORTS

**KUWAIT:** The Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS) has asked the Swiss Public Prosecutor to consider PIFSS as an aggrieved party in the court case against the former director of PIFSS Fahad Al-Raja'an, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh said during yesterday's parliament session.

There is a commitment from the Kuwaiti Public Prosecution to pursue the matter of recouping public funds from the absconding former director of PIFSS, in concert with the Fatwa and Legislation Department which has been entrusted by the govern-

ment to retrieve these stolen public funds, said Saleh. He added that PIFSS has been instructed to provide the Fatwa and Legislation Dept. with all documents necessary and to contact attorneys' offices abroad to pursue lawsuits against Al-Raja'an for the purpose of recovering stolen public funds from him.

Meanwhile, Minister of Communications and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Essa Al-Kandari said that Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) has primarily approved using the aid of international companies to resolve issues in the field. The Ministry of Interior and the

Ministry of Social Affairs are coordinating with the General Administration of Customs to study and resolve the ships traffic jam in ports, Kandari said during the session.

Saleh noted meanwhile that the Audit Bureau requested implementing regulations on uninhabited lands and monitor the violations at these locations. In the same context, Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Ali Al-Omair said that the government has responded to 85 percent of parliamentary questions. He added that the government answered 2007 out of 2373 questions. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Newly appointed Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh gestures during a parliament session at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## MUNICIPALITY HEAD'S RESIGNATION ACCEPTED

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Well-informed Cabinet sources yesterday announced that Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmed Al-Subaih's resignation was accepted after he was appointed secretary general of the Arab Cities Organization. The sources said that Subaih had submitted his resignation to Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Essa Al-Kandari, who referred it to the Cabinet for approval. The sources added that the most prominent nominee to succeed

Subaih was his assistant for urban organization Ahmad Al-Manfouhi, who currently serves as acting municipality director.

## Saadoun slams politicians

Former parliament speaker Ahmad Al-Saadoun said that boycotting the parliamentary elections helped 'uncover corrupt individuals' and debunk the idea that the former opposition was responsible for obstructing development in the country.

"Political movements that claim to be seeking reform must not cooperate and

coordinate with those who are corrupt," Saadoun said in a press statement. "Political forces that are supposed to be reformist should not open means of communications with the elements of corruption."

The veteran oppositionist further revealed that a 'closed-door meeting' took place recently featuring "politicians who think they are smart enough by taking advantage of others," adding that they are audio recordings available for what have been said during the meeting.

## Trafficker sentenced to death

The criminal court yesterday sentenced an expatriate man to death over charges of drug trafficking, said security sources, noting that the suspect was found guilty of importing and possessing drugs for trade.

## 'Huge rats'

Reports of 'huge rats' have been seen in various areas of Dasma and Daiya yesterday morning. Residents in both areas reported seeing huge Norwegian rats 'invading the streets' in broad daylight, and even attacking kittens and puppies.

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الأنباء

Al-Anbaa

WEATHER CONSPIRACY

By Saleh Al-Shaeyji

I do believe that this age is the most blessed as well as cursed in the history of mankind. Man now enjoys rapidly developing technological development, which has facilitated much of life's hassle and made it much easier. Modern means of transport have cut down time and distances that used to take months to cover, which can now be covered by planes in a few hours.

Medicine is at a peak now, communication means are becoming more like magic, and what used to seem insane has become a reality nowadays and part of our daily routine to the extent that we do not even think about how strange it may seem. Well, this is the bright side of the image, the side of blessings and the half-empty, half-full cup theory.

The miserable side, however, is that modern man's life involves too many evils, such as terrorism, military wars and the wars nature wages against us in a way it had never done before. Even individual crimes have become very strange and never experienced before. Natural wars include floods and heavy rain in areas that had never witnessed such heavy rainfall, along with thunder or lightning, which made someone I know claim that it was all part of a US conspiracy to vandalize our countries through a technology it owns, that according to him, enables it to manipulate weather conditions!

Regardless of how strange and peculiar this might seem and whether we know if this friend is serious in his argument or not, we somehow tend to believe such allegations, at least because of the unpredictable weather changes we have been witnessing. In addition to all modern life horrors, we are currently in fear of the possible eruption of a war that would annihilate everything and everybody. A war that will not be similar to any previous one and that would make them all seem as 'merciful' and 'passionate'!

Oceans and seas are loaded with aircraft carriers and heavily-armed transcontinental barges. Skies are clouded with fighter planes with large amounts of multifaceted death arsenals they carry along.

So, today's man is actually torn between the joys and blessings of modern life and the misery, fear and despair he might go through, which is all man-made. Man is the creator of his own happiness, luxury, and at the same time, of his own misery, fear and despair. Oh, Man.....how colossal you are! — Translated by Kuwait Times

Crime

Report

ROADS FLOODED IN SABAHIIYA

**KUWAIT:** Roads of Sabahiya were flooded with brackish water following an explosion at a pump. A security source said citizens reported to police that a brackish water pump exploded and flooded streets in the area. A team from water emergency along with fire and policemen dealt with the problem and repaired the damage.

Laser face treatment burn

A citizen lodged a medical error complaint against a Filipina woman that works in a medical center, claiming the lady caused burns to her face and neck during a laser session. The suspect was arrested. The citizen told Salmiya police that she went for a laser session in a Salmiya center where a Filipina burned her. The Filipina is being questioned.

Woman beats citizen

An Ethiopian woman exchanged blows with a 22-year-old citizen when he offered her money for sex, and she lodged a complaint at Nugra police station. A security source said the woman told police that a young man offered her money for sex, and when she refused he insulted her verbally, so she beat him, then after an exchange of blows he escaped in his car, and she gave police the license plate number. The young man was arrested and investigation is underway.

Jahra crackdown

Jahra policemen launched security campaigns to root out reckless individuals who remain in front of girls schools, and violators in Kabd animal pens. A security source said that five vehicles were impounded and 27 traffic violations were recorded. Meanwhile in Kabd 39 violators were arrested as well as eight without IDs. They are being sent to concerned authorities.

Debtor arrested

Capital police arrested a wanted citizen for the civil implementation department over a KD 59,000 debt. A patrol in Rawdha suspected the man so they checked his ID and was found wanted. — Al-Rai

25,000 HOUSING APPLICATIONS REVIEWED, COULD BE CANCELED

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) may filter housing applications, which have reached 107,000, based on a proposal by the parliamentary committee that called for reviewing the applications. Informed sources said there is a possibility that 25,000 applications (23 percent) may be removed because they violate housing care rules and regulations, adding that most of the applications fall under the "divorced without children category".

They said the parliamentary committee called for finding a compromise between the HCA and Justice Ministry over information about divorce cases in courts, and indicate whether there are children or not, then the application may be frozen and referred to concerned authorities to make sure whether the applicant deserves it or not.

Sources said the current situation of applications is numerically inaccurate and contains a large number of divorcees without children, and other cases such as those with dual citizenship, or whose nationalities were revoked. They said the intention is to cancel the application instead of freezing it, because freezing allows the applicant to take advantage of the date of applying based on his first marriage. —Al-Qabas

Al-Jarida



الأنباء

Al-Anbaa

FIGHTING TERRORISM GOES THROUGH FIGHTING CORRUPTION

By Sami Al-Nisf

Following the severe measures Saudi Arabia took after the Mina accident, Qatar also took very strict ones against those responsible for the projects that were recently flooded by heavy rain, and the Prime Minister referred five major engineering companies to the public prosecution. The Qatari public prosecutor also ordered a travel ban against many general managers and advisors working for companies responsible for those projects.

Sociology, politics and history all clearly show that nations wishing to survive and maintain prosperity and progress and satisfy their people usually wage fierce wars against corruption that can wear out and undermine most countries, leading to their downfalls. On the other hand, countries that still live without caring for tomorrow or for the future of its future generations and countries that allow corruption and corrupt people to prevail and dominate only create more public grudges that may eventually lead to explosions. The main motive behind toppling many Arab regimes by revolutions in the 1950s followed by the 2011 revolutions

was the dominance of corruption, which is the prime reason for peoples' anger.

Arab ministers of interior met in Doha a few days ago and agreed on a joint GCC effort to fight terrorism. Well, we do wish them all the best and remind them that terrorism flourishes and lives on corruption and the public anger it creates. It is financial establishments' corruption that is behind delivering terrorism funds to their final evil destinations. It was political and military leaders corruption and accepting bribes and commissions, regardless of their sources, rather than weapons and ongoing wars, that led to the fall of Iraqi and Syrian cities and governorates into the hands of IS one by one.

We do hope that the next GCC interior ministers' meeting would prioritize a project to fight corruption and set GCC blacklists including the names of corrupt officials and companies so that they could be pursued in all six member states, which will be applauded by those countries' peoples and be terrifying and deterrent to corruption icons. — Translated by Kuwait Times

القابس

Al-Qabas

STRANGE WATER AND STRANGER POWDER

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

I had a skin rash in the groin area a few days ago, and nothing I was given as treatment worked. Also, as I was abroad away from my doctor, I used talcum powder, and its use helped me bear with my dilemma until I returned home. I noticed while using the powder is that it is among the things that has accompanied me since childhood, and despite this I did not try for over more than half a century to find out anything about its ingredients and its wonderful ability to absorb moisture, and whether it is made from gypsum (plaster) or from ground medical pills or human bones!

I also remembered a liquid drink that we were given each time we had colic, and it used to be called strange water (gripe water), and there is no relation of the name with strange of course, because the word "gripe" means pain, and despite the benefit of gripe water and its magical effect, our government, out of its interest in our health and faith, and with pressure from backward religious powers, banned its import, claiming that it has some alcohol. And if any entity attempts to ban the import of material or medicine in which there are alcoholic products, or pig products, such as insulin, for example, it would be fought hard.

Gripe water production began in 1851, with the establishment of Kuwait. It has extracts of natural herbs, and has been sold in all countries for 164 years without any complaints or problems, but it seems that the world's understanding is much less than ours. Also, our government "knows better"!

We go back to that powder, talc, and say that the world's knowledge of it also goes back many years, and it has been said the term is Persian. The powder is used in medicine, soap manufacturing, cosmetics and many other things, and is manufactured from magnesium silicate with a complex chemical formula that is characterized by being highly absorbent. Despite the widespread use of this substance, it has side effects on those who have breathing problems, because its light ingredients rise during application and cause allergy to many. It was also medically proven that some women got ovarian cancer due to the use of this powder at a certain age, or because of its use in deodorants.

Because the metallic formula of talcum powder, it is difficult for the body to get rid of what is absorbed into the body, and causes infections or things more dangerous than this. So we advise caution when this powder is used, and avoid breathing whatever flies from it. Women should not use it, and there may be ways or other similar material that is safer. — Translated by Kuwait Times



Ooredoo's booth at Qout Market



Qout Market

OOREDOO WELCOMES QOUT'S THIRD MARKET VISITORS ON DECEMBER 5TH

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, welcomes visitors of the Qout Market's third season at its booth with an exclusive offer on the iPhone 6s and iPhone 6s Plus. The third Qout Market will be held on Saturday, December 5th 2015 at Murooj complex with local artisans displaying their products or performed to the public.

The exclusive package will enable subscribers to get unlimited local minutes and SMS, 500 GB 4G+ internet subscription and an iPhone 6s 64GB. In addition to a Macbook laptop, Jawbone UP3 fitness tracker and a free 4G router at KD 60 a month. Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "At Ooredoo, our main objective is to continuously present customers with all that is new and innovative. This falls

in line with the concept of the Qout Market, and we are confident that visitors and participants of this season will appreciate the exclusive offers we are bringing to them. We look forward to taking part in this event and sharing the excitement will the entrepreneurs that will be displaying their own works of art, and we invite everyone to pay us a visit at our booth and checkout the exclusive offers we have on hand".

The 'Qout Market' is taking place at Murooj - a Sahara Golf Club project - and will include local farm produce, artisanal food products and crafts, with a 'street food' section aiming at highlighting the culinary diversity of Kuwait's local food community. The market also offers a section dedicated for children's activities and will be held twice a month and will run from November 2015 to April 2016.

AGRICULTURAL AUTHORITY REMAINS UNDER OMAIR

**KUWAIT:** The Cabinet decided to attach the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) to the Minister of Public Works and State Minister for National Assembly Affairs Dr Ali Al-Omair. Ministerial sources said the government wants him to follow up the farm ownerships that caused many arguments lately, especially after the parliamentary investigations committee revealed that there are grave violations in this issue which Omair handled when he took over as oil minister.

The sources said the government does not want a clash by having a new minister take over the ownership issue, and wants Omair to complete his job in facing the parliamentary committee and continue its meetings until it submits its final report on the violations. Meanwhile, the fatwa and legislation department said that 57 percent of farmlands were given to undeserving persons and they do not

meet the PAAAFR conditions.

The department said in its memo which was submitted to the administrative court that is considering the farmland manipulation case that 226 lands were given to owners of companies and establishments without legal merit out of 396 plots. The investigations committee detailed the violations and encroachments, adding that 27 companies presented only a license to open a shop or a balance sheet, which is a violation of the announced rules, while 19 establishments got lands although their capital is less than half a million dinars.

The fatwa and legislation report said 119 companies submitted their guarantee letters after the deadline, and despite this they were given plots, and it also uncovered manipulation in procedures and documents, and some companies got more than one lot through a draw which took place in one day.

— Al-Jarida and Al-Qabas

EXTRADITION AGREEMENT WON'T VIOLATE RIGHTS: MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Justice and Awqaf Yaqoub Al-Sane revealed the basics of an extradition agreement with the United Kingdom, which regulates the extradition process mentioned in the agreement proposal. The two sides agreed to hand over any person wanted for trial or to serve a sentence. Sane explained on his Twitter account that this article calls for handing persons according to the following: Those wanted for trial who are charged by authorities in the country asking for extradition will be extradited to complete the penal procedures related to the trial.

Sane said those sentenced to jail terms are divided into two types - first are those who were sentenced in absentia, and they will be extradited to the requesting country to serve their sentence with the right of the suspect for

retrial. He said the second type are those who are sentenced to jail sentence in their presence, and the party to the agreement can ask for extraditing that person to complete serving his sentence. He said that article 4 of the proposal calls for guarantees during which extradition will be denied according to the following: Extradition will be denied according to this agreement if the side asked to hand over the suspect has serious reasons to believe that the extradition request was submitted for the purpose of trying or punishing a person based on ethnicity, religion, nationality or gender, or his status or political views. Sane said if extradition will lead to violating the human rights of the person to be extradited, the above mentioned text is among the guarantees of the human rights of those persons.—Al-Qabas





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ASSAD ALLY MAY BE LEBANON’S NEXT PRESIDENT



PARIS: US President Barack Obama (right) shakes hands with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan prior to a meeting at the US Chief of Mission’s residence yesterday. —AFP

OBAMA TELLS RUSSIA, TURKEY TO FOCUS ON IS

OBAMA STRESSES US SUPPORT FOR NATO ALLY TURKEY

**BRUSSELS:** US President Barack Obama led calls yesterday for Turkey and Russia to end their dispute over the downing of a Russian fighter jet and focus instead on Islamic State, the real enemy. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg urged key ally Turkey and Russia to change tack and find ways to avoid a repeat of an incident which threatens to scupper efforts to forge a common front against IS after the group’s attacks in Paris left 130 dead. Obama was frank about what both sides should do. “I want to be very clear: Turkey is a NATO ally. The US supports Turkish rights to defend itself and its airspace and its territory,” Obama said after meeting his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Paris. “We all have a common enemy and that is ISIL and I want to make sure we focus on that threat,” Obama said, using an alternative name for IS.

Erdogan, who has demanded that Russian President Vladimir Putin provide evidence to back up charges Ankara trades in oil with IS, said he too was keen to move on. “We are always willing to resort to the diplomatic language (...) we want to avoid the tensions,” he said. Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu meanwhile said Russia should re-establish communication channels instead of making “baseless accusations” that Ankara shot down the jet to keep hidden oil deals with IS which help fund the group’s deadly activities. “We should sit at the table and discuss what to do instead of making baseless accusations,” Davutoglu said in Ankara.

**NATO Urges Calm, De-Escalation**

For his part, Stoltenberg said: “The focus now should be on how we can de-escalate and calm tensions (and find) mechanisms so that we can avoid the type of incident we saw last week.” He was speaking at the start of a two-day NATO foreign ministers meeting which will review measures adopted by the alliance after the Ukraine crisis to upgrade readiness levels and reassure nervous eastern Europe members who were once ruled from Moscow that the alliance will stand by them.

Stoltenberg says the changes apply globally in what he described as a “dark” security environment, with concerns over Syria looming large. He said US-led NATO has supported Turkey in the past and would announce fresh measures shortly but stressed they were not linked to the downing of the Russian jet along the Syrian border. Washington and its allies fear the Turkey-Russia standoff could undercut efforts to reach a political solution to the crisis in Syria, where Moscow backs long-time ally President Bashar al-Assad and Ankara the rebels seeking to oust him.

**Obama, Putin Conciliatory Tone**

Obama met Putin on Monday on the sidelines of the climate summit in Paris. “President Obama expressed his regret for the recent loss of a Russian pilot and crew member,” a White House official said after their closed-

door meeting. Turkey has returned to Russia the body of the pilot killed when his plane was shot down by the Turkish air force on Nov 24 for allegedly violating its airspace along the Syrian border.

Putin said separately he believed “the decision to shoot down our plane was dictated by the desire to protect the oil supply lines to Turkish territory, right to the ports where it is loaded onto tankers.” He had earlier

snubbed a request by Erdogan to meet on the sidelines of the UN climate conference in Paris. “A claim is made through evidence. If there’s such evidence, then put it on the table and we will look,” Erdogan shot back. If the allegations were proved true, then he would resign, the president said. Ankara has also ruled out making an apology demanded by Moscow. Russia on Monday laid out more details of retaliatory economic sanctions

aimed at denting Turkey’s key tourism and agricultural sectors. It will halt fruit and vegetable imports from Turkey after Putin signed a decree banning charter flights and the sale of package holidays, and scrapping Russia’s visa-free regime with Ankara. Russia has also boosted its military presence in Syria, deploying top-range S400 missiles and new naval forces in support of Assad. — AFP

GULF REWARDS

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# ASSAD ALLY MAY BE LEBANON'S NEXT PRESIDENT

**BEIRUT:** Lebanon's political crisis has taken a dramatic turn with the possibility that a friend of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad could become president in a power-sharing deal aimed at breathing life back into the paralyzed state. The idea of Suleiman Franjeh, a childhood friend of Assad, becoming head of state has taken aback many Lebanese, not least because of who tabled it: Saad al-Hariri, a Sunni politician who leads an alliance forged from opposition to Syrian influence in Lebanon. He would become prime minister under the deal.

It is no less startling because of the backing it would require from Saudi Arabia and Iran, rival states that wield decisive influence over Lebanon's competing factions and which are in conflict elsewhere in the region, including in Syria. As the war escalates in Syria, with Iran and Saudi Arabia increasing their support for Assad and his enemies, a new deal for Lebanon seems unlikely to signal any broader understanding to settle regional conflicts.

But it would point to a desire to preserve a minimal degree of stability in Lebanon. While badly affected by the Syrian war that has triggered militant attacks, driven a million refugees over the border, and fuelled a political crisis, Lebanon has avoided the kind of civil

strife some had feared. Yet the country has been without a president for 18 months and a unity government led by Prime Minister Tammam Salam is barely functioning. The Hariri proposal is the most serious effort yet to resolve that political stalemate.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to Iran's supreme leader who was on a visit to Beirut on Monday said after meeting Salam that hopes for the election of a president had increased. "We hope to witness in the immediate future the selection and election of a president of the republic," a statement from Salam's office quoted Velayati as saying. But the appointment of Franjeh faces big challenges including resistance from politicians who campaigned against Syrian influence in Lebanon, and winning over other leaders who also covet the post reserved for a Maronite Christian, notably Michel Aoun and Samir Geagea. If it fails, analysts believe the chances of a settlement will be even more remote, meaning no imminent end to a crisis of government that has in recent months left trash to pile up in the streets and the army without salaries.

**Christian Rivalries**

Though the proposal has not been made public by Hariri, it has been reported in

Lebanon and confirmed by political sources. Franjeh has said the proposal for him to become president is serious, but not official. The deal is expected to include an agreement on arrangements for new parliamentary elections. Any power-sharing deal needs to reconcile Lebanon's two main camps: the March 8 alliance dominated by the Iranian-backed Shi'ite group Hezbollah, and the Hariri-led March 14 alliance.

The toughest part is winning over other Christians on both sides. Geagea and Aoun are the official candidates of the rival alliances, and a Franjeh presidency risks exacerbating historic rivalries among the Christians. Hezbollah has repeatedly stated its support for the candidacy of Aoun, 80, its ally since 2006 and head of the biggest Christian bloc in parliament. Yet Franjeh, whose ties to the group are much older, may be a preferable choice for the group as Hezbollah wages war in Syria in support of Assad.

By backing Franjeh, Hariri meanwhile risks fracturing the March 14 alliance which was forged a decade ago out of opposition to Syria in the wake of the assassination of his father, Rafiq Al-Hariri. "The ones with a positive view of this settlement argue that a Franjeh presidency will reassure March 8 and Hezbollah,

while the presence of Hariri in the palace as prime minister will reassure the other camp. This is what is being marketed behind the scenes," said Nabil Boumonsef, a political commentator. "There has already been great damage, particularly in the March 14 camp - more than in March 8 - because Franjeh is the clearest ally of the Syrian regime and the Assad family in Lebanon," Boumonsef said. Hezbollah was meanwhile like "a father being asked to choose between two sons", he added.

**Hunting With Basil Al-Assad**

Franjeh's ties to the Assad family date to his childhood when his grandfather, the late President Suleiman Franjeh, took him on trips to Damascus to visit his friend, the late President Hafez Al-Assad. Franjeh used to hunt with Bashar al-Assad's older brother, Basil, who died in a 1994 car crash. He was orphaned in 1978 when a Christian militia attacked his family home in northern Lebanon, killing his father, mother and sister. Geagea has been accused of responsibility for that civil wartime attack, though he has denied participating.

Franjeh, 50, featured prominently in the period of Syrian domination of Lebanon that followed the 1975-90 war, serving as a government minister several times. That era ended

with the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon in 2005 following an international outcry at the Rafik al-Hariri assassination. Franjeh was serving as interior minister at the time.

Hariri, 45, assumed the mantle of Lebanon's most influential Sunni politician after his father's death. He left Lebanon in 2011 after his government was toppled by the March 8 coalition. He has made only two, short trips to Lebanon since then. Boutros Harb, a March 14 politician with presidential ambitions, said he had no personal problem with Franjeh. "But will he bring Bashar Al-Assad with him to Baabda Palace, or will he be president for all Lebanese?" he asked on Twitter. Baabda is the location of the presidential palace.

Speaking last week, a senior figure in Hariri's Future Movement, his cousin Ahmad Al-Hariri, said the only choice for Lebanese was a "brave settlement" to end the repercussions of political "obstruction" which he said had turned into a time bomb, the Hariri-owned Al-Mustaqbal newspaper reported. Franjeh's candidacy would certainly be welcomed by Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a powerful Hezbollah ally who heads the Shiite Amal Movement and whose fractious relationship with Aoun is no secret. — Reuters



RIYADH: Saudi men walk past a candidate's campaign billboards for the municipal council elections in the Al-Sahafa district of the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP

# SMALL STEPS FOR SAUDI WOMEN, DEMOCRACY

## WOMEN TO VOTE FOR FIRST TIME IN LOCAL POLL

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabian women are running for election and voting for the first time on Dec. 12, but their enfranchisement marks only a pigeon step towards democracy and gender equality in the autocratic Islamic kingdom. "For 10 years, since men first voted, we have waited for this chance," said Fawzia Al-Harbi, one of hundreds of female candidates who began campaigning this week. "Now they have given it to us I decided I have the ability to do it."

Fully veiled apart from her eyes and hands and with male chaperones at her side, she met potential voters in a Riyadh shopping mall. Only a fraction of them actually will go to the polls however, and the councils they will choose will have little power. The ruling Al Saud dynasty has no intention of sharing power with elected politicians, say analysts, and it fears combative campaigns or rapid social reform could unleash unrest in a patriarchal state with deep tribal and religious loyalties.

While top princes privately discuss the possibility of eventual elections for the Shura Council, the appointed parliament that discusses new laws and advises the government on legislation, it is still seen as a distant prospect. But political liberalization is edging forward, pressed by a powerful business class that supports modernization and the growing number of educated and working women and their families, and prodded by Western allies.

"The Al Saud recognize the need for change. They started with the municipal elections. Now it is for a majority of seats and they let women vote. They don't discuss it publicly, but in private they talk about elections for the Shura Council," said Khaled Al-Dakhil, a Saudi political scientist. The introduction of women into

public life and gradual moves towards electoral politics were won in the face of stiff opposition from the religious establishment - the conservative clerics upon whose support the Al Saud rely for legitimacy. While the clergy has always - eventually - gone along with reforms pushed by the Al Saud, its opposition has sometimes legitimized a conservative backlash, such as the riots that followed the introduction of girls' education in the 1960s.

**Opening the Door to Evil**

In Saudi Arabia's gender segregated society, campaigning is difficult. The owners of the mall, one of the only public spaces in Harbi's electoral district, were worried the religious police would complain if she spoke to men. As her male campaign team, a social networking and website company she found online, negotiated with the management, Harbi stood at the end of the corridor, observing social proprieties.

Saudi Arabia is the only country to bar women from driving and requires them to have a male "guardian" who can stop them travelling, marrying, working or having some medical procedures. The Grand Mufti, the most senior cleric, wrote in a web posting in 2011 shortly before the late King Abdullah announced women would take part in this election that allowing women to participate in politics was "opening the door to evil".

However, Abdullah appointed 30 women to join the 150-member Shura Council in early 2013 and their participation in discussions has put difficulties faced by women on the agenda, said one of them, speaking anonymously. One recent proposal would allow moth-

ers, as well as fathers, to get a document necessary to register births and to enrol children in schools, approve medical procedures and perform other basic tasks that now need the approval of a man. It has been approved for formal study, said the council member.

**No Political Parties**

This year's national election differs from the two run in 2005 and 2011 by giving voters the power to elect two thirds of council members instead of half. However, political parties remain banned and, in a sign of how far the Al Saud want to keep any whiff of national or ideological politics from the poll, several candidates with histories of activism have been barred from running.

Candidates are not allowed to deploy religious or tribal symbolism, cannot use their photographs on election material, and are barred from working together. They campaign purely on the basis of published biographies and promises on local issues. What alarms the Al Saud is the emergence of any recognizable bloc, such as Islamists affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, that could challenge its power, or that campaigns would push divisive tribal, religious or social issues. An Islamist activist, who did not want to be named, dismissed the councils as being so insignificant that the vote did not warrant the term 'election'. "Is this going to change power? We need a real election," he said.

**Democracy**

One place where the performance of elected councils has been particularly watched is Qatif, the only municipal district where a big majority of residents are Shiites, Saudi Arabia's minority sect that has long complained of discrimination. Jafar Al-Shayab, a Shiite who was elected to the Qatif council in 2005, and was then appointed as its leader in 2011, said it had had mixed success in meeting voter expectations.

While it had created a new channel for communication between citizens and the government, and given a measure of oversight of the municipality, which is a main provider of state services, entrenched bureaucracy made it hard to get things done, he said. He cited the example of efforts to coordinate public works for Qatif residents tired of roads being dug up by different departments on successive weeks. "They failed to do anything in that regard," he said. On the other hand, the council did help persuade the government to deal with Qatif independently instead of treating it as part of Eastern Province. That helped it gain a bigger budget and more control of spending, he said.

The relative lack of powers is evident in the low number of Saudis who have registered to vote. Of a population of 20 million, 1.74 million men have registered and only 130,000 women. Of the 7,000 candidates cleared to run, 978 are women. Outside the mall, Harbi approached a family group of five women and spoke about local problems, her plans to open family centres and improve services, and the experience that had led her to stand. They listened, laughed and entered into the discussion. But when asked if they had registered to vote, they said no. — Reuters

# DEATH ROW CLERIC IN 'HIGH SPIRITS'

**DUBAI:** Saudi death row Shiite cleric Nimr Al-Nimr is in high spirits despite reports he is at risk of imminent execution, his brother said on Monday after visiting the sheikh. "He's good, very well, high spirits. His health is very good and he is ready for anything, even for death," Jaffar Al-Nimr told AFP. The brother spoke after he and several other family members, including Nimr's mother, spent about one hour with him at Al-Hair prison near Riyadh. Nimr was a driving force behind protests that erupted in 2011 in eastern Saudi Arabia, where most of the Shiite minority live.

The protests developed into a call for equality in the Sunni-ruled kingdom, where many Shiites have complained of marginalization. Amnesty International said on Thursday that he was among six Shiite activists at imminent risk of execu-

tion who were "clearly convicted in unfair trials". The London-based human rights group said the six were among a total of 50 people who could soon be put to death in a single day. Media "close to the Saudi Arabian authorities" had reported on the execution plans, Amnesty said.

Nimr is not concerned by those stories, his brother said, accusing the interior ministry of sometimes issuing reports in order to gauge public reaction. But Nimr's family are still "very worried," he said. Among the other activists who Amnesty said are at risk of imminent execution is Nimr Al-Nimr's nephew Ali Al-Nimr, who was 17 when he was arrested following the protests for reform. Ali Al-Nimr is also detained at Al-Hair prison, and his father is to visit him in three weeks, Jaffar Al-Nimr said. — AFP

# ISRAELI TROOPS KILL TWO PALESTINIANS

**JERUSALEM:** Two Palestinians attempted to stab an Israeli soldier and a pedestrian in separate attacks near Jewish settlements in the West Bank yesterday, authorities said, but both attackers were shot dead. The incidents came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas shared a rare handshake at a global climate conference in Paris, but no substantial talks were reported.

Yesterday's first incident occurred near the Gush Etzion bloc of settlements south of Jerusalem, the site of a series of recent attacks. A Palestinian brandishing a knife attempted to stab a pedestrian at a junction near the settlement bloc and was shot dead by an Israeli soldier, police and the army said. The Palestinian health ministry identified the dead Palestinian as 16-year-old Mamoon Raed Muhammed Al-Khateeb. Later in the day, in the northern West Bank, a young Palestinian woman who sought to stab a soldier near the Israeli settlement of Einav was shot and killed by the serviceman, the army said. Palestinian police sources identified her as 19-year-old Maram Hassouna, a university student in Nablus who had previously served two years in prison for another attempted knife attack. Violence since Oct 1 has left 103 dead on the Palestinian side, including an Arab Israeli, as well as 17 Israelis, an American and an Eritrean. The stabbings, shootings and car ramming have mainly been carried out by "lone wolf" attackers who have defied calls for peaceful resistance to Israel's occupation. Many of them have been young people, including teenagers, reflecting anger and lost hope over Israel's occupation, the Palestinians' fractured leadership and the complete lack of progress in peace efforts, analysts say.

ernment does not take steps toward peace. There has been speculation that such moves could lead to the collapse of the Palestinian Authority, the governing administration set up in the 1990s under the landmark Oslo accords.

During a visit to Paris on Monday for a global climate summit, Netanyahu told Israeli reporters that he did not want to see the collapse of the Palestinian Authority as it could further empower Palestinian hardliners, such as Islamist movement Hamas. The Palestinian Authority is dominated by Abbas' Fatah party. "The fact that there's now a bad alternative (the PA) doesn't mean that we won't get a worse alternative," Israeli daily Haaretz quoted Netanyahu as saying. "But there has to be a change in the PA leadership's behaviour."

Netanyahu and Abbas shook hands at the summit in Paris, but no substantial talks were reported and both sides played down the importance of the brief encounter. US Secretary of State John Kerry last week held separate talks with Netanyahu and Abbas, but left without achieving a breakthrough. After returning to the United States, Kerry said the conflict was at a "pivotal point" and expressed concern over "the potential for the situation to spin out of control."

Yesterday's violence also came a day after a Jerusalem court found two Israelis guilty of the burning alive of a Palestinian teen in the run-up to last year's Gaza war, but held off on convicting the alleged ringleader. The third defendant, a 31-year-old Israeli settler, was found to have committed the crime, but the court delayed convicting him after his lawyers submitted a report in recent days arguing his mental state meant he was not responsible for his actions. The report will now have to be evaluated, with a new hearing set for Dec 20.

Palestinians and the victim's family harshly criticized the delay. Mohammed Abu Khdeir, 16, was abducted and killed in July 2014, weeks after the kidnap and murder of three Israeli teenagers in the West Bank. Separately yesterday, a Jewish extremist convicted of arson over the 2014 burning of an Arabic-Hebrew bilingual school seen as a rare symbol of coexistence in Jerusalem was sentenced to three years in prison. — AFP

### Handshake But No Talks

The international community has repeatedly called for moves to reduce tensions but Netanyahu has vowed to step up punitive measures and has accused Palestinian leaders of inciting violence. The Palestine Liberation Organisation's secretary general, Saeb Erekat, has said that it could soon move forward on changing longstanding links with Israel, including security coordination, if Netanyahu's gov-



TULKAREM: An Israeli soldier walks by the body of Palestinian Maram Hassouna, 19, at the Inab checkpoint east of this West Bank city yesterday. — AP

# PIPE BOMB EXPLODES NEAR ISTANBUL METRO

**ISTANBUL:** Five people were injured when a pipe bomb exploded on an overpass near an Istanbul metro station yesterday, the district mayor said, halting some train operations and heightening security fears in Europe's biggest city. Turkey has been on high alert since more than 100 people were killed by two suicide bombers in the capital Ankara in October, three months after a similar attack at a town near the Syrian border in July left 33 dead.

Yesterday's blast near the Bayrampasa metro station came at the height of the evening rush hour, district Mayor Atilla Aydinler told A Haber television. Bayrampasa is a residential and industrial area on the European side of Istanbul. Another broadcaster earlier reported that one person had been killed but Aydinler confirmed only five injuries.

Grainy CCTV footage showed a large flash of light on the overpass followed by what appeared to be burning embers showering to the ground as cars drove below. Photographs on social media showed

what appeared to be dozens of people walking alongside overground train tracks after trains had been halted. Although Istanbul's metro is largely underground, it runs above ground in some places, including around Bayrampasa.

Yesterday's blast was much smaller than the ones in Ankara and the town of Suruc near the Syrian border, which are believed to have been carried out by Islamic State militants. Turkey, a NATO member, has carried out air strikes against the Islamist insurgents in neighboring Syria as part of the US-led coalition fighting the jihadist movement. It also faces security threats from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), whose militants often attack police and security in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast, and the far-left Revolutionary People's Liberation Army-Front (DHKP-C). The DHKP-C, which is considered a terrorist organization by the United States and Ankara, said that one of its members was involved in an attack on the US consulate in August. — Reuters



# VENEZUELA'S HARRIED OPPOSITION EYES LANDMARK WIN

**CARACAS:** Its leaders have been thrown in jail, banned from politics and remain deeply divided, but Venezuela's opposition nonetheless looks set to bruise President Nicolas Maduro by winning control of the National Assembly. Sixteen years into late president Hugo Chavez's leftist "revolution", opinion polls indicate the opposition is poised to win legislative elections Sunday for the first time since the firebrand leader came to power.

That is a sign of widespread frustration with the economic mess besieging oil-dependent Venezuela, where spiralling inflation, empty supermarket shelves and long lines have become the norm under Maduro, Chavez's embattled successor. But it is also a sign that the government's crackdown on the opposition has backfired, said political analysts.

Seven opposition politicians have been banned from politics over allegations of corruption or conspiring to overthrow the government, including popular former lawmaker and presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado. Another 75 are being held as "political prisoners," the opposition says, including protest leader Leopoldo Lopez,

who was sentenced to nearly 14 years in September in a case that drew condemnation from human rights groups and the United Nations. "The government has been badly damaged by its own aggressive strategy," said political scientist Elsa Cardozo of Simon Bolivar University.

The opposition coalition, the Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD), heads into the elections leading the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and its allies by as much as 35 percentage points, according to one poll. Founded in 2009 with the goal of defeating Chavez, MUD is a motley group of some 30 parties from across the political spectrum, with no real leader. The coalition, which has always struggled with its own internal divisions, has gotten a counterintuitive boost from the authorities' harsh treatment, especially Lopez's jailing, said Luis Vicente Leon, head of polling firm Datanalisis. "The government made a mistake (in the Lopez case). It made him into a martyr, which motivates people to vote," Leon told AFP.

## Strength in Adversity

Lopez, a 44-year-old economist with a

master's degree from Harvard, was the most visible leader of massive protests that shook Venezuela last year and left 43 people dead. At the time of his arrest on charges of inciting violence, his radical strategy of forcing Maduro from power through protests was rejected by some in MUD, including the coalition's candidate in the past two presidential elections, Henrique Capriles. But by jailing Lopez, the government rallied support around him, said Leon, who called Venezuela "a Chavista country (that) is disgruntled with Maduro."

Many Venezuelan voters still harbor lingering loyalty to Chavez, who ruled from 1999 until his death of cancer in 2013 and used the oil giant's crude revenues to fund a populist economic model he called "21st-century socialism". But as Maduro has struggled to address dwindling oil revenues and other economic woes, his own popularity has plunged to around 22 percent. Given the widespread frustration, the opposition has not needed to run a high-octane campaign, and the lack of well-known names among its candidates does not appear to be hurting it. The PSUV has even attacked it for being too

invisible. "They haven't campaigned. Their candidates are in hiding. No one knows them," said PSUV campaign chief Jorge Rodriguez.

## New Troubles Ahead

The authorities' treatment of the opposition has however propelled it into the spotlight, including on the international stage. With Lopez locked up in solitary confinement at a military prison outside Caracas, his wife, Lilian Tintori, has met US Secretary of State John Kerry, Pope Francis and Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy. "All this has boosted the opposition's international visibility," said Leon. But beyond a shared call for "change," not much unites the opposition, said Latin America expert Jean-Jacques Kourilandsky of French international relations institute IRIS.

"Aside from that, there's little in common between its members, who cover the political terrain from one extreme to the other," he said, adding that MUD's unity will be difficult to sustain if it wins the elections and has to share power with a hostile president. Victory, he said, "will also mean an even more difficult situation to manage." — AFP



**CARACAS:** Lilian Tintori, wife of jailed Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, talks during an interview on Nov 29, 2015. — AFP



**NEW YORK:** Former New York Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver leaves a federal court in Lower Manhattan on Monday. — AFP

# POWERFUL LEGISLATOR SILVER CONVICTED IN BRIBERY CASE

## CONVICTION SENDS NY POLITICS INTO TURMOIL

**ALBANY, New York:** The conviction of former Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver has shaken New York politics down to the granite foundations of the state Capitol, provoking fresh calls to overhaul a system that has stubbornly clung to its long history of corruption. A jury convicted the 71-year-old Manhattan Democrat on Monday on charges that he traded favors for \$4 million in kickbacks from a cancer researcher and real estate developers.

The rapid downfall was as shocking to lawmakers as it was troubling to longtime observers of New York politics. "A political earthquake has hit Albany," said Blair Horner, legislative director for the New York Public Interest Group. "This is a stinging rebuke to the Albany business as usual defense and a clarion call to clean up state ethics." Silver, first elected in 1976, plans to appeal. He was ousted as speaker following his January arrest and lost his legislative seat upon conviction. He remains free on bail but faces decades in prison when he is sentenced.

For two decades, Silver loomed large as one of Albany's "three men in a room," who along with the Senate leader and the governor negotiated budgets, cut deals and defined New York's brash brand of backroom politics. Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Silver's successor as speaker, Bronx Democrat Carl Heastie, said the conviction shows the need for stronger ethics rules. "Words simply aren't enough," Heastie said following the verdict. "We will continue to work to root out cor-

ruption and demand more of elected officials when it comes to ethical conduct." Cuomo said the verdict showed "it is time for the Legislature to take seriously the need for reform. There will be zero tolerance for the violation of the public trust in New York."

## Reform List

The list of possible reforms already was a long one before Silver was arrested: Term limits, restrictions on lawmakers' outside income, new campaign finance rules and tougher ethics enforcement all have been suggested, only to languish on the legislative agenda. Meanwhile, 30 lawmakers have left office since 2000 because of criminal charges or allegations of ethical misconduct. The Senate's former No. 2 member, Republican Thomas Libous, was sentenced to house arrest last week for lying to the FBI. Ex-Senate Leader Dean Skelos currently is on trial for charges that he extorted bribes and jobs for his son.

In just the past five years, one Albany lawmaker was convicted of taking bribes from a carnival promoter. A second entered into a sham marriage in order to become a citizen. A third was accused of harassing female staffers and forcing one to touch cancerous tumors on his neck and armpit. "The bell could not be ringing louder for real reform in Albany than it is right now," said Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky, a former corruption prosecutor now in his first term.

After Silver's arrest, the Legislature passed modest

changes, including a requirement that lawmakers disclose more about their private income. Calls for greater changes, and a special session devoted to ethics, went nowhere. "What New Yorkers need most is wholesale reform of the political system," said Lawrence Norden, of the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's School of Law. "Enough is enough - it shouldn't take even more convictions for Albany to take reform seriously."

The prosecution was a marquee case in Manhattan US Attorney Preet Bharara's quest to clean up what he has called Albany's "cauldron of corruption." Sheldon Silver got justice, and at long last, so did the people of New York, Bharara said. Prosecutors said Silver traded his office for \$4 million in kickbacks from a cancer researcher and real estate developers and earned an additional \$1 million through investments.

Silver did not testify during his trial and called no witnesses. Dr Robert Taub told jurors he steered numerous patients with asbestos-related cancer to Silver's law firm, enabling the legislator to pocket \$3 million in referral fees. Meanwhile, testimony and evidence revealed, Silver caused \$500,000 in taxpayer funds to go to Taub's research projects and helped his son and daughter get a job and an internship. Prosecutors said Silver delivered tax-abatement and rent-control legislation that favored developers while big developers hired a small law firm that secretly sent him \$700,000 in fees. — AP

# CUBA IMPOSES TRAVEL PERMIT FOR DOCTORS

**HAVANA:** The Cuban government announced yesterday that it is re-imposing a hated travel permit requirement on many doctors, requiring them to get permission to leave the country in an attempt to counter a brain drain that it blames on the United States. It is the first major reverse in Cuba's policy of allowing unrestricted travel for its citizens, put in place in 2013 as President Raul Castro allowed new freedoms as part of a broad set of social and economic reforms.

The government announced on the front page of state media that health professionals in specialties that have been drained by large-scale emigration in recent years will now be required to get permission from Health Ministry officials in order to leave the country. The new policy was announced hours after the end of a meeting Monday between US and Cuban negotiators in Washington to address a crisis in Cuban migration, which has reached its highest levels in at least two decades. Cuba complained that the US said it had no plans to change Cold War-era policies that give automatic legal residency to Cuban immigrants.

Many Cuban doctors cite low pay, poor working conditions and the possibility of well-compensated jobs in other countries as their primary reasons for emigrating. The Cuban government places the blame on the US policy of granting automatic legal residency to Cuban immigrants, with special fast-track benefits for doctors who abandon government medical missions overseas.

The government announcement cited anaesthesiology, neurosurgery, obstetrics and gynecology and neonatal care as among the specialties worst-hit by emigration of doctors in recent years.

"The migration of Cuban health professionals is a concern for the country," the government announcement read, blaming US laws that aid Cuban medical emigration for having "the perverse objective of pushing Cuban health professionals to abandon their missions in other countries". The Cuban government cites free, universal healthcare system as one of the crowning achievements of its socialist revolution. Medical missions abroad are one of the most important sources of foreign exchange for the Cuban government, which receives tens of thousands of dollars a year in cash or commodities for each doctor it sends overseas.

Inside Cuba, many doctors and nurses complain that their profession has been devastated by waves of departures, with vital specialists now absent in many clinics and hospitals. Over the past two years, at least 100,000 Cubans have emigrated to the United States, the majority making a treacherous land journey from Ecuador through South and Central America and Mexico. The pace has quickened dramatically this year, with many Cubans fearing that the detente announced nearly a year ago between the United States and Cuba will mean the end to special migration privileges. — AP

# FBI ARRESTS STUDENT OVER REVENGE THREAT

**CHICAGO:** FBI agents on Monday arrested a black student who allegedly threatened to shoot 16 whites - one for each bullet that hit a teen in a notorious police shooting. Police officer Jason Van Dyke, who was charged last week with the murder of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald was released on a \$1.5 million bail, local media reported. Van Dyke's release came just hours after the online mass shooting threat by Jabari Dean, 21, caused the University of Chicago to close its doors.

In the latest racially charged incident to trouble the US city in recent weeks, Dean allegedly admitted to posting the threat when federal agents arrived at his Chicago home. He told investigators that he had deleted the macabre message shortly after posting it, charging papers said. But a fellow user of the unidentified social media forum where the message was posted had already taken a screen shot of the threat and showed it to the FBI on Sunday.

The posting described a plan to bring an assault rifle and two handguns to the campus quad on Monday and to "execute" 16 white male students or staff members. This was allegedly to be carried out to

avenge McDonald, a 17-year-old black Chicago youth who was cut down in a hail of 16 police bullets in Oct 2014. "I will then die killing any number of white policemen that I can in the process. This is not a joke," the message read. "I am to do my part to rid the world of the white devils. I expect you to do the same."

Tensions flared last week after officials released a dashcam video showing police officer Van Dyke shoot McDonald after the teenager walked away from him. The graphic video was the latest in a string of police shootings caught on camera that have sparked mass - and sometimes violent - protests. The footage has fueled an already acrimonious national debate about racism and the use of deadly force by police.

And the latest threat reflects a grim reality of American life, with campus shootings happening on a semi-regular basis. On Oct 1, a gunman opened fire at a community college in Oregon, killing nine before taking his own life. Deadly shootings were also recorded on a campus in Tennessee on Oct 22, and on a North Carolina campus on Nov 1. One person died in each attack. — AFP



**COLORADO SPRINGS:** Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood shooting suspect Robert Dear (right) appears via video hearing during his first court appearance on Monday. At left is public defender Dan King. — AP

# COLORADO CLINIC SHOOTER CHARGED WITH MURDER

**COLORADO SPRINGS:** The man accused of killing three people and wounding nine in a shooting rampage at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs was told he faces first-degree murder charges during his first court appearance on Monday. Robert Lewis Dear, 57, appearing by video link from jail, spoke only to tell a judge he understood and had no questions. There was no discussion of the motive for the Friday shooting during the brief hearing, and formal charges will be filed next week.

Police records from North Charleston, South Carolina, showed that Dear was charged with rape there in 1992, although Reuters could not determine in court records how the case was resolved. Planned Parenthood has said reports that Dear told investigators "no more baby parts" after his arrest showed he was acting on an anti-abortion agenda. Chief Judge Gil Martinez told Dear, who was in handcuffs and leg irons and strapped into a padded vest, apparently for his own safety, that if convicted, he faces a minimum sentence of life without parole or a maximum of death.

District Attorney Dan May said prosecutors had 63 days after Dear's arraignment to decide whether to bring a death penalty case.

Documents in the investigation were ordered sealed by the court on Monday. For his appearance by closed-circuit camera from the jail where he is being held without bond, Dear was flanked by Dan King of the state's public defender's office. A handful of victims sat in the front of the packed courtroom, watching Dear on a screen.

The rampage blamed on the South Carolina native is believed to have been the first deadly attack on a US abortion provider in six years. The Colorado Springs center has been the target of protests by anti-abortion activists. A police officer and two civilians died in the attack, which according to emerging details, began just outside the building, adjacent to a shopping area on the northwest side of Colorado's second-largest city.

Ke'Arre Stewart, 29, an Iraq war veteran, was shot in front of the clinic after walking out to talk on his cell phone. Wounded, he ran back inside to warn others to take cover, his brother told NBC News. Stewart died of his wound. "I believe that's his military instinct, you know," NBC News quoted his brother, Leyonte Chandler, as saying. "Before his time ran out, I guess that was his main priority ... to help and save other lives."

## Reviewing Security

US Justice Department officials have joined the investigation, raising the possibility the federal government could bring a terrorism or civil rights case against Dear. Planned Parenthood was already on heightened alert against threats of violence nationwide. Some affiliates said they would review their security measures further. Several US media outlets, citing unnamed law enforcement sources, have said Dear used the phrase "no more baby parts" in statements he made to investigators after his surrender. Reuters could not independently confirm those reports.

The reported comment was widely seen as an apparent reference to secretly recorded videos released months ago that anti-abortion groups have said showed Planned Parenthood officials discussing the sale of aborted fetal tissue. Planned Parenthood has said the videos were produced to distort the issue of fetal-tissue donations made by the group for scientific research. Authorities have said they do not know what precipitated the attack and have declined to discuss publicly the suspect's motives. — Reuters



# NEW BURKINA PRESIDENT VOWS 'BETTER TOMORROW'

**OUAGADOUGOU:** Burkina Faso's president in waiting Roch Marc Kabore vowed a brighter future for the west African country yesterday after becoming its first newly-elected leader in three decades.

Kabore won 53.49 percent of ballots in Sunday's poll, winning victory in the first round of a vote to restore stability after a popular revolt toppled longtime leader Blaise Compaore just over a year ago. "We must get to work immediately," 58-year-old Kabore, a former Compaore stalwart who served as his prime minister but broke ranks months before his downfall, told several thousand supporters in the early hours of yesterday.

"Together we must serve the country," he said, pledging "to open up opportunities for a better tomorrow". Turnout was over 60 percent, making Kabore's victory the largest in three decades, far outstripping Compaore's re-election results during his long stay in office. His nearest rival Zephirin Diabre scored 29.65 percent. Kabore expressed his "warm congratulations" to the transitional government that has run the west African country since Compaore was deposed by an uprising after trying to change the constitution to extend his 27-year rule.

Kabore, an affable strongly-built ex banker and politician, was long an ally of Compaore and even headed the ruling party.

## 'He deserved to win'

But in his brief time in the opposition he became a driving force in the campaign to oppose Compaore's bid for a third term. "We have a new president, we hope he succeeds in his mission in the interests of the people who rose up and in the interests of all of Burkina Faso's people," said Harouna Kabore, spokesman for a score of civil society groups behind the October 2014 insurrection.

Even Diabre supporters spoke out in support of the new leader, with waiter Medard Nedie saying "the election was perfect, there were no problems, so he deserved to win." "Now we're waiting for the work." In September this year, activists returned to the capital's streets to protest a short-lived putsch by Compaore loyalists in the presidential guard.

That unrest forced the presidential and parliamentary elections to be delayed, but Sunday's vote went off largely without incident, with voters hungry for change standing in long lines to cast their ballot. The head of the electoral commission, Barthelemy Kere, described the vote as "generally satisfactory" despite "a few anomalies" and said turnout was strong in all of the country's 45 provinces.

## 'Real change'

Political scientist Salam Kassem dubbed the election "one of the cleanest

ever organized in Africa." "People opted for Roch because they didn't want a brutal break, they wanted a soft exit from the previous regime." Burkina Faso's 18 million people, most of whom live in grinding poverty, are hoping for a long era of peace and democracy.

Seen as a consensus figure by some and an opportunist by others, Kabore has pledged to build "a new Burkina Faso" by fighting youth unemployment, improving education and modernizing the health system. For over a decade he led the ruling Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP) party and was seen as Compaore's likely heir, but fell out with the strongman in 2012 and last year formed his own opposition party. Michel Kafando, leader of the transitional regime, praised the vote as "the first fully democratic, transparent" election since 1978.

## 'Sighing with relief'

"We're smiling broadly, we're sighing with relief," said Halidou Ouedraogo, chairman of CODEL, the civil society platform monitoring the election. "The Burkinabe people rose to the challenge of holding these historic elections in a calmer atmosphere." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon hailed the election's "peaceful atmosphere" as well as the "strong participation of women in the electoral process," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.



**OUAGADOUGOU:** Newly-elected president of Burkina Faso, Roch Marc Christian Kabore, waves at supporters after preliminary results showed him to be the winner of recent elections, supporters gather outside Kabore's campaign headquarters in Ouagadougou yesterday. —AP

The CDP was barred from fielding a candidate in the presidential poll under a contested law that prevented anybody connected with Compaore's attempts to cling to power from seeking office.

But the well-entrenched party had several representatives standing in the parliamentary election and could score well under the system of proportional representation. Around 25,000 members of the

security force were deployed to keep the peace during the election, reflecting the nervousness in Burkina Faso over the uptick in Islamist attacks in neighbouring Mali. In recent weeks there have been signs of the violence spilling over the border, with suspected jihadists attacking two police barracks along the frontier in recent weeks and holding up a van carrying money from a gold mine in the north. —AFP



**LONDON:** A peace protestor holds placards outside Downing Street yesterday. British Prime Minister David Cameron has called for a debate and vote in Parliament today on whether Britain should launch airstrikes against militants in Syria, arguing that the nation must stand with its allies in confronting extremism. —AP

# CAMERON SAYS GOVERNMENT UNANIMOUS ON SYRIA STRIKES

LABOR LEADER SAYS CAMERON PLAN LACKS 'ENDGAME'

## OVER 410 BIRTHS IN CAMPS FOR BOKO HARAM DISPLACED

**ABUJA:** More than 410 babies were born in the space of two months in camps for people displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency in northeast Nigeria, the country's main relief agency said yesterday. "Over 410 births were recorded between August and September" in the camps in Borno and Adamawa state, said the head of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Muhammad Sani Sidi.

In the same period, there were 187 marriages — 100 in camps in the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, and 87 in neighboring Adamawa, he added in a statement. Boko Haram's fight to create a hardline Islamic state in northeast Nigeria, which began in 2009, has killed at least 17,000 people and made more than 2.6 million others homeless.

Some 10 percent of the 2.0 million or so Nigerians internally displaced by the conflict now live in government-run camps, according to the International Organization for Migration. In recent months, the camps have also accommodated hundreds of women and children kidnapped by the insurgents and rescued by the military during its counter-offensive.

A statement from Borno state governor Kashim Shettima in May said the rebels "deliberately rape women with the intention of getting them pregnant so they would give birth to future insurgents". The same month, a retired midwife helping at the Malkohi camp outside the Adamawa state capital, Yola, told AFP 10 to 15 women were in the early to mid-stages of pregnancy. Pregnancy tests were also given as part of medical screening for women among the 275 people rescued from Boko Haram's Sambisa Forest stronghold earlier that month.

NEMA's Sidi, however, made no reference as to whether the births in September and October were from women kidnapped by Boko Haram and forced into marriage with Islamist fighters. The agency's spokesman, Manzo Ezekiel, also declined to comment, saying how the women became pregnant was not their focus. "We just help them deliver," he told AFP by telephone from Maiduguri. "The period of time these people were displaced is not more than one year. You can still assume the husbands were responsible for the pregnancy," he added. No other figures were available on births in the camps, he said. — AFP

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister David Cameron said yesterday his government had unanimously agreed a motion on air strikes against militants in Syria, portraying the ruling party as united on an issue that has split the Labor opposition.

Cameron wants to launch the strikes as soon as possible against Islamic State in Syria, convinced Britain can no longer "sub-contract" its security to other countries after the group said it was behind last month's Paris attacks. But his push to win approval for the action in the House of Commons on Wednesday, avoiding a repeat of a damaging defeat in 2013 on a motion to strike Syria, has deepened divisions in the Labor Party.

New Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn accused Cameron of rushing to war, and appealed to those Labor lawmakers who favor the motion to "think again ... and please cast your vote against supporting this government's military endeavors in Syria".

Cameron said his cabinet had agreed the motion on extending air strikes to Syria from Iraq, where British warplanes have been bombing targets since Sept. 30 last year. "That motion talked about, yes, the necessity of taking military action against ISIL (Islamic State) in Syria as well as in Iraq but it is part of a broader strategy," he said in a televised statement, adding that the debate in parliament would be thorough and would last 10-1/2 hours. Asked about the prospects for securing a majority, he said: "Let's wait and see."

Cameron is all but assured of winning parliamentary approval after Corbyn said he would allow his lawmakers to vote according to their conscience on Wednesday-breaking with a tradition for leaders to instruct lawmakers how to vote on big decisions. Media reports say about 50 Labor members of parliament (MPs) will vote with the government, although their leader, a veteran anti-war campaigner, hoped he could still persuade them to change their minds.

Corbyn argued that Cameron's case did not meet his party's demands. "I am saying to every MP, you've got to make up your own mind ... on whether we should commit British troops into yet another war in the Middle East with no endgame in sight," he told BBC Radio Two.

Many Britons are wary of entering into more costly military action in the Middle East after Western intervention in Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan failed to bring stability and, some believe, led to the rise of militants such as Islamic State.

British finance minister George Osborne said the cost of extending air strikes into Syria would run into the "low tens of millions of pounds". But after Islamic State claimed responsibility for killing 130 people in Paris, some members of parliament who were reluctant to launch the air strikes now feel they are needed to protect Britain from such attacks. Defence Secretary Michael Fallon told lawmakers yesterday there was an "urgent need" for Britain to launch air strikes against Islamic State in Syria for "our own security". — Reuters

# GERMAN CABINET APPROVES MILITARY AID FOR IS FIGHT

**BERLIN:** The German cabinet yesterday approved a mandate for military assistance to back the international fight against the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria following the Paris attacks.

The package, which still requires parliamentary approval, covers Tornado reconnaissance jets, a naval frigate and up to 1,200 troops in response to a French appeal. The engagement steps up German involvement in the campaign against IS for the first time to a more direct role.

Chancellor Angela Merkel noted that the German engagement began in September 2014 with the start of a program to train and arm peshmerga forces from Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region fighting IS. "We are expanding this participation in the existing alliance with a fight against the same IS but now in Syria," Merkel, who pledged Paris "any and all assistance" after the jihadist attacks that killed 130 people, told reporters.

The mandate is for one year at a cost of 134 million euros (\$142 million) and can be extended in 2016.

By providing for up to 1,200 soldiers for aerial reconnaissance and support, it would be the largest Bundeswehr mission at the moment, following a drawdown in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier acknowledged ahead of the cabinet vote that it could be a protracted fight.

"We are doing what is militarily necessary, what we can do best, and what we

can back politically," Steinmeier told the daily Bild. "We need patience against an enemy like IS." The head of the armed forces union, the Bundeswehrverband, Andre Wuestner, told public broadcaster ARD that he expected the fight to last "far more than 10 years" and called for a "clearly defined mission".

The parliamentary vote is set for Friday, with approval considered virtually guaranteed as Merkel's "grand coalition" government has an overwhelming majority. Germany is to deploy by early January from the Incirlik air base in Turkey six Tornado aircraft fitted with surveillance technology that can take high-resolution photos and infrared images, even at night and in bad weather.

A German frigate will help protect the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle in the eastern Mediterranean, from which fighter jets are carrying out bombing runs, and the tanker aircraft could refuel them mid-air to extend their range. The mandate will also cover the sending of up to 650 soldiers to Mali to provide some relief to France as it bears a large part of the burden in the global fight against the Islamic State jihadists.

Parliament will also be asked to approve provisions for emergency medical assistance for France in the case of "catastrophic events", and a still-to-be-determined amount of additional humanitarian aid for refugees and displaced people in Syria, Iraq and neighboring countries. — AFP



**PARIS:** France's Counsellor for Paris and the Ile-de-France region Pierre-Yves Bournazel (right), Right-wing Les Republicains (LR)' party member and mayor of Bordeaux Alain Juppe (left) and Les Republicains (left right) right-wing party top candidate for the upcoming regional elections in Ile-de-France Valerie Pécresse (center) pose during their visit Montmartre district, yesterday in Paris. —AFP

# FIERCE CAMPAIGN TO STOP FAR-RIGHT WIN IN FRANCE

**PARIS:** France's far-right National Front (FN) faced a ferocious campaign yesterday to stop it taking two of France's most important regions in elections starting this weekend. As Prime Minister Manuel Valls called the party a "menace to the economy" and business leaders warned of the "ruin" it could cause, two of the main newspapers in the north launched an unprecedented campaign to stop its leader Marine Le Pen taking control of the region.

La Voix du Nord daily and its sister paper Nord Eclair ran a second day of attacks on Le Pen and the party Tuesday, questioning their competence to rule the Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie region.

Articles headlined "Marine Le Pen and the Front are not who they say they are" and "Who are the members of the FN really?" cast doubt on the party's ability to govern the depressed region, once a Socialist stronghold. Le Pen, who looks set to win the region-France's second biggest-in the two-round vote which ends on December 13, reacted with fury to the "scandalous" attacks.

She branded the four pages dedicated to the party she inherited from her father,

Jean-Marie Le Pen, little more than "tracts" in support of the ruling Socialist party.

"We shouldn't be surprised," she shot back, "it's payback for the nine million euros (\$9.5 million) of subsidies they (the newspapers) have got from the Socialists during their mandate." French regional newspapers, which outsell their national counterparts, rarely take a strong editorial line in the run-up to elections. But La Voix du Nord-which refuted the claims that it was in the pay of the FN's rivals as "counter to the truth and the facts"-accused the Le Pen family of "nepotism".

## 'Economic danger'

With Marine Le Pen's 25-year-old niece Marion Marechal-Le Pen also ahead in the race for the vast southeastern region that includes the French Riviera, Premier Valls claimed the party could be "pushed back if everyone does their duty" and goes out to vote. Latest polls also show the anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant party, which has never before won a region, in a close battle for two others, Normandy in the northwest and Burgundy and Franche-Comte in the east. —AFP



**BERLIN:** Professor Andreas Wirsching (left) and Doctor Christian Hartmann speak to media on the upcoming re-release of the book 'Mein Kampf' in Berlin yesterday. The infamously book is already widely available around the world but not will only in January 2016 be available in the country where Hitler wrote it in the 1920's but with remarks from historians. — AFP



## RISE OF ANTI-TALEBAN MILITIAS STOKES INSTABILITY FEARS

**JAMSHEDI, Afghanistan:** Riding on horse-back and motorbikes, commander Naeem's fighters combed a fog-enveloped Taliban infiltration route in Afghanistan's northern badlands, as the government expands anti-insurgent militias across a patchwork of fiefdoms.

Desperate to muzzle the resurgent Taliban, the government is cultivating thousands of militias with chequered pasts as a short-term security fix to supplement ground troops suffering record casualties. But the rise of these groups, a throwback to the devastating civil war in the 1990s that set the stage for a Taliban takeover, risk aggravating factionalism and pushing Afghanistan deeper into what observers call a self-perpetuating conflict. For Naeem, a militia commander with a short, thickest frame who leads around 200 fighters in the volatile Pashtun Kot district in Faryab province bordering Turkmenistan, they are key for survival.

In a scene that could have been lifted from history books, his horse-mounted warriors with back-slung guns and RPG warheads scoured a mountain pass near the village of

Jamshedi for Taliban intruders blamed for a spate of fatal ambushes. "Without uprising forces," said Naeem, who is strongly averse to the label militias because of their contentious history, "the Taliban will overrun the district within minutes, killing their way into villages."

"Without us, Faryab will become another Kunduz," he said, referring to the northern city that the Taliban briefly captured in September in their most spectacular victory in 14 years. There are around 5,000 men serving in Faryab's irregular or semi-regular armed groups and Afghan politicians are pushing for thousands more across the region as the stubborn insurgency expands, a Western official told AFP.

"The price of an AK47 has roughly doubled in the capital Maimana's bazaar over the last two years as militias have re-mobilised in Faryab," the official said, requesting anonymity.

President Ashraf Ghani's government also plans to scale up the Afghan Local Police (ALP) — US-backed village defense forces likened to militias-to 45,000 from a nationwide force of around 30,000, he said.

The proliferation of militias, a potential

powder keg in the already strife-torn nation, represents a complete departure from previous government efforts to disarm these groups and is at odds with Ghani's recent pledges to rein them in.

"The rapid growth of armed groups is alarming as these groups have a terrible history of abusing human rights and refusing to obey their purported masters in the government," the official said.

### Protectors or predators?

With inadequate training, a lack of government oversight and a pervasive culture of corruption and impunity, some militias have morphed into brutal criminal gangs. One ALP unit in Faryab was accused of using a dry well filled with snakes as a torture chamber, according to a recent International Crisis Group report.

Another used a captive in an open field for target practice. Their terrifying tactics including theft, rape and drug trafficking have turned some villages into ghost towns while driving residents in other areas to join the insurgency for self-protection. — AFP



Anti-Taleban armed Afghan fighters look on as they listen to their unseen commander Naeem during a patrol against Taliban insurgents at Jamshedi, on the outskirts of northern Faryab province. — AFP



Pakistan army and police officers examine a bullet-riddled vehicle of the military police at the site of an incident in Karachi yesterday. — AP

## 2 PAKISTANI SOLDIERS KILLED IN TARGETED KARACHI ATTACK

### PAKISTAN DENIES WAR CRIMES IN BANGLADESH

**KARACHI:** Gunmen killed two Pakistani soldiers in the southern city of Karachi yesterday, the military said, a rare attack on the powerful army that could indicate the beginning of a push-back against a tightening crackdown on violence. The two were shot on a busy road in the center of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and financial hub. The killings follow an attack that killed four soldiers last month.

No soldier had been killed in Karachi before that since March, underlining their protected status in a city where murders of policemen, politicians and prominent businessmen are common.

"The two were sitting in their official vehicle, when two men shot them from behind and fled," senior police officer Jamil Ahmed told media. Pakistan's military said unidentified gunmen riding a motorcycle fired on the soldiers.

Karachi, a metropolis of about 20 million people, is home to the stock exchange and central bank and is plagued by political, ethnic and sectarian violence.

Security officials say many politicians in the city have links to violent gangs, operating like a mafia to maintain their hold on power. Two years ago, the military launched a crackdown targeting suspected militants and violent criminals.

Murders have sharply declined since the crack-

down began, although violence is still common. In recent months, the crackdown has expanded to include alleged corruption. Opposition politicians say the military is using it as an excuse to target them. The military denies the accusations.

### War crimes

Meanwhile, Pakistan has denied committing war crimes during Bangladesh's independence conflict in 1971, in what analysts said yesterday was an unusually strong statement signalling worsening ties.

The move follows the executions in Bangladesh last week of senior opposition leaders convicted of war crimes during the conflict. Pakistan has engaged in a war of words with its former eastern wing, which broke away in 1971 following the rise of a separatist movement and genocide as well as rape by Pakistani forces of Bangladeshi civilians.

In a statement by the foreign office on Monday, Islamabad "rejected insinuation of complicity in committing crimes or war atrocities."

"Nothing could be further from the truth," the statement added. Badar Alam, editor of Pakistan's Herald magazine, said the statement was a "stiffening of Islamabad's stance" that marked a retreat from former Pakistani military ruler Pervez Musharraf's 2002

statement of regret for "excesses committed during the unfortunate period".

Bangladesh has been roiled by violence for much of the last three years since a domestic tribunal began delivering its verdicts on opposition figures accused of orchestrating massacres during the 1971 war. Four people have so far been sent to the gallows in trials criticized by some groups for failing to reach international standards.

"Both countries have to cater to their internal gallery. If you look at the war crimes trials that are happening in Bangladesh, most observers are seeing them in the context of current domestic politics in that country," Alam added. "Pakistan is also playing to its own gallery. At this time Pakistan appears to be in conflict with every country in South Asia," he said yesterday, noting worsening ties with Afghanistan and India. Dhaka says the 1971 war left three million people dead, though independent researchers put the toll much lower.

Pakistan formally recognized Bangladesh's independence in 1974, but has never issued an official apology for its actions during the war.

A 1972 Pakistani judicial inquiry said genocide had been committed, but its recommendations to try the generals responsible were never followed. — AFP

## PAKISTAN, AFGHAN LEADERS VOW TO RESUME TALEBAN PEACE TALKS

**ISLAMABAD:** The leaders of Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to work together to revive stalled peace talks with Taliban insurgents after meeting on the sidelines of a climate change conference in Paris, officials said.

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani met Monday amid heightened tensions over Kabul's accusations that Islamabad aided the Taliban in their brief capture of the northern Afghan city of Kunduz in late September.

Pakistan, which wields considerable influence over the militants, hosted a historic first round of peace negotiations in July. But the talks stalled soon thereafter when the Taliban belatedly confirmed the death of their longtime leader Mullah Omar.

The United States and China have been pushing for the process to restart, but frosty ties between Islamabad and Kabul have been hampering those efforts.

A Pakistan government statement late Monday said Ghani and Sharif had discussed the negotiations while they were in Paris. "Both leaders agreed to work with all those who would enter such a process as

legitimate political actors and act, alongside the Afghan government, against those who refuse to take the path of peace," the statement said.

Hopes for better ties were high after Ghani's election last year. But they have since plummeted, with Kabul blaming Islamabad for a surge in Taliban violence in 2015.

The Pakistani statement said Monday's talks were held "in an atmosphere of warmth and cordiality".

Sharif also met his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi at the conference, the government said in a statement issued in Paris late Monday.

"The Indian Prime Minister approached Premier Nawaz Sharif and had a brief meeting with him," the statement said, adding that the leaders seemed "friendly" and parted with a "warm handshake".

India and Pakistan have been arch-rivals since gaining independence from Britain in 1947 and have fought three wars. Speaking at the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, Sharif outlined a four-point initiative to ease tensions between the two nuclear-armed countries. — AFP

## SRI LANKA TO LAUNCH SPECIAL COURT TO PROBE WAR CRIMES

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka will launch a special war crimes court early next year to investigate major atrocities during the bloody finale to its decades-long ethnic war, a top official said yesterday.

Former president Chandrika Kumaratunga, who heads the office of national unity and reconciliation, said her work cannot be done without justice for victims of the 37-year conflict that ended in May 2009.

"We have ended the war nearly seven years ago, but we have not won the peace," Kumaratunga told reporters. "No reconciliation is possible without accepting the mistakes of the past." She said tens of thousands of victims of the Tamil separatist conflict would not accept reconciliation unless war criminals are brought to justice.

A special court is set to begin work by January, two months before a UN Human Rights Council review of Sri Lanka's progress in implementing a September resolution calling for accountability for war crimes, she said.

"Enormous amount of work has been done and the special court should start its work by the end of this month or by early January," she said.

"They (the court) will not be chasing behind every soldier, but the main line of command will be looked at," she said adding that surviving Tamil rebel lead-

ers would also be hauled up to answer allegations of "horrendous crimes" by the rebels. International rights groups as well as Tamils had pressed for international judges and prosecutors to be involved in a Sri Lankan war crimes probe, but the government has firmly rejected this.

Kumaratunga said she personally believed that involving independent foreign judges was preferable as suggested in a UN Human Rights Council resolution adopted in October.

Local and international rights groups have accused both sides in the war of targeting civilians. At least 100,000 civilians were killed in the conflict between 1972 and 2009.

Some of the bloodiest fighting came in the last two months when troops unleashed a no-holds-barred onslaught against the rebels, with rights group saying tens of thousands of people may have been killed. Kumaratunga, who ruled between 1994 and 2005, said her office was working on building bridges between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils to ensure ethnic peace after decades of war.

"Reconciliation and accountability will have to go hand in hand," Kumaratunga said. "You cannot have one without the other." — AFP

## JAPAN PROBES MYSTERY BOATS CARRYING DEAD BODIES OFF COAST

**TOKYO:** They drift into seas near Japan by the dozens every year, ghostly wrecked ships thought to come from impoverished North Korea. Japanese authorities said yesterday they are investigating nearly a dozen wooden boats carrying decomposing bodies that were found off the country's northwestern coast over the past month.

In most cases, the bodies are in such bad shape

after being at sea for weeks that it's been impossible to determine their cause of death, officials say. On Nov 20, officials found 10 bodies in three boats off the coast of Ishikawa prefecture. Two days later, another wooden boat was found off nearby Fukui prefecture with six skulls, one nearly intact body with a head, and various other bones and remains, coast guard official Yuka Amao told The Associated Press.



This Nov 29, 2015 photo shows a ship of unknown nationality in Wajima, Ishikawa prefecture, central Japan, after it was found in mid-November off Noto peninsula and was towed to the shore. — AP

Coast guard officials said at least 11 shoddy fishing boats carrying the bodies have arrived since late October. Most are carrying equipment, nets and signs written in Korean, including one carrying a sign saying "Korean People's Army," the North Korean army.

The officials said they could not say for certain, but the poor condition and small size of the 10- to 12-meter-long (33-foot- to 40-foot-long) vessels are not typical of South Korea or Japan, said coast guard spokesman Yoshiaki Hiroto. He said evidence suggests the boats are from the Korean Peninsula, though he declined to identify the country. The recent spate of arrivals has drawn attention, though such discoveries are not out of the ordinary: dozens of such wrecked boats drift toward the Japan every year.

So far this year, 34 mystery boats have drifted over, including the 11 found between late October and November. Last year, Japan found 65 of them. In 2013, there were 80, according to the coast guard.

The number tends to rise during the fall and winter season because of prevailing winds from the northwest, Hiroto said. In recent years, fishermen from food-short North Korea have increasingly forayed into Japanese waters hunting squid, and some of the boats found adrift have been carrying squid-catching equipment. They are usually ordered away when caught by the Japanese coast guard since the two countries lack a fishing agreement.

Sometimes disabled North Korean vessels are rescued with their crews intact, and repatriated. In other cases, fishermen have used their ships to defect to South Korea. The history of such drifting arrivals goes back centuries, according to historical accounts. — AP



NEW DELHI: Indian Border Security Force soldiers salute as they march in a parade during golden jubilee celebrations of their raising day in New Delhi yesterday. — AP



## BLANK SPACES REPLACE NYT ARTICLE ON THAI ECONOMY

**BANGKOK:** The International New York Times said its printer in Thailand removed an article on the moribund state of the kingdom's economy yesterday, forcing the edition to carry blank spaces including on the cover.

It was the second time in 10 weeks that the paper has said its local printer declined to run an article, in a country where media freedoms have been increasingly curtailed since last year's military takeover.

Yesterday's newspaper was supposed to run a report headlined "Thai economy and spirits are sagging" that explored the junta's inability to jump-start the flagging economy. It also touched briefly on succession concerns surrounding 87-year-old King Bhumibol, the world's longest serving monarch who is revered but ailing.

Instead chunks of the front page and page six were blank and carried the sentence: "The article in this space was removed by our printer in Thailand. The International New York Times and its editorial staff had no role in its removal." A spokeswoman for the paper gave the same reply when asked for comment by AFP.

Eastern Printing PCL, the paper's Thai printer, did not comment on why it pulled the piece when contacted by AFP. The article was still accessible online in Thailand.

## Not the first time

On September 22 Eastern Printing failed to publish the entire newspaper because the Asia edition featured a detailed front-page article on the health of King Bhumibol, a hugely controversial topic in Thailand. That story also discussed anxieties over the succession.

Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, who does not enjoy his father's widespread popularity, is next in line for the throne. The monarchy is shielded by one of the world's toughest lese majeste laws and prosecutions have surged since the military coup.

The media routinely self-censors when reporting on the monarchy for fear of falling foul of the broadly-worded law, which carries up to 15 years in jail for each count of insulting the king, queen, heir or regent.

Yesterday's piece was centered on the stuttering economy in Thailand, which has one of the lowest growth rates in Southeast Asia. The country is blighted by high household debt, low consumer confidence and disappointing exports.

Since toppling a democratically elected government in May 2014, Thailand's generals have stamped down on critical media. But some criticism does take place.

## International New York Times



This combination of pictures made yesterday shows the front page of today's Asia edition of The International New York Times (left) and the same edition printed in Bangkok (right) where an article (bottom C) on Thailand was removed by the local printer and replaced by the text "The article in this space was removed by our printer in Thailand. — AFP

## International New York Time



Yesterday English-language newspaper The Nation ran a rare editorial strongly criticizing the lese majeste law.

"The law is clearly not being applied equitably or in the spirit with which it was promulgated," the paper said, adding it was

"too often abused for political ends".

The editorial came as a court yesterday sentenced a 60-year-old man to six years in prison on a lese majeste charge for distributing pamphlets at a rally eight years ago.

In 2005 King Bhumibol said in a land-

mark speech that even he was not above public criticism.

Last month the International New York Times said it would cease printing in Thailand altogether by the end of the year, citing rising production costs. — AFP



MANILA: A protester holds a slogan with a picture of U.S. Marine Lance Cpl Joseph Scott Pemberton outside the courts at Olongapo city, Zambales province, northwest of Manila yesterday. — AP

US MARINE FOUND GUILTY OF KILLING TRANSGENDER FILIPINO  
PEMBERTON SENTENCED TO 6-12 YEARS IN JAIL

**OLONGAPO, Philippines:** A Philippine court yesterday convicted a US Marine of killing a Filipino last year after he discovered she was a transgender woman in a hotel while he was on a break after participating in joint military exercises in the country. Lance Cpl Joseph Scott Pemberton was convicted of homicide by first strangling Jennifer Laude and then dunking her head into a toilet bowl in the hotel they had checked into after meeting in a disco bar in October 2014 in Olongapo, a city northwest of Manila. He was sentenced to 6-12 years in jail and credited with time already spent in detention, said court clerk Gerry Gruspe.

The court also ordered Pemberton, who has been detained at a Philippine military camp for about a year, to pay Laude's family 4.6 million pesos (\$98,000) in damages. Laude's mother, Julita, said that while she was happy the verdict detailed everything that had transpired, she was not pleased with the length of the jail term because she had hoped Pemberton would be convicted of murder, a more serious crime than homicide.

"But the important thing is he will be jailed," she said, crying. "My son's life is not wasted." The Laude family's private lawyer, Harry Roque, said that "this is a bittersweet victory because it is not murder," adding that "if what he did isn't cruelty, I don't know what is." Witnesses had testified that Pemberton squeezed

Laude's neck, dragged her to the toilet and dunked her head into the bowl. Two of Pemberton's US Marine colleagues testified that Pemberton told them, "I think I killed a he/she."

The judge said she downgraded the murder charge to homicide because conditions such as cruelty and treachery had not been proven. The killing sparked anger in the Philippines and reignited calls by left-wing groups and nationalists for an end to America's military presence in the country at a time when the US is reasserting its dominance in Asia and Manila has turned to Washington for support amid an escalating territorial dispute with China.

## JUSTICE

Half a block from the court, dozens of left-wing protesters rejoiced after the verdict was announced by burning an effigy of Uncle Sam and yelling "Justice for Jennifer!" Police officers, fire trucks and iron railings were used to prevent them from getting closer to the courthouse.

Pemberton, an anti-tank missile operator from New Bedford, Massachusetts, was one of thousands of American and Philippine military personnel who participated in the joint exercises last year. He and a group of other Marines were on leave after the exercises and met Laude and her friends at a bar in Olongapo, a city known for its



MANILA: Julita, mother of Filipino transgender Jennifer Laude, gestures as she talks with reporters before entering the courts at Olongapo city, Zambales province, northwest of Manila, yesterday. — AP

nightlife located outside Subic Bay, a former US Navy base. At least two witnesses testified that Laude was a sex worker. Pemberton and Laude left the bar and checked in together at a nearby hotel. About 30 minutes later, Pemberton walked out, leaving the room's door ajar, according to hotel staff.

Pemberton testified in August that he had choked Laude during a fight that erupted when he discovered she was a transgender woman, but said she was still alive when he left her in a shower,

according to his lawyer, Rowena Garcia Flores. Lawyers for Laude's family, however, said Laude was dead when Pemberton left her. Police have said that Laude had apparently been drowned in a toilet. In the decision, Regional Trial Court Judge Roline Ginez-Jabalde ordered Pemberton temporarily jailed at the New Bilibid Prison, a national penitentiary in suburban Muntinlupa City.

The judge said an agreement between the US and the Philippines was ambiguous and failed to state in which facility within the Philippine military headquarters Pemberton would be detained and which government agency would have supervision. She ordered that he be brought to the national penitentiary, in accordance with local laws, until it is decided where he should be permanently held.

Pemberton's lawyers made an impromptu appeal against him being brought to the national penitentiary. After meeting with the lawyers and government representatives, the judge allowed Pemberton to be detained for five days at the military headquarters pending a permanent detention site, said Roque, the Laudes' lawyer. The case has revived a debate over whether government should have custody of US military personnel who run afoul of local laws under a Visiting Forces Agreement the two allies signed in 1998. The agreement, which allows US forces to conduct military exercises in the Philippines, says that the Philippines can prosecute American service members, but that the US has custody over them "from the commission of the offense until completion of all judicial proceedings." — AP

## MANILA ATTACKS BEIJING SOUTH CHINA SEA CLAIMS IN COURT CASE

**THE HAGUE:** The Philippines has sought to debunk China's claims to disputed islands in the South China Sea, court officials said on Monday as an international tribunal wrapped up a five-day hearing.

Although Beijing has refused to take part in the hearing before the Permanent Court of Arbitration, judges have now given China until January 1 to write a rebuttal to the case laid out by Manila in the Hague. "We view China as a valued friend, and it is precisely to preserve that friendship that we initiated this arbitration," Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert Ferreros del Rosario said Monday as he closed his country's case, according to a court statement. Beijing claims sovereignty over almost the whole of the South China Sea on the basis of a segmented line that first appeared on Chinese maps in the 1940s, pitting it against several neighbors.

But it is also a party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Manila has called for the tribunal, set up in 1899, to rule on the dispute, accusing Beijing of flouting the convention.

The Philippines argued "China's claims to sovereign rights jurisdiction, and to 'historic

rights', with respect to the maritime areas of the South China Sea... are contrary to the Convention," the court said in a statement issued late Monday. The Philippines also believes China has failed "in its duty to prevent its nationals from exploiting resources over which the Philippines has sovereign rights and has failed to respect traditional fishing rights at Scarborough Shoal," the statement said.

Beijing had also failed to protect the marine environment by using destructive fishing methods such as cyanide and explosives, while its ships were proving a hazard in the sea.

Even after Manila launched the court proceedings, Beijing had exacerbated the tensions by "building artificial islands at nearly all of the maritime features presently under its control," Philippine officials told the court. The hearing was held behind closed doors. But Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam were allowed to have observers present.

Beijing has never precisely defined its claims to the strategic South China Sea, through which about a third of all the world's traded oil passes. — AFP

## AUSTRALIAN FORMER HELLS ANGELS ABDUCTED IN THAILAND

**BANGKOK:** Thai police said yesterday they are searching for a gang of foreigners believed to have abducted an Australian former Hells Angels gang member at gunpoint. Wayne Rodney Schneider, 37, was kidnapped on Monday by a group of masked men outside his house in Pattaya, a seaside resort town notorious for its sprawling red light district and links with organized crime.

"He was abducted and carried into a van yesterday at dawn according to two security guards who were witnesses", Police Colonel Sukthart Pumanmuang, commander of Pattaya City police station, told AFP. "He (Schneider) has a fitness business in Australia and was also in the Hells Angels group," he added.

Local media ran images of a blood splatter and bullet casings at the scene of the kidnap.

The security guards reported seeing him beaten unconscious before being bundled into the van. Police yesterday named their chief suspect as Antonio Bagnato, a 27-year-old Australian national.

"A court has issued an arrest warrant on charges of kidnapping and assault," Sukthart said. He added that Schneider had been in Thailand for around one month and had rented a house, putting down a 130,000 baht (\$3,626) deposit for six months. Local media reported that Schneider and Bagnato had been out drinking together the night before the kidnap. The Sydney Morning Herald added that Schneider had previously had run-ins with the law in his homeland, linked to his membership of the Hells Angels. The Australian embassy in Bangkok did not return calls requesting comment. — AFP

## INDONESIAN POLICE FIRE TEAR GAS AT PRO-PAPUA DEMO

**JAKARTA:** Police fired tear gas at a hundreds-strong crowd hurling rocks yesterday during a protest in Jakarta against Indonesian rule over the eastern region of Papua, with a lawyer saying that over 100 demonstrators had been detained. Several hundred protesters, mostly university students from Papua, took part in the demonstration to mark the anniversary of the region's declaration of independence in 1961, two years before Indonesia took control.

About 400 police in riot gear were standing guard at the protest by a roundabout in downtown Jakarta, which turned violent as demonstrators hurled rocks and police responded by firing tear gas and chasing protesters. "They have no permit to stage a protest here, so we are dispersing them," said Central Jakarta police chief Hendro Pandowo, insisting the police had not used excessive force. Protest organizers insisted they had notified authorities.

Veronica Koman, lawyer for Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation, speaking on behalf of the protesters, said at least 114 had been detained by police, with some stopped before even reaching the site. Journalists at the scene saw demonstrators being put into police vehicles and driven away.

Police refused to confirm how many protesters had been detained. The remaining demonstrators were later driven from the scene in buses and trucks, but said they were voluntarily going to join the detained protesters at police stations to show solidarity. A low-level insurgency has simmered for decades in Papua, where local groups are fighting on behalf of the mostly Melanesian population, who are a different ethnicity from most Indonesians. Jakarta took control of the region, which forms half of the island of New Guinea, in 1963 from former colonial power the Netherlands. — AFP



JAKARTA: Papuan pro-independence demonstrators shout slogans as they stage a protest in Jakarta yesterday during a protest against Indonesian rule over the eastern region of Papua. — AFP

## RUDDER PROBLEM AND PILOT ACTIONS LED TO AIRASIA CRASH

**JAKARTA:** A rudder control system problem that had occurred nearly two dozen times in the previous 12 months coupled with the pilots' response led to last year's crash of an AirAsia plane in Indonesia that killed all 162 people on board, investigators said yesterday. In releasing their report, the country's National Transportation Safety Committee said an analysis of Flight 8501's data recorder showed the rudder control system had sent repeated warnings to the pilots during the Dec. 28 flight from the Indonesian city of Surabaya to Singapore.

Aircraft maintenance records for the Airbus A320 showed that similar problems with the rudder system had occurred 23 times during the year prior to the crash, including nine times in December. The investigators said the fault was caused by cracked soldering on an electronic card. Investigator Nurcahyo Utomo said the malfunction by itself should not have been dangerous. But after the fourth time an alarm went off during the flight, a crew member apparently went outside of handbook recommendations and removed a circuit breaker to try to reset the system, he said.

The autopilot then became disengaged, and the aircraft began to roll, but no movement was detected on the

plane's manual control stick for nine seconds, he said. It then began climbing rapidly before stalling and plummeting into the Java Sea.

Utomo said the voice recorder showed the pilot said "pull down," but in fact the plane was ascending. "It seemed that there was a miscommunication between the pilot and co-pilot after the fourth fault," he said. The same warnings had occurred three days before the crash with the same pilot, who witnessed a technician on the ground addressing the problem by removing the circuit breaker and then replacing it, according to Utomo and the investigation report. The data recorder showed the circuit breaker was apparently removed during the flight, they said.

Ruth Simatupang, a former Indonesian aviation investigator who was not involved with the report, questioned how the rudder system problems could have continued without any proper action by AirAsia or the government.

"It should be a big question for the airline," she said, adding that if the plane had been properly maintained, the problem would have been flagged and repaired. "With the 23 faults, there should have been a strong warning about the plane issued by the Transportation Ministry." — AP





Men do their morning exercises in front of the skyline of the Lujiazui Financial District in Pudong in Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

## NUSRA FREES LEBANESE HOSTAGES

Continued from Page 1

Nusra has killed four of the captives. "Praise be to God. The joy cannot be described," another of the captives told Al Jazeera. Lebanon also gave Nusra several trucks of humanitarian aid.

The Aarsal incursion was a dramatic and bloody example of spillover from the 4-1/2 year old Syrian conflict. The army fought several days of lethal battles to drive the militants from the town not far from where yesterday's swap took place. The exchange began with the Nusra Front releasing the body of one of the Lebanese soldiers it had killed in captivity, Mohamed Hamieh.

The freed soldiers and policemen were carried aloft during celebrations in the town of Labweh near the Lebanese border where they briefly stopped on their way to Beirut. Politicians from across the political spectrum congratulated the men on their release. Relatives of the captives celebrated at a tented sit-in they have held near the government headquarters in Beirut since last year to press for negotiations. There was dancing and sweets were

offered to visitors who went to congratulate them.

"I was born again today, this is a re-birth for me and my brother. It has been a year and five months of agony for the soldiers' parents, my parents and me," Marie Khoury, the sister of freed soldier George Khoury told Reuters at the sit-in. Qatar has been involved in efforts to mediate the release of the captives for a year or more. A previous effort to secure their release broke down a year ago after one of the captives was killed. The Qatar National News Agency said the successful mediation followed a request from the Lebanese government.

While the Nusra Front and Islamic State attacked Aarsal together, the groups are enemies in the Syrian war, now in its fifth year. Qatar has been a major sponsor of the insurgency against President Bashar al-Assad, supporting rebels including groups deemed moderate by the United States. It has denied backing the Nusra Front or Islamic State. Qatar's foreign minister told Reuters in June the country did not deal with either group, but said the door should be kept open for Syrians with the Nusra Front if they decided to leave Al-Qaeda.



Romanian paratroopers march during a military parade in Bucharest during festivities to celebrate the National Day of Romania yesterday. — AFP

## MPs BLAST DOW DEAL AS 'THEFT OF CENTURY'

Continued from Page 1

The current Assembly asked its public funds protection committee to investigate the deal and why the government rushed the payment of the fine, when it could have delayed it. Head of the committee MP Abdullah Al-Turaiji said the deal is one of the largest financial crimes in the history of Kuwait because it cost state coffers a huge sum. He said the state-owned Kuwait Petrochemicals Co (PIC) signed the deal with the knowledge of the government and hired an international advisor, while ignoring a large number of consultants in Kuwait. He said that the financial advisor appointed by the company owned a stake in Dow Chemical and made \$62.7 million from the deal.

He charged that the then oil minister Mohammad Al-Olaime and former CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corp Saad Al-Shuwaiyeb "cheated the Supreme Petroleum Council" with regards to the deal. He said that former oil minister Hani Hussein worked as a consultant for Dow Chemical and also for PIC. He sent 35 top oil executives into retirement to cover up the mistakes in the deal.

Turaiji said that large international banks had advised Kuwait against going ahead with the deal, but oil executives insisted to sign the joint venture. He also said that Kuwait's legal representation in the arbitration was weak and not convincing, and hinted that the whole issue might have been manipulated to make illegal profits. Turaiji then called for referring the report to the public prosecution.

But liberal MP Faisal Al-Shaye insisted that the cancellation of the joint venture came after opposition MPs threatened to grill former prime minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, saying the decision was political in nature. He said the committee report is

unfair and biased because it interviewed people with one opinion, so it is one-sided. Shaye added that people who rejected the deal and SPC members who resigned were not called for the probe.

The lawmaker said that everyone knows that the decision to scrap the deal was political and wondered how the report can implicate 24 people in the issue. He said that some of the allegations are unsubstantiated, but still called for referring the report to the public prosecution for a legal probe. MP Sultan Al-Shemmari described the issue as the "theft of the century" caused by political disputes. MP Faisal Al-Kandari described the persons charged in the reports as "thieves" who betrayed national interests for their selfish interests.

The Assembly also discussed another report of the committee about public funds wasted in a private company called Advantage, which lost almost all its capital. The Assembly approved a recommendation to refer the report to the public prosecution.

In other business, the Assembly criticized Cabinet ministers for failing to answer queries by MPs and decided to hold a meeting with the government to find a solution to this problem. State Minister for National Assembly Affairs Ali Al-Omair however told the Assembly that ministers have already answered 2,007 questions from around 2,350 questions received.

Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh told the Assembly that the government will continue to sell its stakes in local companies, adding that the process had started in 1995 and is not new. He agreed to meet with the finance committee tomorrow to discuss the issue with them. MPs also voted to ask the public utilities committee to speed up the amendment of Kuwait Airways law with MP Askar Al-Enezi saying the delay is caused by disputes of influential people.

## US SPECIAL OPS TO FIGHT IS MILITANTS

Continued from Page 1

"Where we find further opportunity to leverage such capability, we are prepared to expand it." US lawmakers regularly haul senior officials into Congress to testify about the progress of the US-led effort to counter IS jihadists in Iraq and Syria. The United States has been leading a coalition fighting IS in both countries since August last year and, though there are about 65 nations in the coalition, American warplanes and drones are doing the lion's share of the work. Despite more than a year of daily plane and drone strikes against the IS group, the United States is still struggling to defeat the jihadists.

Carter was joined by his top commanding officer General Joe Dunford. Asked whether the IS group had been "contained," Dunford said: "We have not contained ISIL." Speaking more than two weeks after terror attacks in Paris left 130 dead, Carter called on international powers to ramp up efforts to defeat IS. "The international community - including our allies and partners - has to step up before another attack like Paris," he said. "The more contributions we receive from other nations, the greater combat power we can achieve using our own force." His comments come as the British parliament prepares to debate whether the Royal Air Force should start bombing in Syria. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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Focus

ISRAELI MILITARY  
GOVT, DISAGREE  
OVER UNREST

By Maayan Lubell

Two months into a wave of stabbings, shootings and vehicle attacks by Palestinians targeting Israelis, gaps are emerging between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the military and intelligence chiefs over what is driving the violence. The rifts raise questions about whether the right tactics are being used to quell the unrest, the most sustained that Israel, Jerusalem and the West Bank have experienced since the last Palestinian uprising, or intifada, ended in 2005.

While there is agreement between Netanyahu, the military and the Shin Bet security agency about broad aspects of the violence - that it is being carried out by "lone-wolves" active on social media and that tensions over the al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem have contributed - the deeper causes are disputed. Netanyahu has repeatedly accused 80-year-old Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of directly inciting the unrest. He also describes it as a manifestation of Palestinians' hatred of Jews and unwillingness to accept Israel's right to exist. "What is driving this terrorism is opposition to Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, within any borders," he said as he left for the climate talks in Paris on Sunday.

In contrast, the military and Shin Bet have tended to point to a variety of economic and socio-political factors that they see fuelling Palestinian anger and frustration, particularly among young men and women in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. While they have criticized Abbas and his Fatah party for tacitly condoning the violence, including praising "martyrs" who have carried out stabbings, they have avoided accusing the Palestinian leader of inciting it directly. "The motivation for action is based on feelings of national, economic and personal discrimination," the Shin Bet wrote in an analysis last month. "For some of the assailants an attack provides an escape from a desperate reality they believe cannot be changed."

At a cabinet meeting in November, the head of the army's intelligence division gave a similar description, leading to a row with at least one minister who was angry that the general's briefing was not in line with the government's position. The details were leaked to Israeli media and confirmed to Reuters by a government source who attended the meeting. Since Oct 1, when the violence began, 19 Israelis and an American have been killed. Over the same period, Israeli forces have shot dead 97 Palestinians, 58 of whom were identified by Israel as assailants.

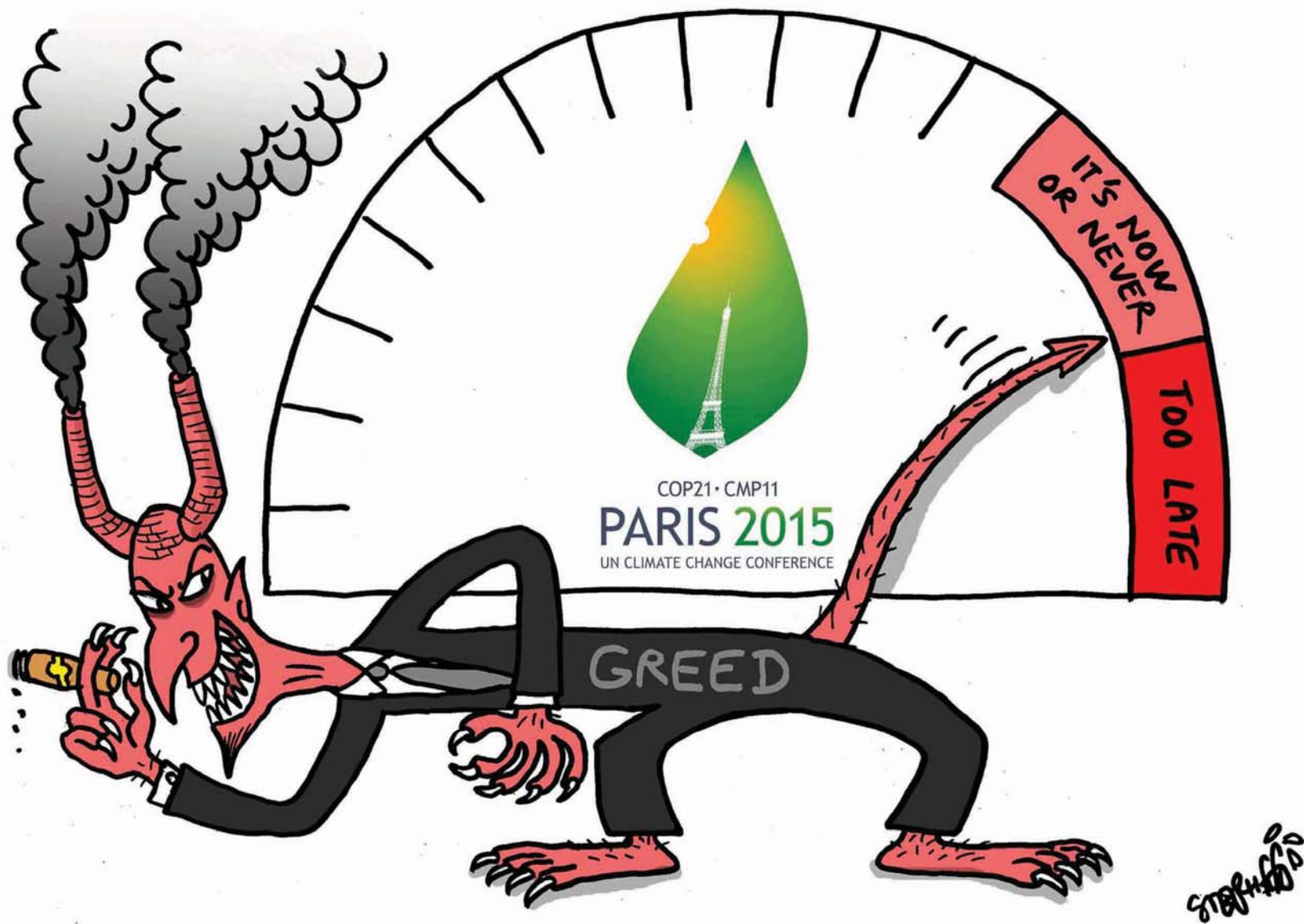
'Pinpoint Action'

As well as differences in identifying the causes, there are gaps in the approach being advocated to quell the situation. The military, which has occupied the West Bank for 48 years and is minutely involved in maintaining stability, in coordination with Palestinian security forces, is pushing for pinpoint operations that target specific perpetrators. Senior ministers who sit on Netanyahu's security cabinet want a heavier toll to be exacted on the Palestinian population, arguing that it is the only effective deterrent. So far, Netanyahu has shown no inclination to launch a large-scale military operation, despite ramping up deployments in the West Bank by 40 percent and calling up reserve units. He has also rejected suggestions by Israeli and US officials that he offer concessions to the Palestinians to diffuse tension. Violence has to end first, he says. Instead, there is a strong presence of Israeli troops and checkpoints across the West Bank, without the sort of iron-fisted tactics that marked the last intifada, although the homes of several attackers have been destroyed. "This is about taking pinpoint action to tackle specific challenges," a senior army officer told Reuters, saying operations focused on three particularly unruly areas.

Kobi Michael, a senior researcher at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies, said the military was trying to ensure that the bulk of the population, which is not involved in violence, is as unaffected as possible. One example of the balance the military is trying to strike is in Beit Ummar, near Hebron, the most volatile West Bank city. On Friday a 19-year-old from the village, Omar Zaakiek, got into his car and drove into six Israeli soldiers, who shot him dead. Within hours Netanyahu's security cabinet announced Beit Ummar would be put under "closure", with cars barred from entering or exiting, except via a winding back road, and pedestrians having to pass through an Israeli checkpoint. Locals accused Israel of collective punishment. The mayor said Zaakiek's family was told their home faced demolition, a tactic the army and Shin Bet have called counterproductive.

Intelligence Minister Yisrael Katz acknowledged the rift between some ministers and the military and said the latter's policy of trying to isolate the attackers was flawed. "It is legitimate to have an argument about distinguishing terrorists from the Palestinian population," he told Channel 10 TV. "It is completely clear that the more you differentiate, the more your ability to deter is limited." So far Netanyahu has headed off the pressure. But the situation remains precarious. Given the complex roots of the violence, Michael said there was no military solution. "This reality cannot last long," he said. "Ultimately one side will make a mistake and the situation will spin out of control." —Reuters

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DIPLOMATS SEE HADI UNDERMINING PEACE TALKS

By Yara Bayoumy

Efforts to launch peace talks to end an eight-month-old war in Yemen are being thwarted in part by Saudi-backed President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who fears a negotiated settlement would drive him from power, diplomats who follow Yemen said. Hadi, driven out of the capital Sanaa earlier this year by Houthis fighters that Arab neighbours say are backed by Iran, has returned to lead a government from the southern port of Aden, recaptured in July by troops from a Saudi-led Arab coalition.

Like his opponents, Hadi says he is committed to UN-led talks to end the war in one of the Arab world's poorest countries. But diplomats following the peace process say he is increasingly an obstacle, raising pressure on his Saudi sponsors to withdraw their support or help shunt him aside. "Hadi has been trying to block any kind of talks because he knows that any settlement will be the end of this political career," said one diplomat who follows Yemen, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Hadi has never been popular and it's not in his interest that the war stop before complete victory. Diplomats know that Hadi is not a serious candidate, and a settlement means he's out."

A second diplomat said there was now broad agreement that talks were the way forward because the war had reached a stalemate on the ground. But "a few dissenters" including in Hadi's camp were nonetheless holding out for a military victory. "And since that is seen as elusive, they are seen to back the conflict because a peaceful solution has nothing to offer for them."

Hadi strongly denies he is being obstructive.

"In fact, it is the opposite. The president has announced the list of participating delegates, and they are supported by an advisory team and they are ready for dialogue at any time the UN announces," said Mukhtar Al-Rahbi, an official in Hadi's office. Since an inconclusive round of talks in Geneva in June, UN special envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed has repeatedly sought to smooth the way to talks either in Switzerland or Oman. Britain's UN Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said on Monday talks could begin in early December.

Any end to the conflict depends on Saudi Arabia, which launched its biggest military operation for decades to back Hadi, at a time of falling oil export income and escalating regional turmoil. Riyadh says the Houthis are puppets of its regional rival Iran, and it has acted to prevent them from dominating the state, like Iran's Hezbollah allies in Lebanon. Though Saudi Arabia says it is committed to the UN peace process, it has not curbed its bombing. Diplomats say the Saudis may not let the war end as long as the Houthis remain a dominant militia.

Meanwhile, the fighting has exacerbated a humanitarian crisis in the Arabian peninsula's poorest country and derailed efforts to combat Islamist militancy. Thousands of people have died in fighting and bombing by Arab air forces. The United Nations believes all sides are guilty of war crimes. "The humanitarian suffering on the ground: we're compromising the entire future of the nation. And compromising a future generation," said the second diplomat. Yemen's powerful branch of Al-Qaeda, for years the target of a secret CIA drone war, has emerged with control of swathes of territory,

including the port city of Mukalla, capital of eastern Hadramout province.

The Saudi-led forces have informally cooperated with Al-Qaeda fighters against the common Houthi foe. Some Al-Qaeda fighters meanwhile have rallied behind a newly opened Yemeni chapter of Islamic State, an even more violent jihadi movement, which has taken on all sides, blowing up both Houthi mosques in Sanaa and targets from Hadi's government and his Arab allies in Aden.

'More Lucid'

The Houthis, mainly drawn from the Zaydi sect, a Shiite group that ruled a thousand-year kingdom in northern Yemen until 1962, say they are leading a nationalist revolution against corrupt officials, Islamist extremists and their foreign allies. They have formed a potent alliance with Hadi's predecessor Ali Abdullah Saleh, their former enemy who ruled for more than three decades until he gave way to Hadi in 2012 after "Arab Spring" protests. The war has restored Saleh's popularity with a large segment of the population, and he is seen as likely to push for a role for his former ruling party in any settlement.

The Houthis emerged as the most powerful force in the country this year after routing Hadi's government from Sanaa, and despite later losing back Aden to the Saudi-led forces, still look unlikely to be dislodged from the capital soon. While Hadi's government accuses the Houthis of obstructing talks, diplomats say they have appeared more willing than Hadi. "The Houthis are possibly more understanding and they're more lucid," said the second diplomat, who was nevertheless strongly critical of Saleh and his

"unholy alliance" with the Houthi fighters.

Not in Sync

Even before Hadi was driven out of Sanaa by the Houthis, the new president had developed a reputation as a weak leader who failed to bring rival militias to heel or curb corruption. Western and regional officials have voiced support for Hadi's prime minister and vice president, Khaled Bahah, widely seen as a rival, who some describe as a more capable technocrat. "The leadership between Bahah and Hadi is not in sync," the second diplomat said, offering praise for Bahah as a "healer" while describing Hadi as more self-interested.

Baleegh Al-Mikhlaifi, a leader of the Justice party that supports Hadi, dismissed reports of a rift with Bahah as "administrative differences" that would not affect peace talks. But one of Hadi's advisors privately acknowledged differences between the two figures and said Riyadh was trying to resolve them. "Saudi Arabia is trying to bring it under control because it is ... benefiting the other side politically. But these efforts have not succeeded," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

Although the peace talks between Hadi's government and the Houthis could begin soon, diplomats are far from optimistic. The second diplomat described tactics being used to undermine negotiations "by setting the stakes of the talks knowingly so high, so that the other side finds them unacceptable." Said the first diplomat: "The talks, if they happen, will yield no results because the divide between the two groups is big and there's no clarity on which basis these talks would take place." —Reuters

KURD-HEAVY ANTI-IS STRATEGY RISKY

By Jean Marc Mojon and WG Dunlop

The US-led coalition has made Iraqi and Syrian Kurdish forces primary allies against the Islamic State jihadist group, but over-reliance on the Kurds carries risks, analysts warn. As the world seeks to turn up the heat on IS, some of the West's main partners on the ground are the peshmerga forces from Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region and the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria. The first soldiers officially deployed by the United States in Syria arrived last week in the north to train the YPG, a group which has close ties to Turkey's terror-listed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) rebels but which has also notched up significant military successes against IS.

In the aftermath of the deadly November 13 attacks claimed by IS in Paris, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls emphasised the need to support Kurdish forces on the ground. After IS took over swathes of Iraq in 2014, Washington launched air strikes alongside a program to train and equip local forces. The US "picked the Iraqi Kurds because they were strategic partners during the 2003 invasion and were, at least in their eyes, the most trustworthy," said Maria Fantappie, Iraq senior analyst with International Crisis Group.

More than a year on, multi-million-dollar attempts to groom Sunni Arab forces in both Iraq and Syria have yielded limited results at best and failed to sabotage IS' self-proclaimed "caliphate". Attacks in France, elections in the US and a migrant crisis across Europe converge to up public pressure for swift and decisive action against the increasingly global threat of IS.

Bargaining Chips

Kurdish forces are among the most skilled, organised and determined to battle IS in the region. But analysts warn military action should be matched with political planning for the post-IS era in Iraq and Syria, and that relying too heavily on the Kurds could backfire. The lack of a roadmap addressing Kurdish statehood aspirations is an incentive for groups to secure as many future bargaining chips as possible by winning military brownie points now.

Fantappie said that explains why the YPG might be prepared to push beyond Kurdish

areas and take part in an offensive to recapture the IS hub of Raqa, an almost entirely Arab city. "Definitely this is on their mind, especially for the YPG, which strives to gain international recognition," she said. In neighbouring Iraq, forces loyal to the regional Kurdish president Massud Barzani last month retook the town of Sinjar, the main hub of Iraq's Yazidi minority. Before IS swept across Iraq last year, it was under Baghdad's authority, not part of the autonomous Kurdish region, but Barzani is now pushing plans to maintain control of the area.

Barzani "effectively announced Sinjar's

annexation into the Iraqi Kurdistan region," Patrick Martin, Iraq researcher at the Institute for the Study of War, said. "There have been no indications that Kurdish fighters are prepared to hand control of the district to the Iraqi federal government," he said.

'Imbalanced Relationship'

Michael Knights, a fellow at the Washington Institute, which focuses on US policy in the Near East, said any operation to free Iraq's second city Mosul from IS would be headquartered on Kurdish real estate. "Until (IS) is removed from Mosul, the Kurds will remain a key ally. Thereafter, their future is much harder to gauge," he said. Knights said that Kurdish expansion was already close to peaking in Iraq and would be limited by a negative reaction from Baghdad, which also receives help from the coalition against IS.

The same limitation applies to Syria, where too much consolidation of Kurdish influence in the north would not sit well with NATO member Turkey. Even where the coalition is trying to foster Kurdish-Arab alliances against the jihadists, the relationship is tilted in the Kurds' favour, Fantappie said. "By picking the Kurds as strategic allies, you have created an imbalanced relationship between the Kurds and the other communities living with the Kurds," she said.

In northern Syria, the Syrian Democratic Forces alliance brings together the YPG and Arab forces, but the Kurds have direct access to funds and weapons while their partners do not, she said. "And this is dangerous because this military support can have unintended consequences... can redraw borders within those countries and create the premises for future conflicts and tensions between the Kurds and their neighbours." —AFP



A file picture taken on September 11, 2015, shows Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga fighters posing for a photo next to a military vehicle bearing the Kurdish flag after they reportedly captured several villages from Islamic State (IS) group jihadists in the district of Daquq, south of the northern city of Kirkuk. —AFP



FRANCE’S PM TAKES SWIPE AT BENZEMA

**PARIS:** French Prime Minister Manuel Valls took a swipe at Real Madrid and France striker Karim Benzema yesterday, saying that great sportsmen should set a moral example. “A great sportsman should set an example. So many kids, so many young people... see themselves in well-known sports people,” Valls told Europe 1 radio. “Therefore, this sportsman-and this applies to Karim Benzema or others must be exemplary. And if he is not, then he should not be in the France team.” Benzema’s international future is in jeopardy as he faces trial for his alleged involvement in a blackmail case linked to a sex tape featuring his France teammate Mathieu Valbuena. Valls said if a minister was facing trial, he would have to leave the government. “In one way, it’s the same. When you take on responsibilities, when you are in the French team, you must set an example,” the prime minister said. One of the legal conditions attached to the case is that Benzema is banned from seeing Valbuena, meaning that less than a year before France hosts the Euro 2016 championships, they cannot train together. — AFP

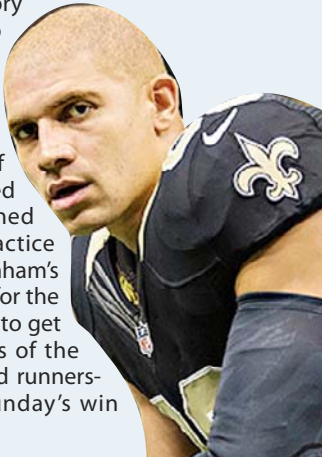


KENYA TO USE ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS TO STEM GRAFT

**NAIROBI:** Kenya’s sports ministry said yesterday it will require all government payments to athletes be made via an electronic system in a bid to stop theft by sports officials. The announcement comes a day after three top athletics officials from the national federation Athletics Kenya (AK) were suspended over suspicions they had siphoned off sponsorship money from Nike and subverted anti-doping controls. In the latest hammer-blow to global track and field, the IAAF ethics commission on Monday announced the provisional suspension of the Kenyan athletics federation president and two other top officials in the “interests of the integrity of the sport”. The new payment system-introduced into other Kenya government departments earlier this year-means salaries and payments are easily tracked. Richard Ekai, the ministry’s principal secretary, its most senior civil servant, said payments in hard cash would be a thing of the past. Athletes have previously claimed they never received government allowances while performing in competitions for Kenya abroad, but with cash payments, such claims were almost impossible to verify. “Once all data has been profiled, the complaints of players not being paid their allowances on time will be a thing of the past,” Ekai said. — AFP

SEAHAWKS SUFFER A BLOW AS INJURY ENDS GRAHAM SEASON

**LOS ANGELES:** Seattle Seahawks tight end Jimmy Graham has been ruled out for the remainder of the season after suffering a torn tendon in his knee, head coach Pete Carroll confirmed on Monday. Graham was injured during the fourth quarter of Sunday’s victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers as he tried to catch a pass from Russell Wilson in the end zone. “We’ve loved Jimmy Graham coming to our team and we’re very grateful that he’s been part of it,” Carroll said. “We’re going to miss the heck out of him the rest of the season.” Graham was placed on injured reserve on Monday as the Seahawks signed defensive tackle AJ Francis from their practice squad. Carroll did not put a timeline on Graham’s recovery but was confident he would be fit for the 2016 season. “There’s plenty of time for him to get back,” Carroll said. The Seahawks, winners of the Super Bowl in the 2013-2014 campaign and runners-up last season, improved to 6-5 after Sunday’s win against the Steelers. — AFP



PULL YOUR SOCKS UP! INDIA, NO LONGER BAREFOOT, REBOOT WORLD AMBITIONS

**NEW DELHI:** A reluctance to wear football boots at the 1950 World Cup is blamed for casting India into the soccer wilderness, but decades later the giant country is making real efforts to get back in the game. Buoyed by a rising economic tide, football will return to India in a big way with the Under-17 World Cup in two years’ time, an event which officials hope is just the start.

Already India’s football federation has its eye on hosting the Under-20 World Cup, as well as the Club World Cup, a prestigious tournament which features some of the sport’s biggest stars. It’s a far cry from India’s fateful withdrawal from the first post-war World Cup in 1950 in Brazil, after they won Asia’s qualifying spot by default when the other teams all pulled out.

The reasoning behind India’s withdrawal remains obscure, but travel difficulties, a failure to grasp the event’s importance, and the rule that their barefoot players must wear boots are all cited. With India mere bystanders, Uruguay stunned Brazil in the final match and World Cup lore was set in motion, with football later rising to become a true global game with revenues and visibility to match. “The Indian team opted out... we didn’t want to play with shoes,” said All India Football Federation president Praful Patel. “So India actually had an entry into the World Cup and we opted out of playing the World Cup. And then of course, once you’ve missed the bus, the whole world just flew by and we were left way behind.”

Hate mail

Sixty-five years later, India has never again come close to contesting a World Cup, languishing at 172nd in the rankings and losing a recent qualifier to the tiny Pacific territory of Guam. But football is at least gaining traction in the cricket-dominated country of 1.2 billion, with two professional leagues including the two-year-old Indian Super League, featuring a list of fading stars. “As the All India Football Federation we receive so much of hate mail and brickbats. I don’t blame anybody for that but we also have to understand that we cannot transform Indian football overnight, it has to be a process,” Patel said.

“I think the time is for everybody to pull up their socks, work together, heart and soul and minds, and let’s make India really rock,” he added. Patel was speaking at the launch of the Under-17 World Cup, which took place with Bollywood actors and a typical touch of chaos at a luxury hotel in New Delhi. After a half-hour delay to get the set ready, a ceremonial ball was handed over and highlights of the last U-17 World Cup in Chile were screened by overhead projector, to a soundtrack played at ear-splitting volume.

With memories still fresh of New Delhi’s embarrassing 2010 Commonwealth Games, plagued by delays and corruption, Patel said no major problems were expected-but he admitted it would be a challenge to get the venues ready on time. Under-17 coach Nicolai Adam warned that India would also find it hard on the pitch, with their rival teams featuring many players honed by the world’s finest football academies. But he said there would be no disgrace for India, even if they are on the wrong end of some big scorelines. “For me, an embarrassment is if you run away from big challenges,” said the German. “Maybe we will get smashed 6-0, but it will not be an embarrassment for this country.” Embarrassment or not, one thing is certain for India-at this World Cup, they will be wearing boots. — AFP



**NEW DELHI:** India’s captain Virat Kohli kicks a football during a training session ahead of the fourth Test cricket match between India and South Africa at The Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP



**ANAHEIM:** Ryan Miller #30 of the Vancouver Canucks tends net as Chris Stewart #29 of the Anaheim Ducks and Patrick Maroon #19 of the Ducks stab at a loose puck during the first period of a game at Honda Center on November 30, 2015 in Anaheim. — AFP

MAPLE LEAFS BEAT OILERS 3-0 SPARKS MAKES 24 SAVES IN DEBUT

**TORONTO:** Garret Sparks became the first Maple Leafs goalie with a shutout in his NHL debut, lifting Toronto over the Edmonton Oilers 3-0 on Monday. Sparks made 24 saves in the Leafs’ first shutout since Jonathan Bernier blanked the Dallas Stars on Dec 23, 2014. Leo Komarov scored twice and Nazem Kadri also had a goal to help Toronto snap a three-game skid. James van Riemsdyk added three assists. Anders Nilsson turned away 23 of 25 shots and the Oilers wrapped up their five-game trip at 1-3-1. Both teams had only a shot apiece through the first 10 minutes. Komarov opened the scoring with his team-leading and career high ninth goal of the season on the power play 6:45 into the first.

DUCKS 4, CANUCKS 0

John Gibson made 25 saves for his third career shutout to lead Anaheim over Vancouver. Shawn Horcoff, Rickard Rakell, Jakob Silfverberg and Corey Perry scored and Anaheim won for only the second time in its last five games. 10 different Anaheim players had a point in its biggest rout of the season. Ryan Miller stopped 25 shots while Vancouver was shutout for the first time this season. Gibson made his NHL debut against Vancouver in the 2014 playoffs, stopping all 18 shots to eliminate the Canucks. Gibson nearly had another shutout last Friday against the Chicago Blackhawks, the other team he has blanked during his brief career, but blew a 2-0 lead in that one. Horcoff put Anaheim ahead just 1:19 into the opening period, taking Andrew Coglian’s pass and converting a one-timer.

RANGERS 4, HURRICANES 3

Mats Zuccarello and Oscar Lindberg scored first-period power-play goals as New York kept up its mastery of Carolina. Chris Kreider and Derick Brassard also scored and New York improved to 18-1-0 in its last 19 meetings with Carolina. The Rangers have won 11 straight against the Hurricanes at Madison Square Garden. Henrik Lundqvist made 33 saves and the Rangers ended a three-game losing streak. Jordan Stall, Victor Rask and Chris Terry scored for the Hurricanes. Carolina



**TORONTO:** Jujhar Khaira #54 of the Edmonton Oilers defends against PA Parenteau #15 of the Toronto Maple Leafs during an NHL game at Air Canada Centre on November 30, 2015 in Toronto. — AFP

battled back from a 4-1 deficit to make it a contest at the end.

ISLANDERS 5, AVALANCHE 3

Cal Clutterbuck broke a tie 1:52 into the third period and the New York Islanders beat the Colorado Avalanche 5-3 on Monday night. Kyle Okposo, Mikhail Grabovski, Casey Cizikas and Ryan Strome also scored and the Islanders won for the third time in four games. Thomas Greiss stopped 25 shots. Jarome Iginla, Nick Holden and former Islander Blake Comeau each scored for Colorado, but the Avalanche fell for the fifth time in their last seven games.

Off a faceoff win, Clutterbuck redirected Thomas Hickey’s point shot past goalie Semyon Varlamov’s glove. The goal was Clutterbuck’s sixth of the season and the first of two third-period goals from the Isles’ fourth line. With Varlamov on the bench, Holden cut the Islanders’ lead to 4-3 with 3:34 left, but Strome scored an empty-net goal with 47.9 seconds left. The Avalanche nearly scored off the opening faceoff, but Greiss robbed Matt Duchene with a left-pad save. Colorado took the lead 10:20 in. After Greiss stopped Comeau’s original shot, the winger circled the net and flipped the rebound over Greiss. The goalie unwittingly knocked it in with the top of his stick.

The Avalanche limited the Islanders to seven first-period shots and very nearly carried a one-goal advantage into the first intermission. But Cody McLeod and Gabriel Landeskog each took penalties in the final minute, and Okposo buried a snap shot with 1.4 seconds left.

Grabovski gave the Islanders their first lead at 6:31 of the second. But just 41 seconds later, Iginla’s seeing-eye wrist shot confounded Greiss and tied the game 2-2. The goal was Iginla’s 597th of his career, leaving him four shy of Jari Kurri for 18th place on the career list. The Islanders peppered the Avalanche cage, aiming to break the tie late in the second period, but Varlamov was outstanding. The Avs goalie has struggled at points this season but stopped 13 of 14 in the frame as the Islanders recorded seven of the period’s final eight shots after Iginla’s goal. — Agencies

NHL Results/Standings

Western Conference													
Central Division													
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Dallas	19	5	0	85	62	38	Ottawa	12	6	5	76	68	29
St. Louis	15	6	3	65	58	33	Detroit	12	8	4	56	60	28
Chicago	13	8	3	67	62	29	Boston	13	8	1	73	64	27
Nashville	12	7	4	59	60	28	Tampa Bay	11	11	3	59	58	25
Minnesota	11	7	4	63	61	26	Florida	10	9	4	60	59	24
Winnipeg	11	12	2	67	80	24	Buffalo	10	12	2	54	62	22
Colorado	9	14	1	71	75	19	Toronto	8	11	5	56	66	21
Pacific Division							Metropolitan Division						
Los Angeles	14	8	1	58	50	29	NY Rangers	17	6	2	74	53	36
San Jose	14	9	0	66	58	28	Washington	17	5	1	75	51	35
Arizona	13	9	1	65	65	27	NY Islanders	13	8	4	72	62	30
Vancouver	9	9	7	69	69	25	Pittsburgh	13	8	2	52	54	28
Anaheim	9	11	5	51	65	23	New Jersey	12	9	2	56	57	26
Calgary	8	14	2	56	87	18	Philadelphia	9	10	5	45	65	23
Edmonton	8	15	2	62	77	18	Carolina	8	12	4	50	70	20
							Columbus	10	15	0	60	76	20
Eastern Conference							Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L)						
Atlantic Division													
Montreal	18	4	3	88	56	39							



CRICKET

## RED-HOT ASHWIN LOOKING TO COMPOUND S AFRICA AGONY

**NEW DELHI:** India's red-hot spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will look to pile on the agony for South Africa in the final Test in New Delhi starting tomorrow on a pitch expected to cause more problems for the tourists. The 29-year-old has risen to number two in the world rankings following his heroics in last week's third Test in Nagpur when he recorded match figures of 12 for 98, giving India an unassailable 2-0 series lead.

Ashwin has taken 55 wickets since the start of the year, more than anyone else in Test cricket, and has been near unplayable on the rank turners that have bamboozled South Africa's stellar batting line-up. "He is a world class spinner, probably the best in the world right now," India captain Virat Kohli said in the aftermath of Ashwin's performance in Nagpur. "He's stepped up in a big way for us, even in (the last series against) Sri Lanka. He is one of the main reasons why we've been able to win back-to-back series."

Both India's victories in Nagpur and Mohali have been wrapped up inside three days, and South Africa were also bowled out cheaply in their only innings in the rain-affected second Test in Bangalore which was drawn. The Proteas' most reliable batsmen, Hashim Amla and A B de Villiers, have managed one half century between them in the series while no one has made a century. The likes of Dean Elgar, Stiaan van Zyl and Faf du Plessis, who are all on their first tour of India, have fared little better. Amla has admitted that it has been a struggle for the batsmen in conditions he says have been some of the most challenging he has ever faced.

**More of the same**

"I think the wickets have played their part in making it very difficult for all the batters," said the South African skipper. While they remain the world's number one Test team, the tourists have had to endure the disappointment of losing their first series abroad in nine years. While they will be desperate to avoid a 3-0 scoreline, the Ferozeshah Kotla pitch is expected to pose similar challenges for the Proteas who have struggled to produce a top-class spinner of their own. "I would hope the one in Delhi is absolutely the same.

I have no qualms about it," the Indian team director Ravi Shastri told the Cricinfo website, saying it was up to batsmen to adjust their technique. "Which rule tells me that a ball can't turn on day one? Where does it tell me in the rule book it can only swing and seam?"

South Africa's cause has not been helped by the absence of their pace spearhead Dale Steyn, the only bowler above Ashwin in the world rankings.Steyn, nursing a groin strain, has bowled just 11 overs in the series and it looks unlikely the visitors will risk him in a dead rubber.

The performance of Steyn's usual strike partner Morne Morkel has been one of the few bright spots for the visitors and he was the pick of the South African bowlers in Nagpur. While India's line-up is expected to be unchanged, South Africa could be tempted to hand back-up seamers Kyle Abbott and Marchant de Lange a chance to impress ahead of the upcoming home series against England and give Kagiso Rabadagive a rest. — AFP



**NEW DELHI:** South Africa's captain Hashim Amla (2nd right) gestures during a training session ahead of the fourth Test cricket match between India and South Africa at The Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi yesterday. India's red-hot spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will look to pile on the agony for South Africa in the final Test in New Delhi starting tomorrow, on a pitch expected to cause more problems for the tourists. — AFP

## INDIA TO FACE ICC SANCTION OVER 'POOR' NAGPUR PITCH

**NEW DELHI:** Indian cricket authorities face a fine of up to \$15,000 after the pitch used for the spin-dominated third test between India and South Africa in Nagpur was rated as "poor" by match referee Jeff Crowe, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said yesterday. Forty wickets tumbled in three days at the VCA Stadium as India beat South Africa by 124 runs with more than two days to spare in the low-scoring contest to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the four-match series."Jeff Crowe submitted his report to the ICC, expressing the concerns of the match officials over the performance of the pitch," the ICC said in a statement. The report has been forwarded to the Indian cricket board (BCCI), which

now has 14 days to respond.

After that, ICC general manager of cricket Geoff Allardice and chief match referee Ranjan Madugalle will rule whether the pitch was poor and whether it warrants a penalty. ICC rules decree that if they confirm that the pitch was "poor", a warning can be issued and/or "a fine not exceeding \$15,000 (imposed), with a directive for appropriate corrective action". The Nagpur pitch offered prodigious turn from day one, prompting Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell to call it "diabolical", while former Australia opener Matthew Hayden termed it a "Bunsen burner"-slang for a turner.

Indian opener Murali Vijay's first-innings 40

was the highest individual score in the test, in which South Africa mustered just 79 in the first innings and lost all 20 wickets in the match to spinners.

Visiting captain Hashim Amla said the Nagpur track was the "toughest" he had faced in his test career, but assistant coach Adrian Birrell refused to blame the pitches for the team's series defeat.

"We're not complaining at all," Birell told reporters at the Feroze Shah Kotla Stadium, in Delhi yesterday ahead of the fourth and final test, which begins on Thursday."We're playing in India and we're playing in Indian conditions. We relish the opportunity. Unfortunately, we've not played to our full potential."— Reuters

## COMMONWEALTH GAMES WANTS CRICKET BACK AT THE CREASE

**MANIKATA:** The Commonwealth Games is in talks with the International Cricket Council about bringing the sport back into the four-yearly event, organizers said. The Commonwealth Games Federation, which controls the second-biggest multi-sport event after the Olympics, said it was keen to get cricket back on the bill, with the Twenty20 shortest format of the game a particularly "exciting" prospect. Cricket has only featured once at the Commonwealth Games, at the 1998 event in Kuala Lumpur, but CGF chiefs said their 71 national and territorial associations wanted it back in, provided a viable format could be produced.

"We've had some fantastic conversations with the ICC. It's very much exploratory," CGF chief executive David Grevenberg said at the Commonwealth summit in Malta. "(It's) one of the priorities of the movement: all 71 nations and territories unanimously agreed that it would be great to have cricket as part of the sports program. "It's not out of the question and, working

with the ICC, we could come up with a really relevant and exciting format." At the 1998 Games, 16 teams competed in 50-over matches.

Caribbean countries competed separately rather than as West Indies, while a Northern Ireland team also took part. England refused to send a squad as it clashed with the end of the domestic championship season. South Africa beat Australia in the gold medal match. Cricket is not on the agenda for the 2018 Games in the Gold Coast, Australia, but could potentially feature at the 2022 Games in Durban, South Africa.

#### Prevent whitewashes

CGF president Louise Martin said West Indies countries such as Jamaica and Barbados would "love" the chance to compete in a global tournament in their own right. Therefore, "it would be completely different" to existing international cricket tournaments, she said. "Let's think outside the box and open it up." She said any

Commonwealth Games cricket competition would have to involve countries from each region, and give minor nations worthwhile matches and something to play for.

The format must also be carefully structured also to avoid major teams playing pointless one-sided matches against weaker opposition, the former Scotland swimmer said. "We need to encourage smaller countries to be able to compete at major Games," she said. However, "you have to look at the whole structure and what the strength in depth is. We don't want whitewashes. I would hate to think that anyone going in against Australia or India are thinking they're going to get nought. That's not what this is about". She stressed discussions with the ICC were still in the initial phases. "We'd like to have it back in again. The Twenty20 format makes its so much more exciting and you can do it in a shorter period of time, but at this moment it's still in discussion stage."— AFP

## WAQAR BELIEVES ENGLAND DEFEAT 'HUGE EYE OPENER'

**SHARJAH:** Pakistan head coach Waqar Younis described defeat in the Twenty20 series against England as a "huge eye opener" for his team whose "poor and ordinary" performance needed proper analysis. Pakistan were blanked 3-0 by England who won the third and final game in Sharjah in a thrilling Super Over finish on Monday-leaving Waqar to ponder his side's progress just four months before the World Twenty20 in India. "I think it's a big eye opener," said Waqar. "We have seen a lot of things which were not obvious before and there was an obvious difference between the two teams. "Our performance has been very ordinary and very poor and needs serious analysis." Pakistan were cruising along nicely in their chase of a 155-run target but faltered in the last over, leaving scores level at 154. Chris Jordan conceded only three runs in the Super Over which England overhauled off four deliveries.

#### Waqar praised England

"England were younger than us and fitter and I think that made the difference. Credit to them for bouncing back after losing the Test series," said Waqar whose team won the preceding three-Test series 2-0 but lost the four-match one-day 3-1. "Twenty20 is fast cricket and that's why we couldn't match them," said Waqar of England who have now won six consecutive Twenty20 matches and displaced Pakistan to sixth from second in T20 rankings. Waqar admitted some of his talented players including the indisci-

plined Umar Akaml were not learning.

"I don't know, I don't have the answer why they are not performing," said Waqar of Umar who was initially dropped from the team for a discipline violation. "They are not young like 18 or 19 and as far as the opportunities are concerned everyone, selectors and cricket board, know they get the most opportunities so I think selectors will have to think. "Don't know about saying goodbye to them, it's not my job to say goodbye but selectors would have been watching so they must have assessed the performance and fitness and they would be considering that."Umar and Sohaib Maqsood managed just 26 each while Ahmed Shehzad scored 32 in three matches.

Waqar said his players were committing schoolboy errors. "To be very honest run outs are a huge problem," said Waqar whose players have been run out 34 times in international matches this year, 21 in one-day matches.

"The manner in which they got run out is a schoolboy error, it's not that you are playing new players, these players are seasoned and that's not on, to be honest. "Individuals have to think, are they worried about getting out? it's a worrying sign and if individuals come under pressure like this then its not good for them as well as for the team.

Waqar pointed out fitness as the key problem. "It's an important part to have fitness camps back home and the national cricket academy has got to start rolling and these guys should be launched there to get fit." — AFP

## AUSTRALIA TURN TO COULTER-NILE, PATTINSON FOR WINDIES OPENER

**ADELAIDE:** Australia yesterday turned to James Pattinson and Nathan Coulter-Nile to replenish their diminishing fast bowling ranks for next week's opening Test against the West Indies. Selectors named the pace duo in a 12-man squad for the December 10-14 Hobart Test following a stress fracture foot injury to Mitchell Starc on top of the recent retirement of Mitchell Johnson.

The panel is also mulling the need to give Adelaide Test man-of-the-match Josh Hazlewood some time off to refresh as Australia face a three-Test series against the West Indies and two return Tests in New Zealand in February. Pattinson, 25, played the last of his 13 Tests against South Africa in March 2014 with his career stalled by chronic back and hamstring issues. Coulter-Nile, 28, has been included despite not playing any domestic Sheffield Shield matches so far this summer because of a shoulder injury.

He should have bowled for Western Australia last weekend but was given a one-match ban for showing dissent at an umpire's decision in the domestic second XI league, meaning he has not played first-class cricket since the Sheffield Shield final in March."We've had our eye on Nathan for a long time. We've been very pleased with the way he's played when he has played," selector Rod Marsh told reporters. "But he's been a fast bowler who hasn't been injury-free and I guess we are at the situation now because of the two Mitchells, one injured and one retiring, that we do need a bit of pace up front, so he's in the 12."Once Mitchell Starc went down everyone's mind turned straight to Nathan Coulter-Nile."

Senior quick Peter Siddle, who has become



**Nathan Coulter-Nile**

even more important to Australia's plans with the pressures on the pace brigade, experienced back problems during last weekend's day-night third Test against New Zealand in Adelaide. As a precaution selectors have placed Scott Boland on standby in case of further injury problems heading into the Test. "Hopefully, all the bowlers from the Adelaide Test recover well over the next few days but we are mindful our fast bowlers have had a heavy workload over this series," Marsh said.

Marsh spoke of the conundrum facing selectors over Hazlewood's recent workload. He bowled a total of 119 overs in the recent New Zealand series. "It will be very difficult for Josh Hazlewood to get

through six Tests in a summer and then go to New Zealand and play two more and we also have a one-day series against India," Marsh said.

"So we'll see how he's tracking, if he's strong and he's fit. "It helps if you don't have to play five-day Test matches too. The last couple of days of a Test match can be quite difficult for a fast bowler." Given Australia's current fast bowling predicament, Marsh was asked if he had considered talking Johnson out of retirement. "I thought about it," he said jokingly. "No, you have to respect a bloke when he retires. "There's a reason why he wanted to retire and he didn't want to play any more, it's simple as that. You don't go there." — AFP



## MEDIOCRE AND LOSING TEAMS ARE NFL CONTENDERS

**NEW YORK:** The NBA has a yearly ritual in which sub-.500 teams make the playoffs. It looks like the NFL could emulate that approach this season. With five weeks left in the schedule, two divisions (AFC South and NFC East) could wind up with a winner at 8-8 or worse. As for the wild-card races, you might want to shield your eyes. Consider that for the final NFC berth, the Seahawks and Falcons are tied at 6-5. Seeing how Atlanta has performed recently, losing five of six, a winning mark on Jan 3 is a long shot. Also consider that the Bears and Buccaneers aren't out of it with 5-6 marks. The Giants and Redskins have the same record and are tied atop the wretched NFC East, where the Eagles (4-7) remain in contention.

The view from the AFC is a bit more pleasant because both the Texans and Colts, each 6-5, are playing good football. Houston has won four straight and five of six. Indy has won three in a row and is 4-0

with backup Matt Hasselbeck in for the injured Andrew Luck at quarterback. Did someone say Comeback Player of the Year? Don't get carried away, though, by the surges the Texans and Colts have made. These are not complete teams, though they appear stronger than the likes of the Bills, Jets, Steelers and Raiders, all of whom are hovering around the break-even mark.

Worth watching the most are the Chiefs (6-5), who not only have won five straight, but have the easiest schedule remaining: two with Oakland, one each with San Diego, Baltimore and Cleveland. "We're proud of where we are, but we still know where we want to go," says tight end Travis Kelce, who is having a terrific season. "There's a lot of leaders in this room that care, that love this game, love this team. We're going to keep this thing rolling." Given that schedule, could be. A look at the mediocre contenders for the playoffs and where things might be headed:

### AFC

The muddled picture is not at the top, except in the South. The Patriots, even with all their injuries, are a virtual lock to take the East. Same for the Broncos in the West, despite Kansas City's surge. Barring a collapse, the Bengals will take the North. The Colts-Texans race is intriguing because both have overcome disappointing starts and emerged the stronger for it. Houston's defense is as good as any in the league, and J.J. Watt is playing like a two-time Defensive Player of the Year. The offense is functional, and that could be enough. But the schedule is kinder to the Colts: Houston has New England and Buffalo left outside the division, Indianapolis has Pittsburgh and Miami.

The key could be the Texans' trip to Indy on Dec 20. Both, of course, could get in should they continue their recent play, which might be asking a lot, and perhaps joining the Chiefs to fill out the field. Of the

6-5 teams, the Jets and Steelers show no consistency and have some critical injuries (Darrelle Revis, Le'Veon Bell). Among the 5-6 squads, say the same for the Bills and the Raiders - plus they are a game behind three other teams. Given who plays whom and their current health status and level of play, look for the Chiefs, Texans and Colts to all find a way into the postseason.

### NFC

What a tangled web they weave. Start with the clear stuff. Carolina (11-0) pretty much has sewed up the South as it chases perfection. It can clinch the division next weekend. Either Minnesota or Green Bay should walk off with the North, which probably will be decided on the Lambeau Field tundra in the season finale - perhaps even in a night game. BRRRRRR! Arizona has a huge edge in the West, even with Seattle getting things straight at last. The two wild-card qualifiers, probably the run-

ner-up in the North and the Seahawks, figure to have a better record than whoever emerges from the Least, uh East. That could be true even with Seattle at 8-8.

Not only did the Giants blow a chance to take a solid grasp of the East by losing at Washington, but they've displayed a penchant for disdaining prosperity. Remember, this is a club that has lost four times in the final moments by self-destructing more than what the opponent has managed to do to them. Now tied with Washington, the Giants have the Jets, Panthers and Vikings remaining, along with Miami and Philly. The Redskins get two meetings with Romo-less Dallas, plus the Bears, Bills and Eagles.

The Redskins' biggest challenge might be how poorly they play on the road, where they are 0-5. The most absurd part of it: The NFC East winner will get a first-round home game. — AP

# CURRY STARS AS UNBEATEN WARRIORS MARCH ON

## BULLS HALT SPURS' FIVE-GAME WINNING STREAK

**SALT LAKE CITY:** Stephen Curry scored 26 points as the Golden State Warriors held on for their NBA-record 19th consecutive win to start the season, 106-103 over the Utah Jazz on Monday night. With the game tied at 101 with 51 seconds left, Curry hit a 3-pointer from the left wing to give the Warriors the lead. Rodney Hood scored 14 seconds later to bring the Jazz within one. After Curry missed a 3, the Jazz had a chance to take the lead, but Hood missed a 3 from the wing with 5 seconds left. Curry hit two free throws and Gordon Hayward's half-court heave at the buzzer fell way short. Klay Thompson added 20 points for the Warriors, including four 3-pointers. Hayward led the Jazz with 24 points. Derrick Favors gave Utah a 99-97 lead on a three-point play before Curry hit a 3. The Warriors have won 23 straight regular-season games dating to last season.

### HAWKS 106, THUNDER 100

Paul Millsap scored 26 points and Jeff Teague made all the big shots down the stretch, sending Atlanta to a victory that ended Oklahoma City's four-game winning streak. Russell Westbrook had 34 points, including a drive with 2:49 remaining that gave the Thunder their first lead since scoring the opening basket. Westbrook knocked down a jumper to push Oklahoma City to a four-point lead. Teague took control from there. He finished with 25 points, while Al Horford added 21 points and 13 rebounds. Kevin Durant, selected Western Conference player of the week after coming back from a left hamstring injury, had 25 points. But the Thunder lost for the first time since he rejoined the lineup. Westbrook also grabbed 11 rebounds and dished out seven assists.

### BULLS 92, SPURS 89

Pau Gasol had 18 points, 13 rebounds and three blocked shots, as the Bulls ended San Antonio's five-game winning streak. Jimmy Butler scored 14 points and reserve Doug McDermott had 12 for Chicago in the opener of a four-game homestand. Joakim Noah contributed eight points, seven assists and 11 rebounds in 24 minutes off the bench. Gasol blocked LaMarcus Aldridge on a drive with 1:06 left, and then hit one of two foul shots on the other end for a 90-89 lead. After Manu Ginobili missed for San Antonio, Butler hit two free throws with 10.6 seconds left. The Spurs had one last chance, but Kawhi Leonard and Tony Parker each missed 3-point attempts in the final seconds. Parker's try was partially blocked by Derrick Rose, who finished with 11 points and six assists.

### CELTICS 105, HEAT 95

Avery Bradley scored 25 points and forced a big turnover when he knocked away a pass by Dwyane Wade with a minute remaining, as Boston put all five starters in double figures against Miami. Jared Sullinger had 17 points to help the Celtics snap a three-game road slide. Isaiah Thomas scored 16 while fellow starters Jae Crowder and Amir Johnson each added 13 for Boston. Evan Turner also had 13 off the bench. Wade scored 30 for Miami, which cut a 14-point deficit to one in the fourth quarter but never led after halftime. Chris Bosh played through an illness to add 21 points for the Heat. Miami made it a one-possession game on five separate occasions in the final 14 minutes, and Boston scored on its ensuing trip every time. The first three of those were all on jumpers by Bradley, two of them being 3-pointers.

### BUCKS 92, NUGGETS 74

Greg Monroe scored 18 points and Milwaukee forced 24 turnovers that led to 35 points in handi Denver hit its seventh consecutive loss. Jabari Parker had 16 points and Michael Carter-Williams added 12 points and nine assists for the Bucks, who won for only the second time in eight games. Danilo Gallinari scored 13 points and Kenneth Faried added 11 for the Nuggets, who managed just 30 points in the second half after scoring only five in the third quarter of its previous game, a 92-81 loss at Dallas on Saturday.

### PISTONS 116, ROCKETS 105

Reggie Jackson had 31 points, and Andre Drummond added 24 points and 13 rebounds as the Pistons beat the Rockets. The Pistons built a 23-point lead in the first half before the Rockets got back into the game by constantly intentionally fouling Drummond - he went 4-for-18 from the line. Houston was never able to get within one possession. Rookie Stanley Johnson had 19 points and a career-high 10 rebounds for Detroit, while James Harden scored 29 for the Rockets. — Agencies



**SALT LAKE CITY:** Golden State Warriors center Festus Ezeli (31) blocks the shot of Utah Jazz forward Gordon Hayward (center) as Golden State Warriors forward Andre Iguodala (9) looks on in the second half during an NBA basketball game on Monday, Nov 30, 2015. — AP

## NBA results/standings

Detroit 116, Houston 105; Boston 105, Miami 95; Atlanta 106, Oklahoma City 100; Chicago 92, San Antonio 89; Milwaukee 92, Denver 74; Golden State 106, Utah 103; Sacramento 112, Dallas 98; LA Clippers 102, Portland 87.

### Eastern Conference

#### Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	11	7	.611	-
Boston	10	8	.556	1
NY Knicks	8	10	.444	3
Brooklyn	4	13	.235	6.5
Philadelphia	0	18	0	11

#### Central Division

Cleveland	13	4	.765	-
Indiana	11	5	.688	1.5
Chicago	10	5	.667	2
Detroit	9	9	.500	4.5
Milwaukee	7	11	.389	6.5

#### Southeast Division

Miami	10	6	.625	-
Atlanta	12	8	.600	-
Charlotte	10	7	.588	0.5
Orlando	9	8	.529	1.5
Washington	6	8	.429	3

### Western Conference

#### Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	11	7	.611	-
Utah	8	8	.500	2
Minnesota	8	9	.471	2.5
Portland	7	11	.389	4
Denver	6	12	.333	5

#### Pacific Division

Golden State	19	0	1.000	-
LA Clippers	10	8	.556	8.5
Phoenix	8	9	.471	10
Sacramento	7	12	.368	12
LA Lakers	2	14	.125	15.5

#### Southwest Division

San Antonio	14	4	.778	-
Memphis	10	8	.556	4
Dallas	10	8	.556	4
Houston	7	11	.389	7
New Orleans	4	13	.235	9.5

## No 1 UCONN DOWN CHATTANOOGA 79-31

**CHATTANOOGA:** Moriah Jefferson scored 15 points and didn't miss a shot Monday night as No 1 UConn breezed past Chattanooga 79-31 for its 41st consecutive victory. The Huskies' winning streak is the fourth-longest in school history. The three-time defending national champions have beaten each of their first four opponents by at least 40 points and haven't lost since falling 88-86 at Stanford on Nov 17, 2014. Jefferson made all five of her shots and four free throws. Breanna Stewart and Gabby Williams each added 14 points for the Huskies (4-0).

Jasmine Joyner and Keiana Gilbert each scored eight for Chattanooga, which ended a 17-game home winning streak. The Huskies scheduled the home-and-home series with Chattanooga due to the long friendship between Connecticut coach Geno Auriemma and Chattanooga coach Jim Foster, both Hall of Famers. Chattanooga visits Connecticut next season. Auriemma began his coaching career by working as an assistant on Foster's staffs, first at Bishop McDevitt High School in the Philadelphia area and later at St Joseph's.

This marked the seventh time the two good friends had faced off, and it was Auriemma's fourth straight victory over his former men-

tor. Connecticut beat Foster's Ohio State team in 2010 and knocked off Foster's Vanderbilt squads in the 1996 NCAA Tournament and the 2001 Preseason WNIT. Foster beat Connecticut while at St. Joe's in 1987 and while at Vanderbilt in the 1991 NCAA Tournament and in December 1992. Having the top-ranked team in town attracted a boisterous crowd of 6,104 for Chattanooga's seventh-largest home crowd ever - and its biggest since 8,468 watched the Mocs upset Tennessee 80-71 on Nov 9, 2012, in the Lady Vols' first game of the post-Pat Summitt era.

Chattanooga entered the night having won 57 of its last 58 home games. Chattanooga's only loss during that stretch was a 59-57 decision against South Florida on Nov 15, 2014. Chattanooga's 17 game home winning streak included victories last season over a fourth-ranked Tennessee team and a seventh-ranked Stanford squad. Connecticut proved a much more formidable challenge. After trailing by 20 late in the first half, Queen Alford's 3-pointer got Chattanooga within 37-26 in the opening minute of the third quarter. But the Huskies scored the next 16 points and never looked back. After that Alford 3-pointer, Connecticut outscored Chattanooga 42-5 the rest of the way. — AP

## ONEASIA'S FOOTHOLD IN AUSTRALIA UNDER THREAT

**SYDNEY:** OneAsia's continuing presence in Australia looked far from assured as the seventh season of the struggling Asia-Pacific golf tour drew to a close in Sydney last weekend. The PGA of Australia was one of the main driving forces behind the establishment of OneAsia in 2009 but in June it dropped the tour from its oldest event, the Australian PGA Championship.

The European Tour will instead debut as co-sanctioners of the tournament on the Gold Coast this week, leaving the Australian Open as the last remaining stop Down Under on a shrinking OneAsia schedule. Asked about the long-term future of the relationship between the Australian Open and OneAsia at the weekend, Golf Australia chief executive Stephen Pitt was non-committal. "I guess, it's hard to look at it for the next four or five years because it's a very dynamic area, there's a lot going on with tours," he told reporters on Sunday.

"So at the moment we're looking at some of those things with our commercial partner Lagardere ... we'll make those decisions at the appropriate time.

"There'll be some tour options without a doubt. But I'd say it's an interesting time in terms of the tour landscape." The interesting times have been brought about by talks over a proposed merger between the fast-expanding European Tour and the Asian Tour, a player-run organization that preceded OneAsia and bitterly opposed its establishment. Pitt said the decision over the future alignment of the tournament would ultimately be taken by Lagardere, formerly the World Sport Group, and Golf Australia.

Lagardere are a major player in the Asian golf market and have been long-time global marketing and media partner of the OneAsia tour. Mark Hardess, their president of southeast Asia and Australia, did not want to specifically discuss the relative merits of aligning with various tours but did explain the reasons for co-sanctioning. "For us, the more we can link Australia to Asia and the huge population up there, hopefully that's a bigger and better proposition and brings money back into the event," he told Reuters on Sunday. "Particularly on our broadcast platform.

We try and get Chinese, Japa-

nese, Korean, southeast Asian players in there because people obviously follow their own.

"So that's the whole purpose of looking to sanction with whatever partner up in Asia is to get Asian lads in here so they get seen on television up there and people follow us." OneAsia was the link into Asia but it could have been with any Asian tour, we could have just gone to the Japanese, to the Koreans, to the Chinese. OneAsia was just one conversation instead of three." The prospect of a tour that could bring big names from not only Asia but also Europe might be highly attractive to an event like the Australian Open, which has been revived from a fairly moribund state over the last few years.

### Parlous state

It was the generally parlous state of the Australasian tour, with its best homegrown talent heading to the US and Europe and cut off from the potential riches of the Asian market, that led to the formation of OneAsia.

With the Australian PGA, China Golf Association, Korean Golf Association and the Korean PGA on board, the new tour was launched with ambitious plans of 20-to-30 events a year each with a prize purse above one million dollars. But for branding on the TV pictures, however, you would have hardly have noticed that last weekend's Australian Open was the final stop on its schedule. South Korea's Moon Kyong-jun was crowned Order of Merit winner after the event but there was no presentation as he was not among the OneAsia members playing at the Australian Golf Club.

The schedule was reduced to seven events this year after the cancellation of the Indonesian PGA and China Masters as well as the loss of the Australian PGA. "We've struggled, it's been a difficult year," David Parkin, OneAsia's Director of Tour Operations, told Reuters on a Sunday as he fulfilled his role a co-tournament director.

"But we're still offering our members the chance to earn good money and play in big tournaments and that's what it's about at the end of the day. "Hopefully we'll have a couple more tournaments next year, we're hoping to have the China Masters and the Indonesian PGA back," he added. "I'm positive about the future." — Reuters





Photo shows Japan's midfielder Aya Miyama (center), Germany's Celia Sasic and USA midfielder Carli Lloyd (left). Lloyd, Miyama and Sasic were chosen as top three candidates for the FIFA Women's Player of the Year with the winner due to be announced on January 11, 2016. — AFP



Combination photo shows Bayern Munich's Spanish head coach Pep Guardiola (left), Barcelona's coach Luis Enrique (center) and Chile's Argentinean coach Jorge Sampaoli in Santiago. Guardiola, Enrique and Sampaoli have been shortlisted for the FIFA Ballon d'Or award for best coach awarded on January 11, 2016. — AFP

## ENRIQUE SAD TO SEE SUAREZ MISS OUT ON BALLON D'OR

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona boss Luis Enrique admitted he feels for Luis Suarez after the Uruguayan missed out on joining teammates Lionel Messi and Neymar as one of the three finalists for the 2015 Ballon d'Or. Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo will join Messi and Neymar on the podium in Zurich on January 11 to crown the world's best player, with Messi the hot favorite to land his fifth Ballon d'Or.

However, many in Barcelona believe

Suarez's contribution to Barca's treble winning campaign last season ought to have been recognized ahead of Ronaldo despite his goalscoring feats for Madrid. "As a coach I always want all my players to be on all the awards lists, but you have to understand that there are other players from other teams of a very good level," Enrique said on Tuesday ahead of Barca's Copa del Rey tie against third-tier Villanovense.

Enrique also insisted that Messi should walk away with another prize in Zurich after being nominated for the best goal of the year for his sensational solo effort in the final of the Copa del Rey against Athletic Bilbao. Messi's strike is up against Alessandro Florenzi's incredible long-range effort against Barcelona for Roma back in September and Brazilian Wendell Lira, but Enrique believes the setting of Messi's goal in a Cup final gives it added value. "It is more difficult

to beat four or five players in a Cup final. The other one is in a Champions League group game and obviously has its merit. Florenzi is a player with a spectacular shot, but for me Messi's has more merit." Messi and Neymar were also winners at La Liga's awards for the 2014/15 season on Monday night and also made the case for Suarez to have been included in the final three for the Ballon d'Or. "I am happy to be among the top three, to be going to another gala and be

there with Ney," said Messi, who is a finalist for a ninth consecutive year. "I would have liked for Luis to be there too because he deserved it for the year he had, but we can't also take away credit from Cristiano and he deserves it too." In contrast to Messi and Ronaldo, Neymar is nominated among the top three for the first time. "It is one of the happiest days of my life," said the Brazilian star. "Suarez is missing. I was hoping that he would be there too." — AFP

## ATLETICO KIDS FIGHT BACK

**BARCELONA:** A youthful Atletico Madrid side came back from a goal down to beat third-tier Reus 2-1 yesterday to edge towards the last 16 of the Copa del Rey. Lucas Hernandez's defensive error allowed Fran to fire the Catalans into a shock lead on the half hour mark. However, 10-time winners Atletico responded immediately through Luciano Vietto's headed equaliser before Saul Niguez flicked home the winner 27 minutes from time. The two sides meet again in the second leg on Dec 17.

Atletico boss Diego Simeone made seven changes to the side that beat Espanyol on Saturday to remain second in La Liga. And that lack of continuity showed early on against a Reus side that had only been beaten once previously this season on their way to leading their regional division in the third

tier. Vietto should have opened the scoring when he fired straight at Edgar Badia with a clear sight of goal after seven minutes.

However, the opener arrived at the other end as Hernandez slipped under pressure from Fran and the playmaker confidently slotted past Miguel Angel Moya. Vietto made amends for his earlier miss with a fine header into the bottom corner to level six minutes later. Atletico had far more control after the break, but needed a set-piece to break Reus down as Saul's clever flicked header from Koke's corner looped into the far corner. Holders Barcelona are in action today when they host Villanovense in the second leg of their fourth round tie at the Camp Nou after a 0-0 draw in Extremadura five weeks ago. Real Madrid also open their Cup campaign today away to Cadiz. — AFP



REUS, Spain: Atletico Madrid's Argentinian forward Luciano Vietto (center) vies with Reus Deportivo's goalkeeper Edgar Badia and Reus Deportivo's defender Jesus Olmo during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) football match at the Estadi Municipal de Reus yesterday. — AFP

## MCLAREN GROUP PLANS 'GIANT STEP'

**LONDON:** McLaren are planning a "giant step" forward as a company that will give their Formula One team more muscle to take on mighty Mercedes and Ferrari, group head Ron Dennis said after a dismal 2015 season on the track. The sport's second most successful team finished ninth out of 10 this year, their worst ever performance and first season of a new partnership with Honda. The former champions last won a race in 2012.

Without a title sponsor, McLaren have seen some prominent partners depart to rivals and will lose out on tens of millions of dollars in revenues due to their lowly placing in the championship. Dennis said however that the group as a whole was doing well, with equity value of more than £1 billion (\$1.51 billion). "Our objective as shareholders is always to think about growth," he said at last weekend's Abu Dhabi season-ender in response to a question about shareholdings and whether he had acquired part of a stake owned by Bahrain's Muntalakat state holding company.

"Whilst I completely understand the interest in who owns what, the actual process we are going through at the moment is how can we be bigger, stronger? How can we start to build our organisation to match the sort of resources that some of the other players have?"

McLaren changed their name last year to McLaren Technology Group, incorporating the car company and applied technologies as well as the F1 team. The F1 side now represents between 34 and 38 percent of the business. "We are strong, very strong, financially," said Dennis. He said reinvestment of profits was one way to achieve growth but McLaren were looking at a "completely different" approach. "That's been focusing my mind for four months at least and has been the primary reason why you haven't seen me at the grands prix," he explained. "As and when we get there, if we get there, to where I think will allow us to take a giant step for McLaren, we will share it with the media." — Reuters



AUGUSTA, Georgia: In this file picture taken on April 7, 2015 Tiger Woods of the US hits a shot at Augusta National Golf Club during a practice round for the 2015 Masters Golf Tournament. — AFP

## WOODS HAS NO TIMETABLE ON HEALING OR PLAYING

**NASSAU, Bahamas:** Tiger Woods painted a bleak picture yesterday on when he can return to golf or even get back to doing anything more than just walking. Woods had two back surgeries in a span of 18 months followed by what he described only as another "procedure" in the same area last month. He has not started rehabilitation and does not know when his back will allow for that. "The hardest part for me is there's really nothing I can look forward to, nothing I can build toward," Woods said. "It's just taking it literally just day by day and week by week and time by time."

Woods is at the Hero World Challenge as the tournament host, not one of the 18 players at Albany Golf Club. The only time he touched a club was to pose for a photo, and he leaned on it while talking to Justin Rose and Zach Johnson on the putting green. A month away from turning 40, the smile did come as easily for Woods. He has not competed since Aug 23 at the Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, North Carolina, where he attracted record crowds in his first appearance and played his best golf of a bad year. He went into the final round two shots behind and tied for 10th.

He didn't realize that would be his last event of the year, and last tournament for longer than he knows. "Was it a surprise? Yeah," Woods said. "Because as I was alluding to that week and subsequent weeks, I felt my hip was killing me and I didn't think it was coming from my back. We worked out in the trailer each and every day and just tried to loosen up my hip. And OK, fine, we

went out and played. But I didn't feel any back discomfort. "Come to find out it wasn't my hip, it was coming from my back."

He had another microdiscectomy Sept 16 and then he revealed Oct 30 another "procedure", which he said was in the same spot. Asked the degree to which he can function, Woods said, "I walk. I walk and I walk some more." Woods, who has spent 683 weeks at No. 1 in the world ranking, is now at No. 400, his lowest as a professional. He has not won since the Bridgestone Invitational in 2013, when he was the PGA Tour player of the year.

And now he can't even begin to imagine when he might play again. "I have no answer for that, and neither does my surgeon or my physios," he said. "There is no timetable." Woods said this was different from his four knee surgeries, even the worst one in 2008 after he won the US Open at Torrey Pines for his 14th major. He had a reconstruction of his left knee and was told it would be about nine months before he could get back. Woods returned eight months later and won in his third start. "For nerves, there are really no timetables and therein lies the tricky part of it because you can come back earlier or you can come back later. It just depends on how the nerve heals and how it settles," he said.

### Just a Host?

Would he be surprised if he was nothing more than a host at the Hero World Challenge a year from now? He couldn't answer it. "So where is the light at the end of the tunnel? I don't

know, so that's been hard," Woods said. "I had to reset the clock each and every day and OK, here we go. This is a new day and this is taken for what it is. I listen to my surgeon. I listen to my physios and we just take it day by day. Hopefully, the day-by-day adds up to something positive here soon."

He agreed to be a vice captain under Davis Love III at the Ryder Cup next year, though Woods still wants to play in the matches. He says it has been two months since he hit a golf ball - "a chip shot left handed" - and that he passes most his time playing video games. Woods said he wants to play again and that anything he accomplishes the rest of his career "will be gravy."

But he sounded at peace with what he already has done - 79 career victories on the PGA Tour (second only to the 82 by Sam Snead), 14 majors (second to 18 by Jack Nicklaus), PGA Tour player of the year a record 11 times. "I've had a pretty good career for my 20s and 30s," he said. "For my 20 years out here, I think I've achieved a lot, and if that's all it entails, then I've had a pretty good run. But I'm hoping that's not it. I'm hoping that I can get back out here and compete against these guys. I really do miss it."

The first step? Getting healthy enough to play soccer with his two children. "If I can get to that, then we can start talking about golf," he said. "But let me get to where I can pass the time and really be a part of my kids' life in the way that I want to be part of it physically, not just as a cheerleader." — AP



LOS ANGELES: In this Jan 15, 2015, file photo, Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (right) and Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James hug before the start of an NBA basketball game. — AP

## LEBRON ON KOBE RETIREMENT: I WANTED TO BE JUST LIKE HIM

**CLEVELAND:** When he was a kid, LeBron James looked up on his bedroom wall where Kobe Bryant hung in reverence. "I wanted to be just like him, man," James said yesterday. Two days after Bryant announced he would retire after this season, James expressed his gratitude and love for the US Olympic teammate who pushed him to greatness and will leave the NBA as one of its most celebrated players.

Following Cleveland's morning shoot-around before playing Washington, James spent several minutes reflecting on Bryant's career and the impact he had on the Cavaliers star. "We've always competed against one another and we always wanted to dethrone each other," James said. "But we always had that mutual respect because we knew how much we put into the game. I've always voiced my opinion about Kobe, how great Kobe is, and obviously there will never be another one of him in our league. Ever."

James spent much of his interview session prais-

ing Bryant, who announced Sunday that his 20th NBA season will be his last. Bryant begins his farewell tour Tuesday night in Philadelphia, the city where his basketball journey began. As Bryant was taking his first steps in what would become a stellar career, James was in Akron, Ohio, doing everything he could to mimic a player with unrivaled offensive skills.

"In high school I wore a nappy afro because of Kobe Bryant," James said. "I always said my inspiration came from Jordan, but I always thought Jordan was so out of this world that I could never get there. Kobe was someone that I just always kind of wanted to be like and play like. And then, just being a competitor, he took me to that next level, and understanding how important competition is and just have a willingness to never die."

James rattled off some of Bryant's signature games and moves: His 81-point game in 2006, a game-winning shot against Phoenix, a tip dunk against Indiana, a behind-the-back, 360-degree

dunk against Denver. James can replay all of them in his mind, and he's struggling with the idea that he'll never get to see Bryant add to that list. "To know that it's coming to an end is truly sad for me," he said.

During his offseason workouts, James said the thought of Bryant being in a gym somewhere else, perfecting his crossover or that unstoppable fade-away jumper, pushed him to do more. "I knew I had to be better because of Kobe Bryant," he said. "I knew he was in the gym and I knew he was working on his game. And I knew he was great. So every day that I didn't want to work out or every day I felt like I couldn't give more, I always thought of Kobe. I knew that he was getting better and I was like, 'Man, if you take a day off, he's going to take advantage of it. You cannot take a day off. You cannot take a day off.' And I used him for my motivation throughout my career because I always knew that he was working on something. So, that part will be missed a little bit." — AP





NAPLES: Inter goalkeeper Samir Handanovic saves on Napoli's Lorenzo Insigne (left) during a Serie A soccer match between Napoli and Inter Milan on Monday, Nov 30, 2015. — AP

# HIGUAIN AT THE DOUBLE AS NAPOLI GO TOP OF SERIE A

**MILAN:** Gonzalo Higuain struck in either half as Napoli toppled 10-man Inter Milan 2-1 in a spectacular clash at the San Paolo to go top of the Serie A table on Monday. Inter travelled south for the first big away test of what they hope will be a title-winning campaign, but with just a two-point cushion on a Napoli side whose last defeat came on the opening day of the season. Inter were shell-shocked by the lightning start of Maurizio Sarri's men and their hopes of staying top suffered a blow when Yuto Nagatomo saw red a minute before the interval.

But Inter regrouped and Adem Ljajic reduced arrears on the hour with a fine individual strike. Yet despite a battling finish that saw the visitors hit the woodwork twice, it wasn't enough to stop Napoli going a point clear at the top for the first time this season. Inter drop to second with Fiorentina, held 1-1 at Sassuolo earlier Monday, a point further off the pace in third. Higuain and Napoli's players milked the applause at an appreciative San Paolo and the Argentina striker dedicated taking his league-leading tally for the season to 12 goals to the city and the fans.

"It's a magic night. I'm happy for the fans, for the team and for the people of Napoli," Higuain told Sky Sport. "I think we deserve it, it's not often we're in the lead. The season is still long, but we have to capitalize on going top." Roma's shock 2-0 home defeat to Atalanta has left embattled Rudi Garcia's side in fourth at four points behind Napoli, with champions

Juventus now up to fifth, at seven points off the pace. Napoli began at break-neck speed and a panicky Inter were made to pay for Jeison Murillo's mis-hit clearance on the edge of the area when it found its way to Higuain via a deft touch from Jose Callejon.

The Argentinean was left in space on the right and coolly volleyed past Samir Handanovic. Nagatomo, who had earlier been cautioned for a foul on Callejon, was given his marching orders, rather harshly, when he was cautioned for a second time after sliding in late but without malice to challenge Allan, who was left writhing on the ground. Mancini hit out at the officiating when he told to Premium Sport: "Nagatomo didn't deserve his first yellow card, Callejon simulated the foul. The red card that sent Nagatomo off for a half-foul was decisive. "Without the red, we wouldn't have lost."

But when asked about Inter's biggest tormentor, Mancini didn't hide: "Higuain's an amazing striker. You give him half a ball and he scores." Mancini introduced full-back Alex Telles for striker Mauro Icardi but Napoli soon added to their tally. Higuain was unstoppable as he ran on to Raul Albiol's powerful header and out-sprinted Inter's centre-backs to smash his finish past Handanovic. Higuain's 12th league goal this season took him clear of Sampdoria striker Eder. Inter reduced arrears minutes later when Ljajic fired low into the near bottom corner through a crowd of defenders.



MILAN: Sassuolo's defender from Italy Federico Peluso heads the ball during the Italian Serie A football match Sassuolo vs Fiorentina on November 30, 2015. — AFP

Inter almost caused a sensation in added-on time when a Stevan Jovetic header bounced off the post. In the follow-up, Reina scrambled to tip Miranda's effort on to the other upright. Earlier, title-chasing Fiorentina spurned the chance to go top after a 1-1 draw

at feisty Sassuolo. Borja Valero broke the deadlock after five minutes but Fiorentina were made to pay for a series of misses when Sergio Floccari headed home the leveler three minutes before the interval. Fiorentina coach Paulo Sousa said his side were "tired" after a 2-

## Italian Serie A table

Italian Serie A table on Monday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Napoli	14	9	4	1	26	9	31
Inter Milan	14	9	3	2	17	9	30
Fiorentina	14	9	2	3	27	12	29
Roma	14	8	3	3	29	17	27
Juventus	14	7	3	4	20	11	24
Sassuolo	14	6	5	3	16	13	23
AC Milan	14	7	2	5	19	18	23
Torino	14	6	3	5	20	18	21
Atalanta	14	6	3	5	15	15	21
Lazio	14	6	1	7	17	22	19
Udinese	14	5	3	6	14	17	18
Empoli	14	5	3	6	16	20	18
Chievo	14	4	4	6	18	16	16
Sampdoria	14	4	4	6	20	22	16
Genoa	14	4	4	6	15	19	16
Palermo	14	4	3	7	13	20	15
Frosinone	14	4	2	8	14	24	14
Bologna	14	4	1	9	13	19	13
Carpi	14	2	3	9	13	27	9
Verona	14	0	6	8	10	24	6

2 Europa League draw at FC Basel last week. "I'm disappointed, we paid for our efforts last Thursday and after the interval Sassuolo moved up a gear. "We missed the chance for 2-0, then in the second half we got tired and lost concentration." — AFP

## MILNER EYEING FIRST TROPHY WITH IMPROVING LIVERPOOL

**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool have hit form at the right time ahead of a season-defining month with a first trophy possible under new manager Juergen Klopp, midfielder James Milner has said. The Merseysiders, who have won six of their last seven games in all competitions, play seven times in December and kick-off the hectic schedule away to Southampton in the quarter final of the League Cup today. "This is always a crucial period. The league table always looks so much different at the beginning to mid-January than what he does at the start of December," Milner was quoted as saying by British media. "You see suspensions and injuries taking hold and teams losing and gaining form. It is a great time to be in good form going into this Christmas period and hopefully we can keep it going."

Liverpool's last trophy was the 2012 League Cup and the former Manchester City midfielder said he was optimistic the club, who are sixth in the Premier League, could end their wait for silverware. "It is a talented squad of players, we have a great mix of youth and experience and obviously a new manager. It is exciting times for everyone," Milner said. "If we keep working hard, keep improving, keep doing our job then hopefully we can be successful. We just want to keep getting the wins on the board. "Hopefully get into January and February and still be in all the cup competitions and give ourselves a shot in one of the cups." — Reuters

## CHELSEA SUBMIT PLANS FOR NEW 60,000-SEAT GROUND

**LONDON:** Chelsea have submitted a planning application to build a new 60,000-seat stadium on the site of their Stamford Bridge ground, the Premier League champions announced yesterday. "A planning application for a new stadium at Stamford Bridge with an expanded seating capacity has been submitted," the club said in a statement. "This follows a successful consultation process during which we received very helpful feedback." The plans involve the demolition of the current stadium at Stamford Bridge, where Chelsea have played since 1905, and the construction of a new arena featuring a club shop and museum, plus restaurants and cafes.

Stamford Bridge, in west London, last underwent major renovation in the late 1990s when the stadium's West Stand was rebuilt. The ground's current 41,798 capacity restricts Chelsea's ability to maximize match-day revenues. According to the most recent figures compiled by financial analysts Deloitte, Chelsea generated 85 million euros (\$90.1 million) in match-day revenue in the 2013-14 season. In comparison, London rivals Arsenal, whose Emirates Stadium holds 60,260, raised 120 million euros, while Manchester United, who can fit 75,653 people into Old Trafford, generated 129 million euros. —AFP



LISBON: Belenenses's defender Joao Amorim (down) vies with Sporting's Colombian forward Fredy Montero during the Portuguese league football match Sporting CP vs Os Belenenses at the Jose Alvalade stadium in Lisbon on November 30, 2015. — AFP

## SPORTING SNATCH VICTORY AGAINST HAPLESS BELENENSES; BENFICA WIN

**LISBON:** Sporting's Willam Carvalho converted a stoppage-time penalty to give the Portuguese league leaders a 1-0 home win over hapless Belenenses who defended gallantly for 90 minutes on Monday. Sporting stay five points clear of Porto, who won 1-0 at Tondela on Saturday. Champions Benfica got two early goals to win 2-0 at Braga and move above their opponents into third. Belenenses suffered a cruel late blow as they appeared to be on the verge of taking a deserved point from Sporting until the ball hit defender Tonel's raised hand as he went up for a header with Islam Slimani and the referee pointed to the spot.

It was not clear whether the handball

was intentional or not, but Carvalho made no mistake as he fired home the penalty. "We reached the shore and died on the beach," said Belenenses defender Goncalo Brandao. The highlight of the game at the Alvalade was an individual effort by Sporting forward Bryan Ruiz in the first half. The Costa Rican collected the ball in mid-field, ghosted past a defender, jinked his way into the area, slipped through two more defenders and saw his shot tipped away by Hugo Ventura. Benfica's Pizzi scored in the third minute after Kostas Mitroglou opened up Braga's defense with a clever backheel and defender Lisandro Lopez turned in the second after 11 minutes. — Reuters

## CHELSEA-TARGET MUELLER 'IRREPLACABLE' AT BAYERN

**BERLIN:** Chelsea are the latest Premier League club reported to be chasing Germany forward Thomas Mueller, but as far as Bayern Munich are concerned their maverick star is 'irreplaceable'. According to UK media reports, Jose Mourinho's Blues want to sign Mueller to replace Diego Costa, hardly surprising given the German's current goal-scoring prowess. Mueller netted Bayern's opener in Saturday's 2-0 win at home to Hertha Berlin to claim his 13th league goal, just four months into the season. It means he has scored in each of his last five competitive outings, taking his astonishing personal haul to 20 goals in 21 outings in all competitions in 2015/16. In a single season, he has never scored more than his current tally of 13 Bundesliga goals-which has come after only 14 matches.

Still just 26, Mueller already has a World Cup winners medal in his collection and can play on the wing or as a striker, as he proved by scoring a hat-trick against Portugal at the 2014 World Cup. Bayern have tied Mueller up with a contract until June 2019 and he has an estimated market value of 75 million euros (\$79.55m), but the sky's the limit in terms of what a Premier League club would potentially have to pay for him. "Thomas Mueller embodies everything which distinguishes FC Bayern Munich," enthused the club's director of sport Matthias Sammer. "He is an absolute role model, an absolute gem and he's irreplaceable." Mueller is not your typical footballer, who tends to be more interested in fast cars and supermodel girlfriends.

Mueller got married shortly after his 20th birthday in November 2009, his wife Lisa is a successful equestrian rider and at the last count, the couple have seven horses. Mueller has even tried his hand at horse breeding. He insists he is just an average guy and his name is so typically German that 700,000 countrymen share the same combination, except the Bayern Star has nearly nine million followers on Facebook. The joker of the team, whether playing for Germany or Bayern, Mueller is more likely to be seen pulling a face or pranking a team-mate than boarding the team bus wearing the trade-

mark oversized headphones most footballers prefer.

### Good over 10kms

Bastian Schweinsteiger famously quipped that the best thing about joining Manchester United at the start of the season is that he "wouldn't have to travel with Thomas Mueller anymore" to Bayern's away matches. But Mueller's trademark talent is for being in the right place at the right time, which has attracted the interest of England's top clubs. "He just has the nose for it and knows exactly where the ball will land," said Germany captain Schweinsteiger. Mueller is the first to admit that he is not the fastest in a sprint, "but I'm pretty good over 10kms", in reference to his high work rate during matches.

Since breaking into the Bayern team in August 2008, he has often shown a maturity and level-headed approach beyond his years, which is juxtaposed by his taste for clowning around. "I gave no thoughts to the recent past. I am not a guy who is haunted by fear," he said after spending a fraught night with the Germany team in the Stade de France changing rooms during the Paris terror attacks on November 13. This is not the first time a Premier League club has been linked to Mueller. In September, Bayern received an offer from Manchester United which chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge would only describe as 'very high', just weeks after making it clear the Germany star was not for sale. The German media speculated that the United offer was in the region of 100 million euros, which soon prompted a new nickname for Mueller, when a fan shouted "Hey 100 million man, what is your shirt worth?" "It's basically crazy the sums which are thrown around in football, but that's just the business," Mueller said at the time. "Nobody is worth 100 million euros, but it's just a transaction." But former Bayern and Germany midfielder Lothar Matthaeus has warned Mueller to ignore the attention from England and says he should end his career in the Bundesliga. And in terms of Bayern allowing their star player to leave the club, as Rummenigge put it in September, "the door remains closed". — AFP



# Sports

Enrique sad to see Suarez miss out on Ballon d'Or



Higuain at the double as Napoli go top of Serie A



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2015

CURRY STARS AS UNBEATEN WARRIORS MARCH ON



CLEVELAND: Baltimore Ravens wide receiver Kamar Aiken (11) reaches for a touchdown after a 15-yard pass in the second half of an NFL football game against the Cleveland Browns on Monday, Nov 30, 2015. —AP

## LAST-GASP DRAMA AS RAVENS STUN BROWNS

**NEW YORK:** Will Hill returned a last-gasp blocked field goal attempt for a touchdown as the Baltimore Ravens scored a dramatic 33-27 win over the Cleveland Browns on Monday. The Ravens had looked set to suffer an agonizing late defeat as Cleveland kicker Travis Coons stepped up for what would have been a game-winning 51-yard field goal with the last play of regulation.

But Baltimore defensive end Brent Urban blocked the kick and safety Hill scooped up the loose ball to gallop down the sideline to snatch a sensational win for the Ravens. "It was almost a game of redemption," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said. "Will Hill didn't do a very good job in coverage. He got fooled a little bit and gave up a touchdown pass. He comes back, picks it up and runs it in. "All the guys on the field-goal-block team set the wall down the sideline. It was a thing of beauty."

The victory saw the Ravens, playing without injured quarterback Joe Flacco, improve to 4-7, although they remain in third in the AFC North standings behind division leaders the Cincinnati Bengals (9-2) and Pittsburgh (6-5). The Browns are last in the

division at 2-9 and have now lost 14 of their last 16 games stretching back to last season. "It's a tough one to wrap your brain around," Browns coach Mike Pettine said. "It's frustrating. The guys battled back from some deficits. We didn't finish it." Baltimore had looked to have done enough for victory when kicker Justin Tucker converted a 35-yard field goal in the fourth quarter to give the Ravens a 27-20 lead.

But Cleveland quarterback Austin Davis-pressed into action after Josh McCown left the field with a shoulder injury in the fourth quarter-connected with wide receiver Travis Benjamin on a 42-yard touchdown pass with 1:47 left to tie the game at 27-27. The momentum appeared to be with Cleveland on the final drive as Coons stepped up for his shot at glory. The final twist came, though, when Urban somehow managed to get a hand to the attempt and Hill grabbed the ball to run for the score. Browns kicked Coons was baffled at the missed field goal. "It felt really good coming off my foot," Coons said. "I was really surprised. I don't know if it was me. As soon as it comes off your foot and you hear another thud, that's not a good thing." — AFP

NFL results/standings

Baltimore 33, Cleveland 27.

American Football Conference								National Football Conference							
AFC East								NFC East							
	W	L	T	OTL	PF	PA	PCT								
New England	10	1	0	1	347	212	.909	Washington	5	6	0	1	241	267	.455
NY Jets	6	5	0	0	272	228	.545	NY Giants	5	6	0	0	287	273	.455
Buffalo	5	6	0	0	266	257	.455	Philadelphia	4	7	0	0	243	274	.364
Miami	4	7	0	0	225	287	.364	Dallas	3	8	0	2	204	261	.273
AFC North								NFC North							
Cincinnati	9	2	0	0	297	193	.818	Minnesota	8	3	0	0	231	194	.727
Pittsburgh	6	5	0	1	266	230	.545	Green Bay	7	4	0	0	262	215	.636
Baltimore	4	7	0	1	259	276	.364	Chicago	5	6	0	1	231	264	.455
Cleveland	2	9	0	1	213	310	.182	Detroit	4	7	0	0	230	288	.364
AFC South								NFC South							
Indianapolis	6	5	0	1	249	260	.545	Carolina	11	0	0	0	332	205	1.000
Houston	6	5	0	0	232	234	.545	Atlanta	6	5	0	1	260	234	.545
Jacksonville	4	7	0	1	236	299	.364	Tampa Bay	5	6	0	0	248	279	.455
Tennessee	2	9	0	0	203	257	.182	New Orleans	4	7	0	1	261	339	.364
AFC West								NFC West							
Denver	9	2	0	0	252	207	.818	Arizona	9	2	0	0	355	229	.818
Kansas City	6	5	0	0	287	220	.545	Seattle	6	5	0	2	267	222	.545
Oakland	5	6	0	0	264	280	.455	St. Louis	4	7	0	1	186	230	.364
San Diego	3	8	0	0	244	307	.273	San Francisco	3	8	0	0	152	271	.273



A combination of photographs shows (left to right) Barcelona's Brazilian forward Neymar da Silva Santos Junior, Portugal's forward Cristiano Ronaldo and Barcelona's Argentinean forward Lionel Messi. FIFA announced on November 30, 2015 that Barcelona's Argentinean forward Lionel Messi, Brazilian forward Neymar and Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo, current winner of the award, are the three finalists for the 2015 Ballon d'Or (Golden Ball). —AFP

## MESSI VOTED 'LA LIGA TOP STRIKER'

**MADRID:** Barcelona star Lionel Messi, the favorite to win FIFA's prestigious Ballon d'Or title, was on Monday voted the top striker in the Spanish league last season ahead of Real Madrid rival Cristiano Ronaldo. It is the sixth time that the Argentinean has won the title in seven editions of the trophy given by the Spanish football league, with the prize presented during a gala ceremony in Barcelona on Monday night. Messi, who scored 43 goals and was the catalyst for Barcelona's run to three titles last season-the Champions League, La Liga and the Spanish Cup was selected following a computer analysis of the players' statistics in the championship.

"I'm proud to receive this award ahead of so many important players in La Liga," said Messi. "This award in particular I want to dedicate to my son Thiago (aged 3) even if he still doesn't understand very well. Every time I leave the house he gets angry and asks me: 'Papa, are you going again to score goals?' This award is for him." Messi also won the vote for the best striker following a poll of the captains of each of Spain's top flight sides. Barcelona's Claudio Bravo was voted the best goalkeeper and Luis Enrique top coach while Real Madrid's Sergio Ramos and James Rodriguez were named best defender and midfielder respectively.

Valencia's Algerian midfielder Sofiane

Feghouli was voted the top African player and Barcelona's Brazilian striker Neymar, the best player from the American continent. Real Madrid's Portuguese star Ronaldo, who scored the most La Liga goals last season with 48, won the public's choice award. Ronaldo, Messi and Neymar were all named on Monday's shortlist for FIFA's Ballon d'Or which will be awarded on January 11. While Ronaldo has triumphed over the last two seasons (in a total of three wins), Messi has previously claimed the coveted award four times while Neymar makes the shortlist for the first time. Neymar, 23, said it was "a great honor" to be named for the first time alongside his illustrious La Liga rivals. — AFP

## CHINA PLANTS ITS FLAG IN ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

INVESTORS BUY 13% STAKE IN MAN CITY FOR \$400M

**LONDON:** China planted its flag in the English Premier League yesterday as a consortium of Chinese investors bought a 13 percent stake in Manchester City's parent company for \$400 million (377 million euros). China Media Capital (CMC) and CITIC Capital have purchased the stake in City Football Group (CFG), which had previously been wholly owned by the Abu Dhabi United Group (ADUG), just weeks after Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the club.

The deal is part of the CFG's strategy of expanding into Chinese football and reflects Xi's aim to turn his country into a "football powerhouse". "The deal will create an unprecedented platform for the growth of CFG clubs and companies in China and internationally, borne out of CFG's ability to provide a wealth of industry expertise and resources to the rapidly developing Chinese football industry," CFG, CMC and CITIC said in a joint statement.

"The capital from the share acquisition will be used by City Football Group to fund its China growth, further CFG international business expansion opportunities and further develop CFG infrastructure assets."

As well as Manchester City, the current Premier League leaders, CFG also owns New York City FC and Melbourne City FC and is a minority shareholder in Japanese club Yokohama F Marinos. The deal, which values CFG at around \$3 billion, is still subject to regulatory approval. It comes after Xi was given a tour of Manchester City, twice Premier League champions in recent years, during a state visit to Britain in October. British chancellor George Osborne had previously announced a £3 million (\$4.5 million) investment package for grassroots football in China. Earlier this year, Xi released a 50-point plan to turn the country into a "football pow-

erhouse", including proposals to set up 50,000 football schools across the country.

The Premier League is hugely popular in China and David Beckham, one of its foremost icons, has been a global ambassador for Chinese football since March 2013. The list of owners of Premier League clubs includes investors from Russia, Thailand and the United States, but China has never previously made such a significant investment in one of the division's superpowers.

"Football is the most loved, played and watched sport in the world and in China, the exponential growth pathway for the game is both unique and hugely exciting," said CFG chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak. "We have therefore worked hard to find the right partners and to create the right deal structure to leverage the incredible potential that exists in China, both for CFG and for football at large." CMC chairman Li Ruigang will join the CFG board, becoming its seventh member. "We and our consortium partner CITIC Capital ... see this investment as a prime opportunity for furthering the contribution of China to the global football family," Li said.

Prior to Tuesday's announcement, the ADUG, an investment arm of the Abu Dhabi royal family, was the CFG's sole shareholder. The ADUG was formed in 2008 when Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan completed the purchase of City from former Thailand prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. It made City, who have spent much of their existence in the shadow of cross-town rivals Manchester United, one of the world's richest clubs. Investment in players, coaching staff and new facilities has led to notable on-pitch success, including Premier League triumphs in 2012 and 2014, an FA Cup success in 2011 and League Cup victory in 2014. — AFP





The all-new Renault  
Captur 2016: Agile,  
dynamic and elegant

BOE'S CARNEY SAYS UK BANKS' JOB ALMOST DONE ON CAPITAL



ISLAMABAD: People look at vintage and classic cars during the annual Classic Car Show in Islamabad yesterday. Dozens of vintage and classic cars purchased and manufactured between the years of 1920-1970 are displayed in an annual car show organized by the Vintage and Classic Car Club of Pakistan as part of their 6th cross country rally.—AP

IMF APPROVES YUAN AS ELITE RESERVE CURRENCY  
RENMINBI TO ENTER IN OCT 2016 WITH 10.92% SHARE

**WASHINGTON:** The International Monetary Fund welcomed China's yuan into its elite reserve currency basket Monday, recognizing the ascendance of the Asian power in the global economy.

The yuan, also known as the renminbi, will join the US dollar, euro, Japanese yen and British pound next year in the basket of currencies the IMF uses as an international reserve asset. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde called the decision "an important milestone in the integration of the Chinese economy into the global financial system." "It is also a recognition of the progress that the Chinese authorities have made in the past years in reforming China's monetary and financial systems," she added. The decision by the IMF executive board solidifies China's ambition to see the government-controlled yuan achieve global status as one of the world's top currencies alongside the United States, Europe and Japan.

China, the world's second-largest economy,

asked last year for the yuan to be added to the Fund's Special Drawing Rights basket. But, while already meeting the SDR criteria for being widely used, as recently as August the Fund considered the currency too tightly controlled to qualify.

However, IMF staff experts in early November said that Beijing had taken the steps necessary for the yuan to be called "freely usable", opening the way for Monday's decision. Lagarde said the yuan's inclusion in the basket was expected to help China open up further to the world economy. "The continuation and deepening of these efforts will bring about a more robust international monetary and financial system, which in turn will support the growth and stability of China and the global economy," she said.

The unexpected devaluation of the yuan last August received good marks from the IMF as it expanded the currency's movements based on market forces.

In addition, Beijing announced last week that an initial group of foreign central banks has been allowed to enter the Chinese currency market, which likely will promote further internationalization of the yuan in global trading. IMF members can use the Special Drawing Rights basket to obtain currencies to meet balance-of-payments needs. The Fund also issues its crisis loans-crucial to struggling economies like Greece-valued in SDRs. The yuan's entry into the basket takes effect on October 1, 2016.

**Chinese challenges**

China's central bank welcomed the decision. "The joining of RMB in the SDR basket also means the international community has greater expectations on China to play an active role in the world economic and financial arena," it said in a statement carried by the official Xinhua news agency.

It puts the Bank of China under pressure to provide more transparency in line with its

peers, such as the Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank. "If part of their policy is to gradually liberalize the capital account and the financial sector, this is setting in motion a process of opening up that cannot be reversed," Angel Udiibe, a financial markets expert at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, told AFP.

"It really make the case at home that they need to continue with the process of liberalization." The composition and weightings of the SDRs basket are reviewed every five years. The last time the currencies in the basket were changed was in 2000, when the euro replaced the German deutsche mark and the French franc. The value of the SDR is based on a weighted average of the currencies in the basket. With the inclusion of the yuan, the dollar's weight in the new basket will be little changed from its current 41.7 percent. The euro will be 30.9 percent, the yuan 10.9 percent, the yen 8.3 percent, and the pound 8.1 percent.

The inclusion of the yuan came with the support of the United States, the IMF's largest shareholder. Until recently Washington accused China of keeping the yuan artificially low to gain a trade advantage. But in October the US Treasury Department softened its tone, saying that after Beijing's moves to loosen controls, the yuan "remains below its appropriate medium-term valuation."

Still, the IMF decision risks angering some lawmakers in the US Congress amid fierce maneuvering for the 2016 presidential election. "With this decision, the IMF is choosing to reward China's currency manipulation instead of combating it," said Senator Chuck Schumer, a New York Democrat and longtime China critic. "This decision is an affront to the millions of US workers who have lost their jobs at the hands of China's rapacious trading practices, and sends a terrible signal to the rest of the world that currency manipulation is acceptable behavior in the eyes of the IMF." —AFP

OPTIMISM OVER IRAN HELPS  
DUBAI OUTPERFORM REGION

**DUBAI:** As low oil prices cast a shadow over Gulf Arab economies, investors are betting that lifting sanctions on Iran will boost Dubai - a view that is causing the emirate's debt to outperform the rest of the region. The outperformance may be surprising to some investors. Dubai recovered only in the last few years from a 2009 debt crisis, and as a trade and business centre for the Gulf, it will not escape a regional slowdown caused by cheap oil.

Dubai real estate prices are falling and its equities index is down 41 percent from last year's peak. But bond prices and credit default swaps, used to insure against the risk of a sovereign default, have barely moved in Dubai, even though cheap oil has dampened investor sentiment toward the rest of the region.

The spread of a May 2022 US dollar sovereign sukuk from Dubai over an April 2019 sovereign bond from Abu Dhabi narrowed to 1.83 percent yesterday from 1.97 percent at the start of this year. Five-year Dubai CDS are down 65 points from the end of last year to 210 points, according to Markit data. The CDS of most sovereigns in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council are lower in absolute terms, but all of the region's CDS except Dubai have risen this year.

A major reason is expectations that Dubai will quickly reclaim its traditional status as a hub for trade with and investment in Iran after international economic sanctions, imposed over Tehran's nuclear plans, are lifted early next year.

"Lifting sanctions against Iran is a point that Dubai will benefit most from. Dubai has a strong history of close trade interaction with Iran and should be the key beneficiary among all GCC credits when Iran opens its market - this is what CDS are pointing to," said Sergey Dergachev, senior portfolio manager for emerging market debt at Union Investment Privatfonds in Germany.

**RISKS**

One factor bolstering confidence in Dubai is that its economy, which is strong in areas from finance and real estate to trade and tourism, is much more diversified than the rest of the Gulf. Oil and gas output accounts for an almost negligible fraction of Dubai's gross domestic product; for other Gulf states, it is around a third or more.

"Dubai is an outlier and not really that impacted by the oil price slump - Dubai would be more hammered by a global growth and trade slowdown, and here the situation still looks not bad," Dergachev said.

However, the composition of Dubai's GDP understates the extent to which it is vulnerable to an oil-related slump in the region.

Tourism-related industries account for 20 percent or more of the economy, and roughly a fifth of international visitors to Dubai come from the GCC. Around a fifth of real estate purchases are estimated to be by GCC buyers from outside Dubai. Meanwhile, market interest rates in the

United Arab Emirates have started rising as less oil money flows through the banking system, and the start of US monetary tightening as early as this month could boost rates further.

This, combined with a regional economic slowdown, could make it harder for Dubai and its government-related enterprises (GREs) to finance the \$143 billion debt overhang left over from their financial crisis. "Imprudent risk-taking and re-leveraging by Dubai GREs and private companies could prop up short-term growth at the expense of medium-term stability," the International Monetary Fund warned in a report in August.

But for many investors, the prospect of an Iran-related boom at least partly outweighs that risk. The IMF estimated that removing sanctions on Iran could add 1 percentage point to the UAE's GDP growth between 2016 and 2018, simply by boosting non-hydrocarbon exports. Dubai, with its sophisticated trading infrastructure, could grab most of that benefit.

The emirate would also profit from increased Iranian demand for services exports such as trade finance, transport, tourism and hospitality. The number of Dubai hotel guests arriving from Iran has almost halved since 2010; it could now recover.

"If sanctions are lifted, the additional indirect impact of spending by tourists and business travellers in the broader economy could be significant," the IMF said.—Reuters

US FACTORY ACTIVITY  
DROPS IN NOVEMBER

**WASHINGTON:** US factory activity fell last month to the lowest level in more than six years, with a stronger dollar and low oil prices cutting new orders and hurting production.

The Institute for Supply Management said yesterday that its index of factory activity in November dropped to 48.6 from 50.1 in October. Any reading below 50 signals contraction and the index has tumbled below that critical level for the first time since November 2012.

It now rests at its lowest level since June 2009, a worrisome sign as Federal Reserve officials will consider raising short-term interest rates this month on the understanding that the economy has sufficiently healed from the Great Recession. US manufacturers hit a rut in 2015. A global economic slowdown and a rising dollar have crimped exports, while lower oil prices have led energy firms to slash their orders for steel pipe and other equipment for drilling. Those pressures have steadily curbed growth in factory activity this year and have now pushed the manufacturing sector into contraction.

A measure for new orders dropped to 48.9 from 52.9, while production fell to 49.2 from 52.9. Still, the report showed a rebound in hiring as its employment measure improved to 51.3 from 47.6 a month earlier. US manufacturers have been squeezed this year as a strong dollar and weak economies in China and other key

foreign markets have cut into exports

The dollar has appreciated nearly 14 percent against a grouping of major currencies from a year ago. The increase has left manufacturers at a disadvantage. U.S. goods have become more expensive overseas, while lowering prices for imported goods that compete against American products. China has been stuck in a slowdown, as has Brazil. Europe - a major trade partner - remains economically fragile, while Canada and Japan have sunk into recession.

Companies trimmed their stockpiles of goods between July and September, the government said last week. That cut economic growth during those three months at an annualized rate of 0.6 percentage points, even though overall growth advanced 2.1 percent.

Despite the dismal outlook from the ISM report, there is evidence that some manufacturers are adjusting to these challenging conditions.

The Fed reported that US manufacturing output rose in October for the first time in three months as steel mills, auto plants and computer factories became busier. For the third consecutive quarter, US CEOs expressed growing caution about the country's economic prospects in the short term and more said they expected to curtail capital investments over the next six months, according to a survey released yesterday.— Agencies



## OPEC RISKS PYRRHIC VICTORY WITH OIL POLICY: ANALYST

**LONDON:** "If we are victorious in one more battle with the Romans, we shall be utterly ruined," King Pyrrhus of Epirus complained after winning exceptionally bloody engagements in 280 and 279 BC.

Pyrrhus lost many of his men, most of his generals and had no reserves left, while "the army of the Romans, as if from a fountain gushing forth indoors, was easily and speedily filled up again" according to Plutarch. The king of Epirus, reported to have been a brilliant general, has come to symbolise victories that are so expensive they leave the victor dangerously weakened.

Pyrrhus won the battle but lost the war. As ministers from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries meet in Vienna, some may wonder if the strategy of maintaining output to defend market share risks securing a Pyrrhic victory.

OPEC has put shale producers on the defensive and forced the cancellation of many ambitious oil projects with its strategy of going for volume over price. But members are gradually running out of money and the shale industry is waiting for any upturn in prices to start ramping up production again.

Meanwhile Iran is set to boost its oil exports once sanctions lifted, which will make the supply glut worse, and the risks of recession in developed and developing countries alike are increasing. Some OPEC members, led by Saudi Arabia, remain hopeful that they will secure an eventual victory. The question is whether all the short-term pain will be worth it in the longer run.

## MIXED RESULTS

In November 2014, OPEC ministers decided to maintain their production unchanged even though oil prices had already fallen \$40 per barrel, 37 percent, over the previous five months.

In choosing this course, which was led by Saudi Arabia but endorsed by other members, ministers expressed concern about the increase in non-OPEC supply and the continued rise in both developed and developing country stocks. Twelve months later, oil consumption is growing at some of the fastest rates in over a decade, US shale production has peaked for the time being and non-OPEC oil output is forecast to decline in 2016.

But Russian oil production is the highest on record and oil inventories in developed countries have risen by 250 million barrels, almost 6 percent, with millions more extra barrels in storage in emerging markets. Oil prices have fallen another \$27, and show no signs of recovering, while many hedge funds are betting they will fall even further over the next few months. Lower prices

have cut economic growth in half and turned budget surpluses into big deficits even for the wealthy oil producers in the Gulf Cooperation Council. For weaker members of OPEC in Latin America and Africa, as well as Iran and Iraq, the budgetary and economic impact has been far worse.

## SAUDI STRATEGY

OPEC's production strategy has been driven by Saudi Arabia, the cartel's biggest producer, and its veteran oil minister Ali Naimi, who has made clear the kingdom felt it had little choice.

Four years with prices averaging at or above \$100 per barrel had left the market on an unsustainable course, with supply growth accelerating, especially from shale, while demand growth was slowing. Oil prices had to fall substantially to curb growth in high-cost production from shale and other sources while encouraging faster growth in demand. If Saudi Arabia had cut its output to prop up prices, it would simply have encouraged more growth in shale and demands for even deeper cutbacks later. Saudi Arabia would have been left with the worst of both worlds: lower prices and lower production. The strategy had been tried before in the early 1980s and ended in comprehensive failure.

## MORE TIME

Commentators close to Saudi Arabia insist policymakers always understood the rebalancing process would take several years. But prices have fallen much further and for much longer than senior Saudi policymakers believed was likely in 2014.

The gains from the strategy have been modest so far which has led to mounting questions about whether it is working or should be changed. Global oil inventories are still rising by more than 1 million barrels per day. While shale and non-OPEC output more generally has started to fall, strong output from Saudi Arabia and Russia has kept the market oversupplied.

Consumption has grown by between 1.5 million and 2.0 million barrels per day in 2015, partly thanks to lower fuel prices, but there are doubts about whether the pace of growth can be maintained in 2016. Iran is poised to add an extra 0.5 million to 1.0 million barrels per day to the oil market once sanctions are lifted.

In developing countries, which have accounted for all the increase in fuel demand since 2005, economic growth is slowing as a result of the collapse in commodity prices and the prospect of higher US interest rates.

And in the advanced economies, the economic expansion is

relatively mature and there is an increasing risk of another recession arriving within the next 2-3 years, which would cut oil demand.

## FINETUNING

Given continued oversupply in the oil market and the big build-up of inventories, most analysts do not see the market rebalancing before 2017 or even 2018. But by the start of 2017, the U.S. expansion will be 90 months old, making it longer than all but three expansions on record, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research.

By the end of 2018, the US expansion will be 114 months old, longer than every other expansion except the expansion which began in March 1991.

If the strategy is to balance the oil market by 2017 or 2018, it will rebalance just as the US economy is poised for another downturn. In the meantime, oil-producing countries are burning through their financial reserves at an unsustainable rate according to the IMF.

Saudi Arabia's external reserves have fallen from a peak of \$737 billion in July 2014 to \$654 billion in September 2015. Other members of OPEC have smaller much financial buffers and will run out much sooner. Nearly all members of OPEC will exhaust their reserves in less than five years, according to the IMF, though in some cases it may be possible to extend the reserves by issuing foreign currency debt instead.

Saudi officials have been briefing journalists and analysts that prices are too low and need to rise to \$60-80 per barrel in the medium term to encourage enough investment to meet demand. The attempt to guide market expectations higher has not been backed up by any formal change in output policy ("Saudi counters lower for longer oil mantra" Financial Times, Nov 26). For the time being, there appears to be enough political support in Saudi Arabia and its key allies around the Gulf to give the strategy more time. But that patience will not last forever.

If the strategy does not show clear signs of working and prices are not higher by this time next year, the political pressure to change course will be overwhelming. For now, the Saudis and OPEC appear committed to their current course, and a formal policy change appears unlikely. But there is scope for some flexibility in production at the margin without formally changing policy, which could limit the build-up of stocks and in turn buy the strategy more time. —Reuters

OPEC NOVEMBER OUTPUT RISES, LED BY IRAQ, SAUDI, SAYS SURVEY  
OUTPUT RISES BY 250,000 BPD TO 31.77 MILLION BPD

**VIENNA:** OPEC oil output has risen in November from the previous month, a Reuters survey found on Monday, led by a rebound in Iraqi exports after bad weather had temporarily halted supply growth from the group's second-largest producer. The increase indicates the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries is again pumping close to a record high as Saudi Arabia and other big producers focus on market share. OPEC meets this week to review the policy, with no change expected.

OPEC supply has risen in November to 31.77 million barrels per day (bpd) from 31.64 million in October, according to the survey, based on shipping data and information from sources at oil companies, OPEC and consultants.

The OPEC meeting on Friday comes almost a year after its historic decision, led by Saudi Arabia, to refuse to prop up prices. Oil has more than halved in 18 months due to persistent oversupply, but even those in OPEC who want a change in approach do not expect one.

"I am seeing that Saudi Arabia will not change its position," said an OPEC delegate from a non-Gulf country which favors supply restraint. "No favorable outcome will be reached at the next meeting." OPEC has boosted production by about 1.50 million bpd since its November 2014 policy shift. Output is not far below July's 31.88 million bpd, the highest since Reuters records began in 1997.

The biggest monthly rise in output has come from Iraq, the world's fastest growing source of supply growth this year. Exports from Iraq's main outlet, its southern terminals, have risen in November to at least 3.06 million bpd and could top that and set a record high if tankers currently waiting depart before



**TOKYO: Pedestrians walk past a share prices board of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo yesterday. Tokyo's benchmark stock index closed on December 1 above the key 20,000 mark for the first time since late August thanks to upbeat data on investment by Japanese companies. —AFP**

Tuesday, according to loading data and industry sources.

October's figure was lower than expected as bad weather delayed shipments.

Exports from Iraq's north by the Kurdistan Regional Government via Ceyhan in Turkey have edged lower, while those by Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization have remained zero for a second month, the survey found. An increase has also come from Saudi Arabia, sources in the survey said, as the kingdom sent more crude abroad and used more in refineries, outweighing a seasonal drop in usage in domestic power plants.

"November exports and refinery runs

are up compared to October by more than direct burn was down," said one of the sources who tracks Saudi output. "So, supply to the market is up in November."

Saudi output, at 10.25 million bpd in this survey, is not far from the record high of 10.56 million bpd it pumped in June. Output declined in OPEC's two West African producers, Angola and Nigeria, the survey found. Libyan output, which was already at a fraction of the pre-conflict rate, edged lower in November. Supply from Iran, OPEC's second-largest producer until sanctions forced a cut in exports in 2012, stayed flat in November, the survey found. A lifting of sanctions on Iran has the potential to boost OPEC output further in 2016. —Reuters

## News

in brief

## Aramco wants 70% of \$300bn supply chain spend to be local

**DUBAI/KHOBAR:** Saudi Aramco wants to double to 70 percent the amount of goods and services it sources from the local market by 2021 as the kingdom's oil giant outlined plans to spend \$300 billion on its supply chain in the next 10 years, its chief executive said. The local sourcing target comes at a time of significant financial stress in Saudi Arabia, as the Gulf's largest economy adjusts to a projected period of sustained lower oil prices and subsequent reduced state spending and economic growth. As part of its local focus for the supply chain, Aramco aims to create around 500,000 direct and indirect jobs for Saudi nationals, Amin Nasser said, according to the text of a speech given yesterday and published on Aramco's website.

## OPEC oil price at \$38.93pb

**VIENNA:** The OPEC daily basket price went down 15 cents Monday and stood at \$38.93 per barrel compared with \$39.08 pb the previous day, the cartel said yesterday. The yearly average of the OPEC's basket price hit \$96.29 a barrel, it added. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Meruy (Venezuela). During their annual meeting in June, the OPEC oil ministers agreed to maintain their output ceiling of 30 million barrels per day. The OPEC expects high demand for oil and high supply on the part of non-OPEC member states in the second half of 2015.

## US dollar firm vis-a-vis Kuwaiti dinar at 0.304

**KUWAIT:** The US dollar stabilized vis-a-vis the Kuwaiti dinar yesterday trading at KD 0.304 whereas the euro plunged to KD 0.321, as compared to Monday's rates, the Central Bank of Kuwait said. The Sterling Pound dropped to KD 0.459, Swiss franc rose to KD 0.296 while the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002.

## Qatar launches \$5.5bn, 5-yr loan into syndication

**DUBAI:** The government of Qatar has invited banks to participate in a \$5.5 billion sovereign loan, sources aware of the matter said yesterday, as it becomes the latest Gulf state to raise funds at a time of stretched state finances due to lower oil prices. The loan is smaller than the up-to-\$10 billion which the government was said by sources last month to be seeking. The transaction is being arranged by Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Mizuho, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp, Deutsche Bank, Barclays and Qatar National Bank, two of the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity as the information isn't public. The interest rate on the loan will be between 85 and 95 basis points over the London interbank offered rate (Libor), according to a third source with direct knowledge of the deal. Marketing of the deal will close in the third week of December, the two sources said.

## Vodafone Qatar appoints Ian Gray as CEO

**DUBAI:** Vodafone Qatar has appointed Ian Gray as chief executive officer with immediate effect, the loss-making Vodafone affiliate said yesterday. He replaces outgoing CEO Kyle Whitehill, who will leave Vodafone to pursue other opportunities, a company statement said. Gray joins from Vodafone Egypt, where he was chairman. Whitehill joined Vodafone Qatar as CEO in June 2013, having worked for the Vodafone group since 2001. Vodafone Qatar has yet to make a quarterly net profit since ending state-controlled Ooredoo's domestic monopoly in 2009. Its losses had been consistently diminishing, but that trajectory has faltered of late, reporting widening year-on-year losses for the past four quarters.

## EXCHANGE RATES

## AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

## ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.483
Indian Rupees	4.592
Pakistani Rupees	2.894
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.139
Nepali Rupees	2.862
Singapore Dollar	217.340
Hongkong Dollar	39.387
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippine Peso	6.481
Thai Baht	8.520

## GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.443
Qatari Riyal	83.894
Omani Riyal	793.270
Bahraini Dinar	811.080
UAE Dirham	83.152

## ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	38.200
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	39.051
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.425
Tunisian Dinar	148.540
Jordanian Dinar	430.020
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.035
Syrian Lira	2.177
Morocco Dirham	30.740

## EUROPEAN &amp; AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.250
Euro	324.330
Sterling Pound	461.840
Canadian dollar	229.430
Turkish lira	105.040
Swiss Franc	298.240
Australian dollar	222.830
US Dollar Buying	304.050

## GOLD

20 gram	216.15
10 gram	110.77
5 gram	56.07

## UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

COUNTRY	SELL DRAFT	SELL CASH
Australian Dollar	204.08	
Canadian Dollar	231.95	
Swiss Franc	300.84	
Euro	326.66	
US Dollar	305.45	
Sterling Pound	461.91	
Japanese Yen	2.52	
Bangladesh Taka	3.874	
Indian Rupee	4.578	
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.139	
Nepali Rupee	2.859	
Pakistani Rupee	2.893	
UAE Dirhams	0.08312	
Bahraini Dinar	0.8118	
Egyptian Pound	0.03892	
Jordanian Dinar	0.4344	
Omani Riyal	0.7932	
Qatari Riyal	0.08422	
Saudi Riyal	0.08142	

## DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.500
Canadian Dollar	230.865
Sterling Pound	461.645

Euro	324.265
Swiss Frank	314.635
Bahrain Dinar	810.840
UAE Dirhams	83.470
Qatari Riyals	91.520
Saudi Riyals	82.190
Jordanian Dinar	430.480
Egyptian Pound	38.904
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.139
Indian Rupees	4.591
Pakistani Rupees	2.893
Bangladesh Taka	3.861
Philippines Peso	6.480
Cyprus pound	581.885
Japanese Yen	3.480
Syrian Pound	2.615
Nepalese Rupees	3.865
Malaysian Ringgit	72.820
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	48.080
Thai Bhat	9.505
Turkish Lira	105.140

## BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

COUNTRY	SELL CASH	SELLDRAFT
British Pound	0.453566	0.462566
Czech Korune	0.003920	0.015920
Danish Krone	0.039193	0.044193
Euro	0.317244	0.325244
Norwegian Krone	0.031155	0.036355
Romanian Leu	0.072292	0.072292
Slovakia	0.009139	0.019139
Swedish Krona	0.030991	0.035991
Swiss Franc	0.290630	0.300830
Turkish Lira	0.100686	0.110986

Australian Dollar	0.213225	0.224725
New Zealand Dollar	0.195825	0.205325

Canadian Dollar	0.223144	0.231644
US Dollars	0.301150	0.305650
US Dollars Mint	0.301650	0.305650

## Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003520	0.004120
Chinese Yuan	0.046310	0.049810
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037288	0.040038
Indian upee	0.004344	0.004734
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002398	0.002578
Kenyan Shilling	0.002980	0.002989
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068340	0.074340
Nepalese Rupee	0.002925	0.003095
Pakistan Rupee	0.002709	0.002989
Philippine Peso	0.006409	0.006689
Sierra Leone	0.000069	0.000075
Singapore Dollar	0.213100	0.219100
South African Rand	0.015125	0.023625
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001773	0.002353
Taiwan	0.009221	0.009401
Thai Baht	0.008211	0.008761

## Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.802790	0.810790
Egyptian Pound	0.037250	0.040376
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000204	0.000264
Jordanian Dinar	0.426547	0.434047
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022219	0.046219
Nigerian Naira	0.001264	0.001899
Omani Riyal	0.786436	0.792116
Qatar Riyal	0.083133	0.084363
Saudi Riyal	0.080763	0.081466
Syrian Pound	0.001294	0.001514
Tunisian Dinar	0.144289	0.152289
Turkish Lira	0.100686	0.110986
UAE Dirhams	0.082127	0.083276
Yemeni Riyal	0.001380	0.001460



## X-CITE TAKES FIRST PLACE IN PAN ARAB APPLICATIONS AWARDS

**KUWAIT:** X-cite by Alghanim Electronics realized another admirable feat that is now part of its growing collection of success stories. This year, X-cite won first place in the Fourth Pan Arab Applications Awards for its application of its website, www.xcite.com, that is accessed through smartphones. X-cite's win of this highly sought after award confirms the company's pioneering strategies and steadfast commitment to provide its customers with smart and convenient channels of communication.

The Pan Arab Application Awards took place in Dubai on Tuesday, November 24, 2015 in cooperation with the Arab Social Responsibility Organization in the presence of Pierre Moukarzel, President of the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility, Dr.

Mohammed Essa Al-Adwan, Ambassador of the Arabian Cooperation Affairs at the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility, and other government and diplomatic officials as well as representatives of the private and



public sector and a large number of marketing, media and social media representatives. A large number of leading companies in the Arab World participated in the challenge that recognizes the most superior applica-

tions in the region; however, only X-cite took first place after an intensive and comprehensive study was implemented to measure the company's application's standards. The study awarded the relevant companies' applica-



tions upon the category they were in, highlighting which participants surpassed the judging panel due to their innovation and outstanding technological capabilities.

All applications competed against strict

measures, measures that X-cite transcended with flying colors. The company's winning application was measured at a commendable 20% when it came to its creative innovation. X-cite's application was measured at 25% based on its ease-of-usage that allowed customers to navigate the application with simple convenience. The third measure was based on the application's technical aspect; at 20 percent, X-cite's application proved to be an efficient one due to its moderate usage of a smartphone's battery life as well as the lack of technical glitches that application users typically face. Regarding the application's structure, X-cite gained an admirable 10 percent based on its compatibility on a majority of smartphone devices, telecom networks and

its offline availability. Apart from gaining 15 percent based on its social media reach, X-cite's application acquired 10 percent due to its wide reception and usage. All in all, X-cite's high ratings were the reason behind the company's win of this desired prestigious award.

The Pan Arab Application Awards aims to encourage Arab innovation in the realm of smartphones that are considered as the ideal tool for social engagement and human interaction whether that might entail social or commercial content. The Awards' goal also sheds light upon the significance of Information Systems (IT) as it is the ultimate channel for communicating with the youth, a population that comprises 70 percent of the Arab World.

## ECB MAY SURPRISE WITH SIZE OF NEW STIMULUS

### DRAGHI SIGNALS ACTION ON INTEREST RATE POSSIBLE

**FRANKFURT:** Christmas is coming - and some investors are already convinced they will unwrap an early present tomorrow in the form of more economic stimulus from the European Central Bank.

ECB head Mario Draghi has signaled clearly that action is coming this week when the bank's governing council meets. So clearly, in fact, that the challenge - as for parents with overexcited children may be simply to avoid disappointing expectations. That means that this week's meeting could bring surprises. Draghi may seek to exceed expectations by expanding its bond-buying stimulus program or cutting interest rate more than analysts foresee.

Bond purchases tend to drive up the price of a broad range of other assets, including stocks. Another consequence could be a weaker euro against the dollar. Some think the euro, which is currently around \$1.06, could head down toward \$1.00, so-called parity. Others say Draghi may have to exceed expectations just to keep it where it is.

The weaker euro against the dollar would mean cheaper European travel for Americans. But it could also hurt the profits of American companies doing business in Europe, because the currency shift will shrink euro earnings in dollar terms. More broadly, a weaker euro would help eurozone exporters by making their goods more competitive in major trade partners including China, the US, Britain and Japan. Starting from the ECB's Oct. 22 meeting and in subsequent speeches, Draghi has indicated action is likely in December. Through its stimulus actions, ECB aims to make credit cheaper for companies to support growth, which is still weak at just 0.3 percent in the third quarter. Most of all, it is trying to push inflation higher from 0.1 percent toward its goal

of just under 2 percent annually. Price stability is the bank's chief goal; low inflation suggests the economy is weak and makes it harder for indebted countries such as Greece to recover.

To achieve that, the ECB is currently buying 60 billion euros in government and corporate bonds a month, up to a total of 1.1 trillion euros. And Draghi mentioned that the current rate on funds deposited

amounts. It could also increase the list of eligible bonds beyond government bonds and limited types of very secure private-sector bonds.

To exceed expectations, Draghi may have to do several of those, or all three, and/or exceed the amounts. Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank in London, looks for the ECB to raise bond purchases to 75 billion a month; lengthen the minimum

increase in monthly purchases.

#### LOWER INTEREST RATES

Markets are already expecting a cut in the deposit rate by around 0.15 percentage point, says analyst Carsten Brzeski at ING-DiBa in Frankfurt. Analyst May foresees a 0.10 percent cut, "although a larger reduction is certainly possible." So to clearly exceed expectations, Draghi would need something like a cut of 0.20 percentage point, or more.

Speculation about a deeper cut into negative territory has been fed by experience in Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden, which have negative rates and have seen fewer unintended consequences than some had feared. Switzerland has its key rate at negative 0.75 percent. That has supported the idea that the ECB might be able to go even deeper into negative territory than it has.

A cut in the deposit rate has several effects that could help stimulate the economy. It would increase the amount of safe bonds available for the ECB to buy, since currently the central bank cannot purchase bonds yielding less than its deposit rate. It would push banks to lend money instead of hoarding it at the ECB. Perhaps most important of all, the negative deposit rate is seen as tied to the euro's exchange rate to the dollar. That is because the lower rates go in the eurozone, the less people want euros to buy fixed income investments. That lessens demand for euros - and sends its exchange rate lower. It helps exporters and helps the ECB raise inflation by making imports more expensive.

And that's particularly so against the dollar, since the US Federal Reserve is widely expected to make its first rate increase in years at a Dec. 15-16 meeting. —AP



**FARNKFURT:** President of the European Central Bank, ECB, Mario Draghi smiles prior to a news conference following the meeting of the Governing Council of the ECB in Frankfurt.—AP

by banks could be cut further. That rate is already negative at minus 0.2 percent. Here's what investors expect from the ECB - and where the central bank could surprise on Thursday:

#### BIGGER BOND PURCHASES, FOR LONGER

Right now, markets are expecting the ECB to either extend the bond-buying program beyond the current end date of September 2016 or increase the purchase

duration of the purchases by six months until March 2017; and add new types of bonds excluding corporate issues.

"It would be a big surprise if the ECB fails to take further action in December," wrote Ben May at Oxford Economics in a research note. "The key issue is, how much will it do. In the past Draghi has often delivered more than anticipated." May said that suggests a longer purchase program duration is likely - though he expects no



**MUMBAI:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor, Raghuram Rajan speaks during a news conference at the RBI headquarters in Mumbai yesterday. —AFP

## INDIA'S CB KEEPS KEY INTEREST RATES ON HOLD

**MUMBAI:** India's central bank kept interest rates on hold yesterday, citing rising inflation and "weakness" in Asia's third-largest economy despite recent growth.

The move follows recent rate cuts designed to lower the cost of investing and boost India's economy, a key priority for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the benchmark repo rate, the level at which it lends to commercial banks, would remain at 6.75 percent as analysts had expected. "Indicators suggest the economy is in the early stages of a recovery, though with some areas of continued weakness," RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan said in a statement following the bank's monetary policy review meeting in Mumbai.

"The uptick of CPI inflation excluding food and fuel for two months in succession warrants vigilance," he added. Rajan has made controlling inflation a priority, setting a target of bringing it consistently below six percent by January 2016 and to four percent for the 2016/17 financial year. India's consumer prices rose five percent in October, below the target, but accelerating from a 4.41 percent increase in September. "Inflation has turned up as anticipated, and is expected to rise further until December before plateauing," Rajan said in the statement.

A survey of 47 economists by Bloomberg had overwhelmingly predicted Rajan would hold rates after he surprised analysts in September with an aggressive 50-basis-point reduction, suggesting there would be little room for further easing in 2015.

The bank chief has already lopped 125 basis points off borrowing rates this calendar year in four separate cuts to bring the repo rate down to its lowest level in four years. Economic

growth has notched 7.4 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, outperforming China, data showed Monday.

#### More growth needed?

Modi has focused on spurring economic growth since sweeping to power in a general election in May 2014 and India has now posted three straight quarters of growth above seven percent. But investors have raised concerns about the pace of promised economic reform needed to create jobs for India's tens of millions of young people. They are hoping Modi's government will be able to reach an agreement with opposition parties and push reforms through the current session of parliament, including one that paves the way for a long-awaited national sales tax.

Rajan also cited "weak" global growth and a flagging Chinese economy as reasons to remain cautious.

Analyst Arun Singh said the RBI had also chosen to wait to see whether the US Federal Reserve would hike rates later this month, as expected, before cutting again.

"It makes sense to stick with the status quo until we get clarity," the senior economist at Dun & Bradstreet, told AFP. After the RBI cut rates in January and March, it kept them unchanged in April, citing inflation concerns and a failure of most commercial banks to pass on lower loan rates to customers. In June it snipped off a further 25 basis points before holding rates at its meeting in August and then slashed the repo rate the next month to its lowest level since March 2011. It is still much higher than compared to other major economies, with the United States and Japan at record lows of near zero percent. —AFP

## QATARI BANK CBQ EYES SALE OF UAB STAKE

**DUBAI:** Commercial Bank of Qatar (CBQ) has been trying to sell its 40 percent stake in troubled Emirati lender United Arab Bank, but is yet to find a buyer, sources aware of the matter told Reuters.

The Sharjah-based lender has had a difficult few months, with its chief executive leaving after the bank swung to a third-quarter loss on significant provisioning for soured loans. Such a position, combined with expectations of further challenges for UAE banks as the economy slows and loan defaults increase, would make concluding any deal extremely tricky, according to the sources who spoke on condition of anonymity as the information isn't public. The stake has a value of around 3 billion dirhams (\$817 million) based on current

market capitalization, according to Thomson Reuters data. CBQ declined to comment.

It was unclear how far talks had progressed with any of the parties contacted by CBQ, which included local banks. But given market conditions, the sources noted a sales process was unlikely to go far. A Doha-based banker said any potential buyer would demand CBQ offer to indemnify them against future losses incurred by UAB.

The UAE's seventh-largest bank by market value, UAB has stopped lending to some of its small and medium-sized enterprise customers as it seeks to protect itself from further damage after a net loss of 272.6 million dirhams in the third quarter, three separate sources said. —Reuters

## QATAR RECOVERS FROM MSCSI SHOCK; EGYPT REBOUNDS

### MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Several major Middle Eastern stock markets rose yesterday, led by Qatar, which recovered steep losses triggered the previous day by MSCI's rebalancing of its emerging markets index.

Qatar's stock index tumbled 4.4 percent on Monday as MSCI added overseas-listed Chinese companies to its index, diluting Qatar's weighting and causing an outflow of passive funds. The drop in the Qatari market was magnified by thin turnover and a lack of buying interest. Yesterday, Qatar rebounded 4.4 percent. Gulf International Services, the second most active stock on Doha's exchange, surged 10 percent after plunging 9.4 percent on Monday as it was deleted from the MSCI emerging market index.

Qatar Gas Transport, the most heavily traded stock, fell 2.9 percent after climbing 1.3 percent on Monday as it was added to the index. Some other blue chips jumped, with Islamic bank Masraf Al Rayan up 6.2 percent. "Yesterday's sharp fall of the market was a one-off event, largely magnified by lack of buying interest," said a portfolio manager based in Doha. Local and regional investors were buying on Tuesday, he added.

The Saudi stock index rose 0.7 percent in the heaviest trade so far this week as miner Ma'aden added 2.6 percent. Emaar Economic City climbed 4.3 percent to a five-week high. It has attracted interest since it said on Sunday last week that authorities, who have been investigating how the firm acquired land in the industrial zone it is developing, would let it keep the land to protect the interests of investors.

PetroRabigh fell 1.6 percent after saying that its high olefin cracker unit and its subordinate units would remain offline until Dec. 30, although it would restart most operations at its refining and petrochemical complex on Thursday after a 50-day planned maintenance period.

Egypt's index climbed 1.1 percent to 6,425 points, bouncing from near technical support on the November low of 6,302 points. Locals were net buyers of stocks while foreigners continued to sell, according to exchange data.

Uncertainty continued to rein about foreign

exchange policy. The central bank held the Egyptian pound steady at 7.7301 to the US dollar in a regular foreign exchange auction that caused confusion because some bankers said they were denied dollars. Later, the central bank said it had revised the way it allocated foreign currency at auction, but gave few details.

After the market closed, it said it had repaid foreign investors in stocks and securities a total of \$546 million, clearing a backlog that had built up amid a dollar shortage.

Global Telecom Holding was the top performing Egyptian stock, surging 10 percent to 1.76 Egyptian

pounds, after the company announced on Monday that it would combine its Pakistan telecommunications business with local mobile operator Warid Telecom. This confirmed a statement by foreign partner Vimpelcom at the end of last week.

Naem brokerage said this would be positive for the stock and kept a "buy" recommendation, with a target price of 4.00 pounds. Qalaa Holdings jumped 4.5 percent after saying its Gozour agrifoods unit had signed deals to sell assets in Sudan and Egypt for about \$11 million, as Qalaa continued to sell non-core assets. The Dubai and Abu Dhabi markets were closed for National Day holidays. —Reuters



**ATHENS:** Agents operating the shops of the country's biggest betting firm OPAP hold black flags and shout slogans outside the Finance ministry in central Athens yesterday. —AFP



# STOCKS STUTTER, EURO FIRMS AS ECB BETS WAVER

**LONDON:** European stock markets stuttered and the euro clawed back some ground against the US dollar yesterday as investors had second thoughts about sky-high expectations of European Central Bank easing this week.

Britain's FTSE 100 was one of only a couple of the region's bourses to show gains after the release of promising bank stress tests, with record low unemployment data from Germany feeding fears that ECB stimulus hopes could be overdone. US stocks were set to open up 0.3 percent, building on Asian gains after tentative signs that a slowdown in China was stabilising.

Europe's bond yields ticked higher and the single currency bounced off a 7-1/2-month low on concerns that the ECB may not deliver all the stimulus on Thursday that investors have come to expect.

Markets are already pricing in a deposit rate cut and an increase in the size, scope and length of the ECB's trillion-euro bond buying program. Analysts say it would be hard for ECB President Mario Draghi to surprise markets.

"The big question is if Draghi can surprise the markets, given that ECB by its own comments has contributed to quite stretched mar-

ket expectations," SEB head of fixed income research, Jussi Hiljanen, said. The FTSEurofirst 300 was up slightly on the day, with the rally in the FTSE offsetting falls in Germany's DAX and France's CAC 40.

European stocks failed to gain much sustained impetus from Chinese data which sent MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan up 1.8 percent. China's official Purchasing Managers' Index reached a three-year low in November. But the private Caixin/Markit China Manufacturing PMI showed factory activity contracted at a slower

pace than in October, fuelling hopes the economy may have been bolstered by government support.

In Europe's largest economy, Germany, there were further signs of a turnaround in fortunes, with unemployment dropping to the lowest level since reunification in 1990.

CMC Markets' Michael Hewson said that these sorts of signs of life in the euro zone economy could limit the aggressiveness of ECB stimulus. "Quite simply there is a risk that market expectations of what the ECB will do this week are based on the premise of shock and awe, when in reality they could get something more akin to bubble and squeak," he said in a note to clients. This was certainly the feeling among bond and currency investors, with German yields up for the second straight day, coming off a one-month low hit on Friday, and the euro rising to \$1.0593, after dropping to a 7-1/2-month low of \$1.0557 on Monday.

China's yuan was flat in onshore trading, after the International Monetary Fund on Monday admitted the yuan into its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket alongside the dollar, euro, pound sterling and yen.

The widely expected move was a mile-

stone in China's integration into global finances and a nod of approval to the country's reforms. The dollar index, which tracks the greenback against a basket of six major rival currencies, edged down to 100.00. That still left it within sight of the 100.39 the index hit in March, its highest for more than 12 years, on expectations Federal Reserve will raise US interest rates later this month. By contrast, the Reserve Bank of Australia held rates steady at 2 percent at its policy meeting. The Australian dollar rose about 0.7 percent after the decision, to \$0.7277.

Australian shares rallied 1.9 percent, extending gains, after trade data showed Australia's economy gained last quarter from a rebound in resource exports. US crude oil prices regained some ground after volatile trading overnight, when they first rallied and then erased gains after a survey estimated higher OPEC output. US crude added 0.5 percent to \$41.88 a barrel.

Brent crude futures were up 0.5 percent to \$44.82. Spot gold was up about 0.6 percent at \$1,068.90 an ounce, getting a reprieve as the recently robust dollar weakened and helped it move away from a nearly six-year low of \$1,052.46 plumbed last week. — Reuters

## Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Tuesday 01 December 2015

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▲ 0.98	5,803.34	5,802.36	5,807.57	5,793.49
Weighted Index	▼ -0.89	392.07	392.96	394.11	391.76
KSX 15	▼ -1.05	928.59	929.64	936.41	928.01



Security	Trades					
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	114
IKARUS	89	88	68,187	6,061	8	89
IPKG	238	238	50,000	11,900	2	238
NAPESCO	600	600	1,020	612	1	600
ENERGYH	44.0	42.0	15,525	656	5	44.0
GPI	58	54	9,273,615	525,918	201	58
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112
Oil & Gas			9,408,347	545,147	217	790.49
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	234
BPCC	560	560	5,011	2,806	2	560
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610
ALQURAIN	190	190	202,237	38,425	13	190
Basic Materials			207,248	41,231	15	1025.11
KCEM	395	395	42,604	16,829	1	395
REFRI	315	315	125,467	39,522	7	315
CABLE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385
SHIP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	144
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,140
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	295
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	495
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132
KPAK	365	365	6,750	2,464	1	365
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	232
EQUIPMENT	63	62	476,000	29,818	14	63
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102
SALBOOKH	80	80	75,600	6,048	4	80
AGLTY	530	520	612,837	321,288	23	520
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	216
CLEANING	42.5	42.0	167,750	7,058	7	42.0
CITYGROUP	390	390	1	0	1	390
KGL	48.0	47.5	226,000	10,748	8	47.5
KPCP	222	202	4,214	853	8	202
HUMANSOFT	1,000	960	5,298	5,181	6	1,000
NAFAIS	198	198	10	2	1	198
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	325
GFC	74	71	2,100	149	3	74
MAYADEEN	23.5	23.0	1,196,800	27,527	18	23.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	780
MTCC	73	72	854,100	61,627	35	72
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700
ALAFCO	214	214	64,961	13,902	8	214
MUBARRAD	81	79	446,732	35,739	16	81
LOGISTICS	58	57	364,530	21,073	27	58
SCEM	87	86	560,000	48,460	6	87
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81
QCEM	80	80	19,000	1,520	1	80
FCEM	74	72	2,065,620	149,016	25	73
RKWC	108	104	423,157	44,168	12	108
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87
Industrials			7,739,531	842,992	232	1075.68
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	62
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104
CATTL	136	136	34,000	4,624	2	136
DANAH	93	91	505,265	46,432	35	92
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180
FOOD	2,260	2,260	11,040	24,950	4	2,260
Consumer Goods			550,305	76,006	41	1104.95
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920
YIACO	178	160	1,005	161	2	160
Health Care			1,005	161	2	974.01
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	970
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196
SULTAN	73	73	10,000	730	4	73
CABLETV	27.5	25.0	115,016	3,163	3	27.5
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310
IFAHR	166	166	31,000	5,146	6	166
OULAFUEL	116	114	85,889	9,931	16	114
MUNTAZAHAT	98	98	50,000	4,900	2	98
JAZEERA	475	470	72,450	34,304	5	470
SOOR	114	112	46,630	5,277	17	114
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110
ALNAWADI	82	82	500	41	1	82
ALRAI	172	172	1,000	172	1	172
ZIMAH	122	116	1,515,900	181,771	90	120
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	120
KOUTFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	800
Mezzan	1,140	1,080	213,944	235,518	15	1,080
Consumer Services			2,142,329	480,954	160	1043.87
ZAIN	365	360	814,054	295,575	29	360
OOREDOO	1,060	1,060	2,094	2,220	2	1,060
HITSTELEC	31.0	30.5	1,103,659	33,722	20	30.5
VIVA	1,060	1,040	715,790	754,596	177	1,060
Telecommunications			2,635,597	1,086,112	228	625.96
NBK	830	820	257,236	211,142	16	820
GBK	275	270	214,716	58,842	5	270
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	500
ABK	365	365	25,000	9,125	2	365
ALMUTAHED	550	550	3,000	1,650	2	550
KIB	226	226	126,500	28,589	5	226
BURG	385	385	41,016	15,791	5	385
KFIN	580	570	414,402	236,963	19	570
BOUBYAN	435	435	88,288	38,405	22	435
AUB	220	218	960,100	209,302	19	218
ITHMR	46.5	44.0	8,046,405	367,968	122	46.5
WARBANK	206	204	308,143	62,888	96	204
Banks			10,484,806	1,240,664	313	929.77
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310
GIN5	750	750	232	174	1	750
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400
WINS	106	106	257	27	1	106
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	65
WETHAQ	40.0	39.5	65,632	2,620	3	39.5
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355
Insurance			66,121	2,821	5	1094.11

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	48.0	47.5	541,400	25,721	13	47.5	— 0.0
KRE	62	61	60,000	3,670	3	62	▲ 1.0
URC	95	95	50,000	4,750	2	95	▼ -4.0
NRE	95	93	2,498,725	234,051	85	93	▼ -2.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	345	— 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600	— 0.0
AREEC	182	182	23,000	4,186	2	182	— 0.0
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	— 0.0
ARABREC	31.5	31.0	837,500	26,356	14	31.0	▼ -1.0
ERESCO	66	65	149,500	9,722	14	66	▲ 1.0
MABANEE	930	920	31,459	29,214	7	930	— 0.0
INJAZZAT	94	91	251,400	23,182	10	93	— 0.0
INVESTORS	30.0	29.0	7,597,602	224,613	67	29.5	▼ -0.5
IRC	31.5	30.5	238,692	7,428	14	31.5	▲ 0.5
ALTUJARIA	83	82	616,766	50,578	22	83	▲ 1.0
SANAM	46.5	44.5	3,754,311	174,477	6	46.5	▲ 0.5
AAYANRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	81	— 0.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	22.0	22.0	40,000	880	2	22.0	▼ -2.5
MAZAYA	108	108	28,550	3,083	2	108	— 0.0
ADNC	29.5	28.5	4,854,686	140,657	34	29.0	▼ -0.5
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0
TUJARA	42.0	42.0	50,000	2,100	3	42.0	— 0.0
TAAMEER	27.0	25.0	2,691,200	69,263	61	25.0	▼ -1.5
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	108	— 0.0
ARGAN	174	170	156,690	26,834	12	172	▼ -2.0
ABYAAAR	31.5	31.0	1,783,634	55,705	24	31.0	▼ -0.5
MUNSHAAT	89	88	116,335	10,251	10	89	▼ -1.0
FIRSTDUBAI	52	50	153,010	7,763	12	52	▲ 1.0
KBT	44.5	43.5	460,500	20,216	20	43.5	▼ -0.5
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	— 0.0
MENA	25.5	25.0	79,500	2,025	6	25.0	▼ -1.0
ALMUDON	35.5	34.5	3,242,909	113,010	73	35.0	▼ -0.5
MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	24.0	— 0.0
REMAI	38.5	38.0	236,938	9,122	10	38.5	— 0.0
MASHAER	114	114	177	20	1	114	▲ 8.0
Real Estate			30,544,484	1,278,876	529	974.15	▼ -4.35
KINV	100	100	50,000	5,000	3	100	▼ -2.0
FACIL	182	180	148,414	26,955	9	182	▼ -2.0
IFA	32.5	32.0	1,461,400	46,777	34	32.5	— 0.0
NINV	106	102	595,000	61,574	17	102	▼ -2.0
KPROJ	590	570	651,912	378,089	19	580	— 0.0
COAST	34.0	32.5	123,800	4,086	9	33.0	▼ -0.5
SECH	48.5	46.5	8,010,401	377,093	133	47.0	▼ -1.0
SGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	— 0.0
ARZAN	38.5	38.0	59,680	2,297	6	38.0	— 0.0
MARKAZ	104	104	4,000	416	1	104	▲ 2.0
KMEFIC	30.0	29.0	737,500	21,757	45	30.0	▼ -0.5
ALAMAN	60	59	58,000	3,451	3	59	▼ -1.0
ALOLA	63	63	600,000	37,800	6	63	▼ -1.0
ALMAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	32.5	— 0.0
GIH	32.0	31.5	492,305	15,578	21	32.0	▲ 0.5
AAYAN	53	51	1,324,671	68,755	40	51	▼ -1.0
BAYANINV	38.0	37.5	462,113	17,329	17	38.0	— 0.0
OSOUL	40.0	40.0	1,866	75	1	40.0	▲ 2.5
KFIC	40.0	40.0	5,000	200	2	40.0	▼ -2.0
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0
NIH	65	61	814,415	52,278	29	64	▲ 1.0
ISKAN	33.5	32.0	4,473,540	144,770	106	33.0	▲ 0.5
MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	20.5	— 0.0
ALDEERA	35.0	34.0	126,301	4,410	15	35.0	▲ 0.5
ALSALAM	39.0	38.0	840,500	32,455	28	38.5	▼ -0.5
EKTTITAB	32.5	32.0	560,000	17,945	18	32.5	— 0.0
QURAINHLD	8.5	8.0	658,500	5,272	15	8.5	▲ 0.5
ALMADINA	46.0	44.0	6,326,406	283,948	134	45.5	— 0.0
NOOR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	— 0.0
TAMINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	415	— 0.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	130	— 0.0
TAIBA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	— 0.0
KSHC	27.0	26.5	142,910	3,838	12	26.5	— 0.0
STRATEGIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.0	— 0.0
ASIYA	37.5	36.0	28,600	1,041	7	37.0	▲ 0.5
GNAHC	31.5	31.0	939,490	29,137	42	31.0	▼ -1.0
AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	31.0	— 0.0
ALMUTIAZ	79	78	119,200	9,371	3	78	— 0.0
MANAZEL	25.0	24.0	943,000	23,040	21	25.0	▼ -0.5
NIND	138	136	781,327	106,260	43	138	▲ 0.0
BIHC	34.0	32.5	110,735	3,599	9	34.0	▲ 1.0
SENERGY	14.5	13.5	2,091,788	29,248	37	14.0	— 0.0
AGHC	85	84	60,000	5,060	3	85	▲ 2.0
KPPC	59	57	1,086,406	62,479	18	57	▼ -2.0
TAHSSILAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	— 0.0
JEERANH	64	64	600	38	2	64	— 0.0
EKHOLDING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0.0
GPH	36.0	33.5	11,127,980	392,678	148	36.0	▲ 2.5
INOVEST	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
Financial Services			46,017,319	2,274,098	1,056	634.42	▲ 0.96
Investment Instruments			0	0	0	1081.97	— 0.00
ASC	350	350	150	53	1	350	▲ 25.0
OSOS	82	82	26,000	2,132	1	82	— 0.0
FUTURE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	122	— 0.0
HAYATCOMM	48.0	45.5	71,300	3,296	14	48.0	▲ 1.0
Technology			97,450	5,480	16	897.25	▲ 26.68
BAREEQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	— 0.0
AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	182	— 0.0
ALSHAMEL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0.0
SAFRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	16.5	— 0.0
AJWAN	25.5	25.0	95,100	2,390	6	25.0	— 0.0
MASAKEN	48.0	46.0	247,478	11,452	12	46.5	▼ -2.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	— 0.0
ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	— 0.0
FLEX	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	37.5	— 0.0
THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	— 0.0
KCLINIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.5	— 0.0
AMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	72	— 0.0
Parallel Market			342,578	13,842	18	1230.52	▼ -5.41



# Agile, dynamic and elegant

## The all-new Renault Captur 2016



By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** "Wow! What an amazing design," was the first comment I heard when two of my colleagues saw the all-new Renault Captur 2016 as I parked it in front of the office. In fact, I had the same feeling when I saw it first at the Renault showroom, from where I received it for a test drive. Both the color and design were beautiful.

The performance of this French vehicle was beyond expectations after getting behind the wheel and driving it. Renault's first urban crossover, the Captur is agile, dynamic and elegant, both inside and out. It explores new territory in terms of design, comfort, equipment and pleasure.

It was a great experience for this reporter. I was surprised how stable the Captur is on road even when driving at high speed for few minutes, so as not to be caught by traffic cameras! When first told that it's a 1.2 L, I didn't expect such a high-performance engine that provides such power and speed. Moreover, the fuel consumption can be reduced easily with the Driving Eco2 program and its customized instructions.

### Great performance

The Renault Captur engine is turbocharged, to be the best in its category in terms of driving pleasure. With a lively response, sharp acceleration, and flexibility at all speeds, Energy engine combines driving pleasure with fuel economy, delivering remarkably moderate fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

It is equipped with Turbo Control Efficiency (TCe) to ensure maximum performance. The new TCe 120 EDC, combines power and controlled fuel consumption (5.9 L/100 km and 138 g/km of CO2). Responsive, lively and agile, it is both powerful and quiet. Its 83 kW deliver torque of 190 Nm at 2,000 rpm. For even greater driving pleasure, it is connected to a 6-speed dual-clutch EDC automatic gearbox.

### EDC automatic gearbox

For greater comfort and pleasure, the 6-speed dual-clutch EDC automatic gearbox is available with the TCe 120 engine. Up shifting is fast and smooth, with no jerking or loss in acceleration. Fuel consumption is comparable to that of a manual gearbox.

### Vent control

Automatically adjust the flow of air through the radiator to the engine's cooling requirements, improving the vehicle's aerodynamics and fuel consumption.



**KUWAIT:** Nawara behind the wheel of all-new Renault Captur 2016 during a test drive. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



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Passion for life

### ECO mode

To reduce fuel consumption even further, the driver can hand over control of some driving duties to Eco Mode, which modifies the vehicle's acceleration, torque/power management and heating/air-conditioning. Driving is made smoother and acceleration longer, thus saving fuel.

### Interior

The Captur's interior was also amazing. It's very well equipped with latest technology. Whatever the terrain, the Renault Captur has everything to help on even your wildest expeditions: the Renault r-link 100% touch screen multimedia tablet, high-performance engine, hill start assist, seats with unzippable covers, even a hands-free card for added peace of mind.

The brand-new seat design enhances the passenger compartment's modern look. The Zip Collection upholstery is unzippable and machine-washable. Five available patterns (depending on the model) let you change your interior trim whenever you like! The front seat backs can be wiped down with a sponge. Renault R-Link includes a network-connected

multimedia tablet with 7" touch screen and voice recognition to control the essential functions TomTom navigation, multimedia, hands-free calls, vehicle applications) intuitively, enjoying 3D Sound by Arkamys music via audio streaming and Bluetooth hands-free telephone system.

Captur is also equipped with regulated air-conditioning. With combined pollen/activated carbon filter and toxicity sensor. The filters reduce fine particulate matter and pollutants (exhaust gases, odors). If a high pollution level is detected, the system automatically shuts the ventilation. Easy Life drawer, is easy for both the driver and front passenger to access, this drawer - boasting a record capacity of 11 liters - takes the place of the glove box. Ingenious and practical, it comes with customized LED lighting. Parking distance control, has four rear parking sensors, with reversing camera depending on the version. The camera sends the image to the navigation system screen and displays guidance aids. Hands-free card, to unlock, start and remotely lock the car, which even has a special pocket at the care to place it in.

### Exterior

Technology, fuel economy, flexibility and endurance. The Renault Captur's position at the top of its category in terms of quality/performance ratio is no accident. It's available in five color variations including ivory, blue, orange, mocha brown, and black, with the possibility of different combinations. Even the



interior is available in different color variations to meet different tastes. These also include Chrome strip on front grille, Fog lights with chrome surrounds, Chrome side strips on lower door protections, Body-colored mirrors and handles, 16" alloy wheels, centre console, air vent surrounds and speaker surrounds, Removable upholstery, and many others.

The 11-litre Easy Life drawer can hold all of your valuables. Accessible and practical, this XXL storage space is a big new concept! As if that was not enough, there is also a closed compartment on top of the dashboard and a removable central storage area that can be

speaker surrounds, easy life drawer)

Ivory pack (centre console, air vent & speaker surrounds)

Turquoise pack (centre console, air vent & speaker surrounds, easy life drawer)

### Exterior customization

The customer can make his Captur feel unique down to the last detail. A range of customization options is available: two-tone colors - wheel rims - exterior color packs. These include 17" orange diamond-cut, 17" ivory diamond-cut, and 17" black diamond-cut alloy wheel rims.



### Interior customization

The customer can also customize the seats of his vehicle by choosing from the available variety and combination of colors including Ivory / Orange, Ivory / Light grey, Light grey / Ash grey, Orange / Dark carbon, and Dark carbon removable upholstery. He can also customize the INTERIOR TRIMS including the Air vent surrounds, Centre console surrounds, Speaker surrounds, Easy Life drawer color and light "Zip Collection" upholstery available with light or dark color scheme.

### More options are available: Two-color exterior paintwork

Orange pack (centre console, air vent &





Kuwait 15 Index (KSX15) Periodic Review as of 30/11/2015											
الشركة	Ticker	Stk	Liquidity	Market Capital	Market Cap Rank	Liquidity Rank	Weighted Cap	Weighted Liquidity	Weighted Tot Mkt Cap	Weighted to Mkt Liquidity	No. of Issued & Outstanding Shares
بنك الكويت الوطني	NBK	101	147,536,621.540	4,132,568,503.340	1	1	24.89	18.66	16.60	9.34	5,039,717,687
بنك الكويت	KFIN	108	107,213,969.610	2,716,070,518.860	2	2	16.36	13.56	10.91	6.79	4,765,035,998
زین	ZAIN	605	94,876,751.525	1,557,741,207.240	3	5	9.38	12.00	6.26	6.00	4,327,058,909
الغذائية	FOOD	704	15,164,799.680	908,524,678.200	4	23	5.47	1.92	3.65	0.96	402,002,070
بنك بوبيان	BOUBYAN	109	26,287,128.590	907,830,693.000	5	14	5.47	3.32	3.65	1.66	2,063,251,575
مشاريع	KPROJ	205	40,724,657.790	854,672,167.740	7	9	5.15	5.15	3.43	2.58	1,473,572,703
كليب	GBK	102	12,270,544.685	838,235,171.950	8	29	5.05	1.55	3.37	0.78	3,048,127,898
الحياتية	MABANEE	413	37,517,828.250	790,137,233.970	9	10	4.76	4.75	3.17	2.37	849,609,929
برقان	BURG	107	23,484,818.900	789,003,275.830	10	15	4.75	2.97	3.17	1.49	2,049,359,158
تجاري	CBK	103	20,708,090.280	705,972,402.000	11	17	4.25	2.62	2.84	1.31	1,411,944,804
ايجيبت	AGLTY	603	76,755,110.880	630,159,058.880	12	6	3.80	9.71	2.53	4.86	1,211,844,344
أبكي	ABK	104	13,850,950.920	599,091,506.580	13	25	3.61	1.75	2.41	0.88	1,619,166,234
فيكا	VIVA	822	95,867,693.140	529,364,000.000	15	4	3.19	12.13	2.13	6.07	499,400,000
ميدان	MEZZAN	823	68,289,822.610	343,940,000.000	16	7	2.07	8.64	1.38	4.32	296,500,000
بوبيان ب	BPCC	514	10,087,901.540	299,500,740.000	17	35	1.80	1.28	1.20	0.64	534,822,750
المجموع	Total	15	790,636,689.940	16,602,811,157.590			100.00	100.00	66.71	50.04	29,591,414,059
Reserve List											
الدواي	KIB	106	8,934,760.956	232,361,174.528	20	42					1,037,326,672
بنك وربة	WARBABANK	821	29,585,434.750	204,000,000.000	22	11					1,000,000,000
الجزيرة	JAZEERA	654	9,351,502.665	197,400,000.000	23	38					420,000,000
All Kuwaiti Companies			Tot Mkt Liquidity	Tot Mkt Cap							Tot No. of Shares
			1,580,075,571.785	24,887,907,384.420							88,262,098,392

As a result of this Periodic Review  
"Kuwait International Bank (K.S.C.P.)" and "National Industries Group Holding (K.P.S.C.)" and "Warba Bank (K.S.C.P.)" have been removed from the Index.  
"Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (K.S.C.P.)" and "Mezzan Holding Co. (K.S.C.P.)" and "Boubyan Petrochemical Company (K.S.C.P.)" have been added to the Index.  
"The Commercial Real Estate Co. (K.P.S.C.)" and "Kuwait National Cinema Company (K.P.S.C.)" have been removed from Reserve List.  
Both "Kuwait International Bank (K.S.C.P.)" & "Warba Bank (K.S.C.P.)" (which were in the Index)" have been added to the Reserve List, while keeping "Jazeera Airways Company (K.S.C.P.)" within the Reserve List.  
\* These changes to KSX15 resulting from the review will be implemented after the market close on the 17th of this month of December.

## KUWAIT 15 INDEX REVIEW: NOVEMBER 2015

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Stock Exchange has conducted its scheduled review of the Kuwait 15 Index (KSX 15) as at the end of November 2015.  
Accordingly "Kuwait International Bank (KSCP)" and "National Industries

Group Holding (KPSC)" and Warba Bank (KSCP) will be removed from the Index, to be replaced by Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (KSCP.) and Mezzan Holding Co (KSCP) and Boubyan Petrochemical Company (KSCP).

Further, The Commercial Real Estate Co (KPSC) and Kuwait National Cinema Company (KPSC) will be removed from reserve list to be replaced by Kuwait International Bank (KSCP) and Warba Bank (KSCP) (which were in the index)

while keeping Jazeera Airways Company (KSCP) within the reserve list.  
These changes to KSX 15 resulting from the review will be implemented after the market close on the 17th of this month of December.

## SOUTH KOREA NOV EXPORTS FALL LESS THAN EXPECTED

**SEOUL:** South Korean exports fell for an 11th straight month in November, while foreign orders shrank at a sharper pace, pointing to a further deterioration in global demand and prompting some analysts to call for more interest rate cuts. November export data and a private manufacturing survey highlighted persistent downward pressure on Asia's fourth-largest economy from weak external demand, with factory activity shrinking for the ninth straight month.

But the activity survey, combined with other data in recent weeks, also suggested that the weak trade outlook was being offset in part by a recovery in domestic consumption, which could make policymakers more cautious about further easing. Exports fell 4.7 percent on-year in November, less than an 8.3 percent fall forecast in a Reuters poll, government data showed. But several analysts noted the decline would have been much worse if not for big ship deliveries. "Headline exports without vessels would have fallen 12 percent," said Wai Ho Leong, an economist at Barclays. "The broader trend remains unchanged - marked by high inventories, slower inventory clearance and a lack of production."

The trade ministry said export prospects remain bleak as China and other emerging economies were still slowing and Europe as a whole was struggling to regain economic momentum. Minutes released late yesterday from the last Bank of Korea meeting on Nov. 12 showed some members of the policy board were more doubtful of the economic recovery than Governor Lee Ju-yeol, who has recently seemed reluctant to cut rates again.

"Weakness in exports will persist for a while and I feel downside risks to growth have increased," said one member in the anonymous minutes. Exports to the European Union soared 52.5 percent in November on-year but mainly due to increased sales of ships. Exports to China, South Korea's biggest trade partner, fell by 6.8 percent, in their fifth straight monthly drop. Imports fell 17.6 percent in November, leaving the trade surplus at an all-time monthly high of \$10.4 billion.

### DOMESTIC DEMAND BETTER FOR NOW

Consumer inflation data and the manufacturing survey, meanwhile, suggested that domestic demand held firm in November, which supported optimism expressed by the government and the central bank for a consumption-led economic recovery. The November inflation rate edged up to 1.0 percent from a year earlier, a one-year high and beating expectations. The Nikkei/Markit purchasing managers' indexes underscored the division between domestic and overseas demand. New export orders fell more sharply in November than in October but orders from domestic customers improved.

Data from the country's top mortgage lender showed on Monday that house prices rose for a 27th straight month in November on-month, bringing annual growth to the fastest since March 2012.

Still unless global demand improves, some analysts believe the Bank of Korea will have to cut rates further next year as price pressures are still weak and domestic demand will eventually succumb to the effects of the prolonged export slump. "Given weak exports, low inflation, a tight 2016 budget, and micro tightening for household loans, we expect another policy rate cut in H1 of 2016," economists at Goldman Sachs said. The BOK cut its policy rate by a combined 50 basis points in two steps in March and June this year to a record-low 1.50 percent. Views in financial markets are currently split between favoring no change in South Korean interest rates for some months ahead, or a cut early in 2016. — Reuters



**A home for sale in Coral Gables, Florida. The National Association of Realtors releases, on Monday, its October report on pending home sales, which are seen as a barometer of future purchases. —AP**



**About the only flat land to build anything among the jumble of mountains in Southern West Virginia is in the hollows traced by small rivers, and that land sits in dangerous flood plains. This unavoidable geography has hampered efforts to diversify the economy, despite decades of effort. —AP**

## BOE'S CARNEY SAYS UK BANKS' JOB ALMOST DONE ON CAPITAL

FURTHER INCREASES IN CAPITAL WILL ONLY BE INCREMENTAL

**LONDON:** British banks including HSBC and Lloyds have almost completed the job of building up their defences against a future financial crisis, Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said yesterday as he set out details of new capital requirements.

Banks may have to hold up to 10 billion pounds (\$15 billion) more capital to meet rules designed to link the capital they must hold to protect against financial risks to the state of the economy, a relatively small sum compared with the hundreds of billions they have raised to strengthen their position since the financial crisis. Carney was keen to dispel banks' fears that the BoE was going further than international rules required, and acknowledged that excess capital requirements could hurt growth. "With today's announcement, the basic amount of capital our system requires is settled," he said, setting out plans for top UK banks including HSBC, Lloyds, Barclays after their annual health check.

RBS and Standard Chartered only passed after taking remedial action."While the benefits of increased resilience are clear, higher capital costs are ultimately passed on to borrowers," he said. British finance minister George Osborne has called for a "new settlement" with banks after introducing a welter of tougher rules. Carney said there was absolutely no political pressure on the BoE to ease the pressure on lenders. The BoE's Financial Policy Committee "seems positively relaxed about the current state of the banking system", said Samuel Tombs at Pantheon Macroeconomics.

The BoE also released the results of annual 'stress tests' into how Britain's big seven lenders would deal with unexpected economic shocks.

This year the focus was on emerging market and trading risks, and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and Standard Chartered both only passed thanks to steps they took to improve their capital ratios during the process, which lifted their leverage ratios above the minimum 3 percent level.

The other five big lenders tested - HSBC, Barclays, Lloyds Banking Group, Santander and Nationwide - did not have to take action. "RBS was always still further behind in the journey but Lloyds and Barclays are fine, with no material threats of further capital raising or, in Lloyds' case, growing dividends over time," Richard Buxton, CEO of Old Mutual Global Investors, a shareholder in RBS, Barclays and Lloyds, told Reuters. Shares in Barclays were up 3.9 percent at 1145 GMT, RBS was up 3.2 percent, Lloyds was up 2.6 percent and HSBC up 1.8 percent as investors breathed a sigh of relief that the outlook on capital requirements was clearer.

The BoE said that credit conditions were largely back to normal after the financial crisis and therefore banks should hold an extra so-called counter-cyclical capital buffer (CCB) of 1 percent of risk-weighted assets during such times - equivalent to 10 billion pounds across the system.

The BoE was now tweaking the requirements individual banks must meet with a view to imposing the add-on buffer step-by-step from March. The CCB aims to rein in risky lending at frothier stages of the credit cycle. It stands at zero currently, but the BoE has already required some banks to hold extra capital due to firm-specific risks, meaning some lenders may not have to raise much fresh capital.

Some economists and banking analysts had expected the



**LONDON: Bank of England governor Mark Carney listens to a reporter's question during a news conference at the Bank of England in London yesterday. The Bank of England says the country's seven biggest lenders have passed stress tests designed to see if they can withstand a slump in the global economy. —AP**

BoE to raise the CCB this month to 0.5 percent. The BoE also said it expected the banking sector as a whole to hold high-grade tier one equity capital of 13.5 percent of risk-weighted assets by 2019, up from 13 percent now.

The 13.5 percent figure is equivalent to 12 or 12.5 percent of best quality core equity, a level some banks already have. The BoE has said it wanted to give banks more clarity about its long-run aims for the amount of capital they hold. Banks have complained that in the past, the BoE has unexpectedly piled on extra capital requirements, making it hard for them to lend or decide which lines of business to stay in.

### HIGHER RATE RISK

The BoE Financial Policy Committee's report comes as markets brace for the United States to raise interest rates later this month for the first time since the financial crisis.

"Financial market prices remain vulnerable to a sharp increase in market interest rates or the compensation demanded by investors for risky assets," the report said.

With the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee unlikely to raise British interest rates until later next year, the FPC is having to take other steps to guard against risky behaviour.

Even if domestic cost pressures are too weak to warrant a rate rise, British consumer and mortgage lending is growing at its fastest rate since the financial crisis.

So-called buy-to-let mortgages - which enable small landlords to purchase property to rent out - showed weaker underwriting standards than residential mortgages and the BoE's Prudential Regulation Authority said it was examining this. The FPC said it stood ready to take action if needed and would monitor closely the impact of higher property transaction taxes for buy-to-let purchases which finance minister George Osborne announced last week and will take effect next April. —Reuters

## ZAIN OFFERS 50% DISCOUNT ON ALLS TO GCC COUNTRIES

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced a 50 percent discount promotion on international calls to all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries starting from December 2nd and for a duration of four days. The special offering comes on the occasion of the United Arab Emirates' celebrations of the National Day today.

On this special occasion, Zain expressed its sincere congratulations to the people of the UAE, represented in its leadership, the embassy, and the Emirati citizens residing in Kuwait. The company took the opportunity to share this special occasion with its customers, becoming the first telecom in the country to offer such discounts.

Zain prepaid and postpaid customers initiating international calls to any GCC country, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Qatar, and the Sultanate of Oman, will receive a 50 percent discount during the period from 2-5 December.

As a leading telecommunications company in the region, Zain is keen to participate in the celebrations of different nations. The company considers itself as a core entity within the communities in which it operates, and strives to share the joys of special occasions in its customers' lives.

## HAMAD AL-ENEZY WINS KD 125,000 IN NBK'S JAWHARA MONTHLY DRAW FOR NOV

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announces the winner for November's KD 125,000 Al-Jawhara monthly prize, Hamad Ziedan Al-Enezy. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The winner's name was announced live during Hamad Show program on Al Rai TV.

NBK has re-launched Al-Jawhara account recently by doubling chances to win in the weekly, monthly and quarterly draws if customers do not withdraw or transfer from their accounts.

NBK customers have chances to win KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and a grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly. Each KD 50 in a customer's account entitles them one entry into the draw, thus more money in an account means more chances into each draw. The new feature introduced to Al Jawhara Account enables customers to double their chances when maintaining their balance without withdrawing.

Al-Jawhara is the most popular prize-giving account in Kuwait. Al-Jawhara account entitles account holders to enter the weekly, monthly and quarterly Al-Jawhara draws. All prizes are automatically credited to the winners' accounts the day after the draw.

Al-Jawhara account is available for both Kuwaitis and expats and can be opened at any of NBK's numerous branches around Kuwait, or safely and easily through NBK's website for existing customers.

## MYANMAR BOURSE TO DEBUT ON DEC 9

**YANGON:** Myanmar will open its first major stock exchange next week after months of delays, authorities said yesterday, as the long-cloistered economy slowly opens up.

Initially slated for October, the Yangon Stock Exchange (YEX) will now be launched on December 9, according to a statement by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar. Its debut was pushed back until after the breakthrough November 8 elections, won handsomely by Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party.

Suu Kyi's supporters hope her party's landslide win will hasten the pace of economic liberalization in the formerly junta-ruled country. Approval for the bourse was given by Maung Maung Thein, the chairman of the securities and exchange commission, according to state-backed newspaper the Global New Light of Myanmar.

About five companies will be listed on the YEX to start with, the official was quoted as saying. Myanmar is one of just a handful of countries without a stock market. In 1996 Japanese firm Daiwa Securities and a state bank set up the Myanmar Securities Exchange Centre, but this allowed over-the-counter sales of shares in just two firms, a Myanmar timber company and bank.

The workings of a bourse remain a mystery to most ordinary people, a nation where many keep their money at home and the banking system is still in its infancy after decades of state control over the economy. But with controls easing since reforms began in 2011, local companies hope soon to be able to access more capital and woo investors.

"It is the first step for us and it will bring new economic opportunities for us," Aung Tun Thet, an economic adviser to the president, told AFP.

"The most important thing is a systematic and disciplined process for running companies." Businessmen have broadly welcomed the exchange but there are concerns a new and poorly regulated bourse could attract dirty money, in a country where corruption runs deep. "It is very important to prevent the stock exchange becoming a place for money-laundering," said Aung Thura, an economic expert and head of the Thura Swiss market research company. Official media says state-owned Myanmar Economic Bank will own a controlling 51 percent stake in the YEX, with the remainder divided between Japanese partners the Japan Exchange Group and Daiwa Institute of Research, the research arm of Daiwa Securities Group. —AFP



## GOOGLE OPENS ONLINE WINDOW ON TOLL OF CLIMATE CHANGE

**SAN FRANCISCO:** As world leaders gathered in Paris on Monday in the hope to stopping catastrophic climate change, Google Maps provided online views of remote locations where wildlife is struggling for survival. A "Street View" feature at the free online map service has grown from simply showing scenes outside of business or residential addresses to allowing arm chair adventurers to virtually explore mountains, rain forests, ocean depths and more.

Some settings find creatures in dire straits, such as polar bear in the Canadian Arctic appearing to desperately wait for bay ice that doesn't form

because temperatures are too warm. "From polar bears in the Canadian Arctic, to communities in the Brazilian Amazon, to blue oak trees in Central California, the impacts of climate change are being felt by plants, animals and people across the planet," said Google Earth outreach program manager Karin Tuxen-Bettman. "With Street View, you can get a window into some of our world's changing ecosystems, and learn how nonprofit and other organizations are working to keep our planet healthy."

Polar Bears International (PBI) borrowed Street View Trekker 360-degree camera and location-pinpointing gear

to enhance maps with scenes of polar bears in Manitoba as the sea ice on which they depend vanishes. PBI incorporated the Street View scenes into its website and a lesson plan for schools to help children learn about the habitat. Brazilian nonprofit Amazonas Sustainable Foundation (FAS) used Trekker Gear to capture scenes in the Amazon forest and put isolated local communities on the map. FAS captured imagery from three reserves in the Amazon and uses it for education about rain forest protection and sustainable ecosystem management, according to Google.

### Visualizing climate change

The initiatives aims to make climate change more real for people and inspire them to act by allowing them to virtually explore remote areas, and see beauty lost or under threat due to climate change. Street View imagery also allows for comparisons over time to show how environments are changing along with the climate. "Street View is great for visualizing the impacts of climate change, but we're also using our Street View platform to measure climate data, which can be used by scientists, policymakers, businesses and citizens to drive better decisions," Tuxen-Bettman said.

Google Earth has worked for several years with the Environmental Defense Fund to map methane leaks from natural gas lines under an array of US cities by equipping Street View cars with special gear, according to Tuxen-Bettman. Street View cars will begin measuring more pollutants, such as climate change culprit carbon dioxide, in an alliance with environmental sensor network specialty firm Aclima, according to California-based Google. "Essentially, we're turning Street View cars into environmental sensing platforms," Tuxen-Bettman said, noting that they will first be put to work in California communities. — AFP



TIANJIN: Photo shows a building facility that is undergoing interior completion to be a clone factory in Tianjin. — AFP

## 'CLONE FACTORY' SCIENTIST EYES HUMAN REPLICATION

CHINA CLONING PIONEER OFFERS VISION OF BRAVE NEW WORLD

**BEIJING:** The Chinese scientist behind the world's biggest cloning factory has technology advanced enough to replicate humans, he said and is only holding off for fear of the public reaction. Boyalife Group and its partners are building the giant plant in the northern Chinese port of Tianjin, where it is due to go into production within the next seven months and aims for an output of one million cloned cows a year by 2020. But cattle are only the beginning of chief executive Xu Xiaochun's ambitions. In the factory pipeline are also thoroughbred racehorses, as well as pet and police dogs, specialized in searching and sniffing.

Boyalife is already working with its South Korean partner Sooam and the Chinese Academy of Sciences to improve primate cloning capacity to create better test animals for disease research. And it is a short biological step from monkeys to humans-potentially raising a host of moral and ethical controversies. "The technology is already there," Xu said. "If this is allowed, I don't think there are other companies better than Boyalife that make better technology." The firm does not currently engage in human cloning activities, Xu said, adding that it has to be "self-restrained" because of possible adverse reaction.

But social values can change, he pointed out, citing changing views of homosexuality and suggesting that in time humans could have more choices about their own reproduction. "Unfortunately, currently, the only way to have a child is to have it be half its mum, half its dad," he said. "Maybe in the future you have three choices instead of one," he went on. "You either have fifty-fifty, or you have a choice of having the genetics 100 percent from Daddy or 100 percent from Mommy. This is only a choice." Xu, 44, went to university in

Canada and the US, and has previously worked for US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, and in drug development.

### Snuppy the cloned dog

Presenting cloning as a safeguard of biodiversity, the Tianjin facility will house a gene bank capable of holding up to approximately five million cell samples frozen in liquid nitrogen-a catalogue of the world's endangered species for future regeneration. Boyalife's South Korean partner Sooam is already working on a project to bring the woolly mammoth back from extinction by cloning cells preserved for thousands of years in the Siberian permafrost. Sooam also serves a niche market recreating customers' dead pet dogs, reportedly for \$100,000 a time. Sooam founder Hwang Woo-Suk was a national hero with his own postage stamp before being embroiled in controversy a decade ago after his claims to be the first in the world to clone a human embryo were discredited.

Hwang, who created Snuppy, the world's first cloned dog, in 2005, lost his university position, had two major papers retracted, and was accused of crimes ranging from violation of bioethics laws to embezzling research funds. Earlier this year he was quoted in South Korea's Dong-A Ilbo newspaper saying that his firm was planning a cloning joint venture in China "because of South Korea's bioethics law that prohibits the use of human eggs". "We have decided to locate the facilities in China in case we enter the phase of applying the technology to human bodies," he was quoted as saying.

### 'Weird experiments'

For now, Xu seeks to become the world's first pur-

veyor of "cloned" beef, breeding genetically identical super-cattle that he promises will taste like Kobe and allow butchers to "slaughter less and produce more" to meet the demands of China's booming middle class. Cloning differs from genetic modification, but its application to animals would enable the firm to homogenize its output.

"Everything in the supermarket looks good-it's almost all shiny, good-looking, and uniformly shaped. For animals, we weren't able to do that in the past. But with our cloning factory, we choose to do so now," Xu said. "Remember, this is a food. We want it to be uniform, very consistent, very premium quality," he added. There is controversy over whether cloned beef is safe for human consumption research by the US Food and Drug Administration says that it is, but the European parliament has backed a ban on cloned animals and products in the food chain.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has yet to review the issue. Han Lanzhi, a GMO safety specialist at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, said Boyalife's claims about the safety, scope and timeline of their operations were alarming and implausible. "To get approval for the safety of cloned animals would be a very drawn-out process, so when I heard this news, I felt very surprised," she said. "There must be strong regulation because as a company pursuing its own interests, they could very easily do other things in the future," she added. Xu sought to be reassuring said: "We want the public to see that cloning is really not that crazy, that scientists aren't weird, dressed in lab coats, hiding behind a sealed door doing weird experiments" — AFP

## AMAZON GIVES NEW DRONE DETAILS, MUM ON TIMELINE

**NEW YORK:** Amazon is giving new details on its Prime Air drone delivery program. But the timeline is still unclear. The retailer says Prime Air will one day deliver packages up to 5 pounds in 30 minutes or less using small drones. The drones will fly under 400 feet and weigh less than 55 pounds, according to details posted on its website Sunday. It says it will use technology and automation to operate safely. Seattle-based Amazon.com Inc. said Monday the pro-

gram will start once government regulations are in place to support it. It has development centers in the US, the UK and Israel. The FAA currently bans commercial drone flights but has granted several thousand waivers. It has granted Amazon approval to fly drones for research. This story has been corrected to show that the FAA has granted waivers of its ban on commercial drone flights to several thousand, rather than just a few dozen, companies. — AP

## SAMSUNG PICKS NEW SMARTPHONE HEAD

**SEOUL:** Tech giant Samsung Electronics Co Ltd's long-time handset division chief is ceding day-to-day management of the struggling smartphone business in the biggest leadership change yet under the Samsung conglomerate's heir-apparent, Jay Y Lee. Samsung Group said 54-year-old Dongjin Koh will take over as president of the mobile communications business from 59-year-old JK Shin, who will remain head of the overall mobile division for Samsung Electronics and focus on long-term strategy and developing new growth businesses.

The move diminishes Shin's influence on the mobile business as the former cash-cow battles to reverse a slide in its market share to rivals like Apple Inc, Huawei Technologies Co Ltd and Xiaomi Inc. "While it's true that Shin delivered remarkable performance in the past, it's indisputable that the Galaxy S6's results fell short of expectations so a new leader was needed," Hansung University economics Professor Kim Sang-jo said. "Today's appointments appear to acknowledge the need to develop a management system that can more proactively respond to challenges from Xiaomi and other Chinese companies."

The group's annual announcement of management changes also saw another top executive moved into a strategic role, with TV and appliances division chief Yoon Bo-keun shifted out of the day-to-day operations of the appliances business. Analysts said that while the moves at the mobile division were an apparent acknowledgment that change was needed, they did not expect a new strategy to emerge any time soon.

"Koh is basically the same person as Shin," Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology business professor Chang Sea-jin said. Analysts have said Samsung needed to step up its software and services offerings to revive its mobile business, but

Koh, who has held mobile business roles since 2006, had an engineering background like Shin. "There is no real change and Samsung appears to be continuing on the hardware-centric path," Chang said.

### Mobile struggles

Jay Y Lee, 47, has been the de facto leader of the smartphones-to-construction conglomerate since his father and group patriarch, Lee Kun-hee, was hospitalized following a heart attack last year. Under the younger Lee's leadership, the group has faced mounting investor pressure to boost shareholder returns and find new growth engines as the smartphone business slows. Shin, in charge of the mobile business since 2009, was instrumental in delivering record profits through the sales of Galaxy smartphones before a sharp earnings decline starting last year appeared to put his standing at risk. Some media reports said he was on the way out last year. Samsung has implemented new designs and cut prices for high-end products to boost sales, but researchers say its global market share continued to fall from a year earlier during the third quarter. "This is basically a retirement for Shin," Chang said. Others however said that Shin could still exert influence through his role as mobile division chief.

Samsung said Koh, previously head of Samsung's mobile research and development, played an important role in the development of premium devices such as the Galaxy S6 and the Galaxy Note 5. The company touted his experience in helping to develop software and services such as its mobile payments service and the KNOX security platform. "Jay Y Lee has yet to assume the role of chairman so there's still some time before we see bigger-scale changes," said Chung Sun-sup, head of corporate analysis firm Chaebul.com. — Reuters



CALIFORNIA: Photo shows the front of Google's new self-driving prototype car during a demonstration at the Google campus in Mountain View, Calif. — AP



CALIFORNIA: Photo shows the side view of Google's new self-driving prototype car during a demonstration at the Google campus in Mountain View. — AP

## HOW CAN PEOPLE SAFELY TAKE CONTROL OF SELF-DRIVING CARS?

**LOS ANGELES:** New cars that can steer and brake themselves risk lulling people in the driver's seat into a false sense of security - and even to sleep. One way to keep people alert may be providing distractions that are now illegal. That was one surprising finding when researchers put Stanford University students in a simulated self-driving car to study how they reacted when their robo-chauffeur needed help.

The experiment was one in a growing number that assesses how cars can safely hand control back to a person when their self-driving software and sensors are overwhelmed or mismatched. With some models already able to stay in their lane or keep a safe distance from other traffic, and automakers pushing for more automation, the car-to-driver handoff is a big open question.

The elimination of distracted driving is a major selling point for the technology. But in the Stanford experiment, reading or watching a movie helped keep participants awake. Among the 48 students put in the driver's seat, 13 who were instructed to monitor the car and road began to nod off. Only three did so when told to watch a video or read from a tablet. Alertness mattered when students needed to grab the wheel because a simulated car or pedestrian got in the way.

There's no consensus on the right car-to-driver handoff approach: the Stanford research suggests engaging people with media could help, while some automakers are marketing vehicles with limited self-driving features that will slow the car if they detect a person has stopped paying attention to the road. Though research is ongoing, it appears that people need at least 5 seconds to take over - if they're not totally checked out. Self-driving car experts at Google, which is pursuing the technology more aggressively than any automaker, concluded that involving humans would make its cars less safe. Google's solution is a prototype with no steering wheel or pedals - human control would be limited to go and stop buttons.

### Auto pilot

Meanwhile, traditional automakers are phasing in the technology. Mercedes and Toyota sell cars that can hit the brakes and stay in their lane. By adding new features each year, they might produce a truly self-driving car in about a decade. One potential hazard of this gradualist approach became clear this fall, when Tesla Motors had to explain that its "auto pilot" feature did not mean drivers could stop paying attention. Several videos posted online showed people recording the novelty - then seizing the wheel when the car made a startling move. Starting late next year, the Cadillac CTS will get a Super Cruise system, which will allow semi-autonomous highway driving. If the driver's eyes are off the road, and they don't respond to repeated prodding, the car slows. "We are in no way selling this as a technology where the driver can check out," General Motors spokesman Dan Flores said. "You can relax, glance away, but you still have to be aware because you know the technology's not foolproof."

One riddle automakers must solve: How to get owners to trust the technology so they'll use it - but not trust it so much that they'll be lulled into a false sense of

security and therefore slower to react when the car needs them. Trust was on the mind of researchers who in August published an extensive report on self-driving cars funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "Although this trust is essential for widespread adoption, participants were also observed prioritizing non-driving activities over the operation of the vehicle," the authors wrote.

### 'Mode confusion'

Another wide-open question: How to alert the person in the driver's seat of the need to take over. It appears that the car should appeal to several senses. Visual warnings alone may not suffice. But combine a light with spoken instructions or physical stimulation such as a vibrating seat, and people react more quickly. "If it is done courteously and subtle and not annoying, it could be missed by someone that is distracted," said Greg Fitch, a research scientist at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. Then again, the way the car interacts with people will be one way automakers differentiate their product - and overbearing warnings may sour potential buyers. — AP



The back side of Google's new self-driving prototype car. — AP



## GROUP FUNDED BY COKE TO FIGHT OBESITY DISBANDING

**NEW YORK:** A nonprofit funded by the Coca-Cola Co. to combat obesity is disbanding following revelations about the beverage maker's involvement with the group. The Global Energy Balance Network said on its website Monday night that it is "discontinuing operations due to resource limitations." The decision was effective immediately. The

group had previously said that it received an "unrestricted gift" from Coke and that the Atlanta-based soft drink giant had "no input" into its activities. But last week, The Associated Press reported on emails showing that Coke helped with the selection of the group's leaders, edited its mission statement and suggested content for its website.



When contacted about the exchanges, Coke CEO Muhtar Kent said in a statement there wasn't enough transparency regarding the company's involvement.

Coke also told the AP that it accepted the retirement of Rhona Applebaum, its chief health and science officer who initially managed the relationship with the group. The company said it was no longer working with the Global Energy Balance Network. The emails obtained by the AP through a records request showed Coke executives and the group's leaders held meetings and conference calls to develop the group's mission. A proposal circulated via email at Coke laid out a vision for a group that would "quickly establish itself as the place the media goes to for comment on any obesity issue." It said the group would run a political-style campaign to counter the "shrill rhetoric" of "public health extremists."

Early on, Applebaum also informed the group's president that those

involved would need to be open about collaboration with private industry. "That is non-negotiable," she wrote. Relatively minor matters, such as the group's logo, were also covered. "Color will not be an issue - except for blue. Hope you can understand why," Applebaum. Coke is known for its red logo, while Pepsi is associated with blue. The Global Energy Balance Network, led by a professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, initially came under fire in August after The New York Times reported on the group's funding by Coke. On Nov. 6, the University of Colorado said it was returning a \$1 million donation from the company because of the distraction it was creating. The announcement came after the school released hundreds of emails to the AP.

The University of South Carolina has said it is keeping a \$500,000 donation it received for the group and that there was no misuse of funds. One of the

school's professors is also a group leader. Coca-Cola said Monday night it had no comment and deferred questions about the status of its donation to the University of South Carolina. A representative for the university did not respond to a request for comment Monday. Critics say Coke touts the idea of "energy balance," or the need to offset calorie intake with physical activity, to deflect negative attention over its sugary drinks by stressing the need for exercise. James Hill, the group's president and a professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, did not respond to a request for comment. Steven Blair, the group's vice president and a professor at the University of South Carolina, also did not respond. Both had financial ties to Coca-Cola prior to the formation of the Global Energy Balance Network. For instance, Coke paid Hill \$5,000 for at least one speaking engagement overseas. His travel expenses were also covered by the company. —AP

## CERTAIN BIRTH DEFECTS LINKED TO ABUSE OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS

**NEW YORK:** Babies with certain birth defects are much more likely to be abused as infants and toddlers than other young children, a US study suggests. Babies with malformations of the mouth and jaw known as cleft lip and palate were 40 percent more likely to be abused by their second birthday than those born without birth defects, the analysis of about 3 million children in Texas found. For infants born with spina bifida, a spinal cord disorder linked to lower limb paralysis and cognitive delays, the odds of maltreatment were 58 percent higher, researchers reported in the journal Pediatrics.

Down syndrome, a chromosomal defect tied to physical abnormalities and intellectual impairment, didn't appear to make abuse any more likely by age two than it would be for babies born without birth defects, the study also found. "Understanding the factors that place children at an increased risk for maltreatment is crucial for prevention," said study leader Bethanie Van Horne, assistant director for state initiatives for the Children's Learning Institute at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

"Parenting is challenging - even for typically developing children in well-resourced homes," Van Horne added by email. "The medical complications of birth defects like spina bifida or cleft lip or cleft palate add another level of stress and complexity to infant care." To explore the connection between birth defects and maltreatment, Van Horne and colleagues reviewed data from a registry of birth defects for children born in Texas from 2002 to 2009 as well as state records on reported abuse. The vast majority of children in the study were born without birth defects. About 3,700 had Down syndrome, while roughly 2,900 had cleft lip or palate and almost 1,000 had spina bifida.

Overall, about 67,000 of these children had a substantiated case of maltreatment by their second birthday, a prevalence of 23 cases for each 1,000 kids. For Down syndrome, the prevalence was similar, with 20 cases of abuse for each 1,000 children. The prevalence of abuse was higher - 36 per 1,000 - with cleft lip and palate and higher still - 38 per 1,000 - with spina bifida. It's possible that fewer infants and toddlers with Down syndrome

experienced abuse by age two in the study because these infants initially look and act very similar to babies without birth defects, Van Horne said.

Among the maltreated children, the infants with cleft lip and palate or spina bifida were about two to three times more likely to experience abuse in their first month of life. The most common type of abuse was neglect or lack of supervision, followed by physical abuse, physical neglect or medical neglect, the study found. One shortcoming of the study is that abuse noted for certain families in the study might not have always involved the specific infant included in the study and might have instead been related to another child in the household, the authors acknowledge. Abuse cases reported outside of Texas were also not part of the study, which might have contributed to an underestimation of maltreatment.

Even so, the findings suggest that when babies have visible birth defects that impact interactions with them, parents may need extra support from clinicians to come to terms with anger, grief or other feelings that can surface when babies

have abnormalities, said Dr Bruno Grollemund, a specialist in orthodontics and member of the Strasbourg cleft competence center in France. "This is particularly important for midwives and pediatric nurses who are the medical staff in whom parents confide most readily," Grollemund, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. "If full use is made of these teams and careful attention is paid to the child as a unique being, the parents will feel less isolated, and will be in a better position to reach the decisions that will affect their future."

Children may fare even worse in the developing world, according to Erin Stieber. Stieber works for Smile Train, an international charity devoted to cleft repair surgeries. "Poorer regions lack the resources and training to treat cleft and to address the special needs associated with it - such as difficulty eating, breathing and speaking - which can lead to social isolation and shame," Stieber, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. "The challenge is often complicated by a lack of understanding, even negative mythology, about the causes of cleft." —Reuters



**WASHINGTON:** A mosquito is bloated with blood as it inserts its stinger into human flesh in this undated file photo obtained from the US Department of Agriculture(USDA) on September 9, 2002. —AFP

## MOSQUITOS SPREAD MICROCEPHALY IN BRAZIL

**BRASÓLIA:** Cases of microcephaly, which causes babies to be born with small heads, are skyrocketing in Brazil and the discovery that mosquitoes carry the disease means there are few ways to stop it, officials said Monday. Latest figures show 1,248 cases this year, compared to just 147 last year, said the health ministry. Complicating the situation is the revelation that mosquitos carrying the dengue-like Zika virus are spreading microcephaly, which also curbs mental development in the baby. Claudio Maierovitch, director of the epidemiology department at the health ministry, said.

"The control of the sickness depends on control of the transmitter, in this case the mosquito," he said. "There is currently no specific treatment for the Zika virus," Maierovitch said. "That is what worries the Brazilian government." Zika, which is related to dengue, has been detected in 14 of Brazil's 27 states this year. Microcephaly is seen as an alarming new trend which threatens women especially in the first three months of pregnancy. The health ministry is in talks with the World Health Organization and two US specialists are expected to arrive in Brazil within days. —AFP

## CENTRAL AMERICA TESTS DROUGHT-RESISTANT BEANS

**QUEZALTEPEQUE, El Salvador:** "These beans are miraculous because they beat droughts," crowded Manuel Ceren, a farmer in El Salvador trying out a hybrid, climate change-defying crop produced by Salvadoran, Colombian and Honduran experts. In Quezaltepeque, a village 30 kilometers north of San Salvador, Ceren and 13 other co-farmers feel fortunate to be the first testing the bean. They proudly showed off an abundant harvest of around 0.7 of a hectare (1.7 acres) of the bean grown on the farm where they work, to the awed gaze of visitors. "We were very careful with this initial experiment with these beans, which were hit with a 15-day drought and

two storms," the 45-year-old manager of the farm, Baltazar Garcia, told AFP.

"Other people called us crazy. But today a lot of them are admiring the harvest." The type of light red bean they are using, which is also resistant to an infection known as bean golden yellow mosaic virus, was painstakingly developed with the help of El Salvador's National Center for Agricultural and Forestry Technology (CENTA). Dubbed CENTA-EAC, the bean is not a biotech crop designed by genetic engineers slicing up chromosomes. Rather it is the product of hybridization: the combining of naturally formed plants to form a cross-breed. "You could say it's

the simple cross-fertilization of red bean and black bean plants in a process that in this case took five years of selecting and discarding plants until the desired variety was created," a CENTA researcher, Aldemaro Clara, explained.

### A search for better crops

The Salvadoran experiment came as a prolonged drought settled on Central America this year, causing heavy crop losses across a broad swathe of land stretching from Costa Rica to Guatemala. Because of the lack of water, 2.3 million small Central American farmers will need food aid, the UN's World Food Program has warned. The CENTA-EAC bean is part of a decade-old effort by laboratories in the region to come up with hybrids able to survive and even prosper during the recurring droughts. With the help of farmers, it was noted that it was possible to come up with crops adapted to extreme weather conditions.

"Our mission to produce seeds resistant to climate change, which in this region means against high temperatures, long droughts and extremely heavy rainy seasons," Rolando Ventura, another CENTA researcher, said. The whole region is working along the same lines. In Guatemala, scientists are working on the ICTA-Chorti, which will not only resist droughts but also be rich in iron. In Nicaragua, another institute has made a variety of red bean, the INTA-Tomabu, also able to survive when water is scarce.

### Corn, tomatoes and cacao

Candida Lazon, who is trying out that bean on her farm, said: "Here, it almost never rains. We have managed to grow the INTA-Tomabu bean by watering it just once every 12 days. I'm thrilled about this seed because it adapts to the very dry local climate." It's not beans that are being made to "adapt" to climate change. In Panama, one of the first countries in the region to work with types of corn resistant to changing weather, has come up with a new seed. "In the case of corn, these seeds are compatible with higher temperatures, 35 to 36 degrees (95 to 97 degrees Fahrenheit), and drought-tolerant," said Jose Alberto Yau, deputy director for seeds at the country's IDIAP Agriculture and Fishing Research Institute.

In El Salvador, farmers already have the option of using a type of corn called CENTA-Pasaquina, but it has fallen from favor because of its perceived low yield. Nicaragua meanwhile has a type of virus-resistant tomato seed christened INTA-Jinotega that copes with temperatures over 25 degrees centigrade. In Costa Rica, it's cocoa-a crop essential to the economy-that is being looked at in the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center with hopes of coming up with a more resistant variety. —AFP



**EL SALVADOR Quezaltepeque:** A farmer shows beans of the CENTA-EAC variety at a farm in Quezaltepeque, about 30 km north of San Salvador.



**EL SALVADOR Quezaltepeque:** Peasants harvest and clean beans of the CENTA-EAC variety on a farm in Quezaltepeque.

## HIV STIGMA IN UGANDA PUTS MOTHERS AND BABIES AT RISK

**LONDON:** When Juliet Nalumu, overjoyed at her first pregnancy, visited her local hospital in eastern Uganda for a check-up, it turned into one of the worst days of her life. She found out she was HIV positive. "All the joy and happiness disappeared." Lonely, and terrified of telling her husband of two years, the 26-year-old decided to keep it a secret. "I was his third wife, and the youngest, so by going home and telling him I was HIV positive, both he and his other wives would believe I'd brought the infection into the family."

"They'd probably chase me out of the house. I depended on him entirely - he was the breadwinner. We would have had nothing to live on," Nalumu said while on a visit to London ahead of World Aids Day. Nalumu's story is not unusual in eastern Uganda - and in many parts of Africa - where women are entirely dependent on their husbands for food, shelter and medicine, and where stigma against AIDS is common. With only one month's supply of anti-retroviral drugs, and the hospital a two-hour bus ride from her village in Kamuli district, she did not want to raise suspicions by returning for more medication. "I became very sick. They had to carry me to the hospital. I had tuberculosis and I was very wasted," she said.

Even after giving birth while sick and very thin, she said nothing to her family. She was told by a nurse she had to exclusively breastfeed her twins to protect her children from the virus. Severely malnourished, she was unable to do so. About 40 percent of infections from mother to child happen when babies are fed a combination of breast milk and formula milk or other foods. The combination irritates the intestinal lining making children more susceptible to the virus. One of her twins fell ill at four months and died. Her other daughter developed similar symptoms at nine months but survived. "This time I said for the sake of this innocent child I had to do my best. I did casual work for my neighbours, anything to raise money to get me back to the hospital."

### Dramatic scale-up

An estimated 7.3 percent of people in Uganda aged 15 to 49 years old have HIV. Globally nearly 37 million people are liv-

ing with the virus. Nalumu's fortunes changed four years later when she started working as a mentor for mothers2mothers, an international charity helping mothers with HIV. "I now had a voice, a salary," she said. But before she could start work, she had to tell her family she had the virus. The whole family was checked for HIV. Her husband and one co-wife tested positive.

He was supportive, but some of her other relatives were less so. One of her sisters asked her to hand over her assets, now that she was earning money, saying she would die soon. Neighbors asked her why she was doing training, as they assumed she would die before the end of the course. But her health improved, and armed with the medication and knowledge she needed, she went on to have two children who are virus-free. She now helps other mothers struggling with the virus, and teaches them how they and their children can lead normal, healthy lives.

"HIV is just in my blood and that is all. I have a very normal life." Her eldest daughter Joelia, now eight years old, still struggles with her health. Last year she demanded to know why she alone of all her siblings had to take medication every day. Her parents finally explained she had been infected with HIV through breast-feeding.

"I felt so much pain, I could cry day and night," Nalumu said. Over the last 15 years, scale-up of treatment has been most dramatic in Africa where now more than 11 million people are receiving HIV treatment, up from 11,000 at the turn of the century, the World Health Organization said on Monday. Mothers2mothers reaches a quarter of all pregnant women in the nine countries in which they work.

Women are put on ARVs as soon as they test positive, and stay on the treatment for life. This reduces the risk of transmitting the virus to their children and partners. Babies are given a short treatment of drugs as soon as they are born, in case they were infected during childbirth. And women are encouraged to feed their children exclusively formula milk - an expense many cannot afford - or breast milk. As a result of these measures, mother to child transmission has been reduced to near zero, according to mothers2mothers. —Reuters





TEHRAN: Specialist and Dermatologist Dr Torg Makrami. —KUNA

## HAIR TRANSPLANT PROCEDURES POPULAR AMONGST YOUTH IN IRAN

**TEHRAN:** Hair transplant have become very popular among youth in Iran due to its high success rate, low cost and effectiveness in sustaining as well as retaining individuals' youthful looks. Speaking to KUNA on the popularity of hair transplant, specialist and Dermatologist Dr Torg Makrami said that youth were increasingly seeking treatment for the lack of hair on their heads, opting for the hair transplant procedure as a solution for their baldness which is mainly due to genetic reasons.

Clients usually are young men or older people who are seeking to retain their youthful looks, said Dr Makrami, adding that women were also amongst his clients. On the procedure, Dr Makrami said that the hair transplant usually was conducted without general anesthesia and it would take around four to six hours to get done depending on the amount of hair being transplanted.

He noted that hair was usually taken from the back of the head and transplanted into areas which are in need of

hair. The amount of hair pulled from the back of the head should not exceed 50 percent otherwise a visible mark will be left after the operation, said the specialist, adding that the hair planted in the bald spots would not fall at all due to the fact that the transplanted hair will not be affected by the body's hormones.

Dr Makrami said that hair transplanting was not an independent branch of medicine, adding that it was taught within dermatology at college level. He noted that medical students are required to take specialized courses in hair transplanting before being able to conduct the procedure legally. On his part, Abbas Burhani, 45, said that he had went for the hair transplanting procedure and was flabbergasted by the good results. As for the reasons, Burhani said that he was eager to look younger and therefore he underwent hair transplanting. The procedure was easy and less risky than other operations and the results are great, said Burhani. —KUNA

## AL-NOOR HOSPITALS GROUP EXTENDS NETWORK WITH AVAYA SDN Fx

**DUBAI:** Al-Noor Hospitals Group, the largest private healthcare company in Abu Dhabi, is extending its networking system with the deployment of Avaya SDN Fx technology at a purpose-built data center in its new hospital in Al-Ain. The project is being delivered by Avaya partner, PACMDS.

Founded in 1985, Al-Noor provides a complete continuum of healthcare services and has expanded to currently operate three hospitals and 17 medical centers and clinics across the United Arab Emirates and Oman. The company employs more than 4,000 staff and 5,400 patients entrust it with their healthcare needs every day.

When the new data center is completed, Al-Noor Hospital will relocate its disaster recovery operations from a hosted facility in Jebel Ali, allowing the group to reduce operating costs and manage resources more effectively. The Avaya SDN Fx technology has

reduced the time taken for Al Noor to achieve a return to operations in the event of an outage from a period of hours to just minutes.

Al-Noor began deploying Avaya's fabric technology in 2014, based on the Virtual Services Platform 9000 core switch platform. Avaya SDN Fx offers a future-proof foundation for today's megatrends-network virtualization, cloud, mobility, and video-while simplifying the network and reducing operational costs. The company has been working with Avaya since 2008 and the entire group operates on Avaya's IP telephony solutions. Equipped with the latest and most advanced medical equipment, Al-Noor remains an innovator, always keen to introduce the latest diagnostic and treatment techniques. In 2009, Al-Noor was presented with the acclaimed Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award, Gold Category for its contribution to healthcare.

# SENEGALESE VILLAGES SWALLOWED BY THE SEA

**SAINT LOUIS, Senegal:** Behind the remains of washed-away fences, crumbling houses dot an expanse of the northern Senegalese coastline where a swollen river and an advancing sea are swallowing villages whole. The fishing community of Goxu Mbath is one of many districts in the city of Saint Louis, the former colonial capital of French west Africa that, little by little, is disappearing under water. "The waves surprised us at night. It was October 20. The water hit hard and knocked down walls," says Awa Sarr Fall, 68, outside her badly damaged ocean-front house. "We are calling for the help of the state and we're willing to move elsewhere."

The village is on the Langue de Barbarie, a densely populated spit of land that is home to nearly 120,000 people. Colorful dugout canoes are berthed on the sandy former peninsula, which protects the heart of the old colonial city from the Atlantic's fearsome breakers. An archipelago in the mouth of the Senegal River often referred to as the "Venice of Africa", St Louis is anchored precariously between the fast-flowing currents of the swollen waterway and the ocean. A 2008 UN-HABITAT report listed the city of 250,000, which is plagued by flooding during the rainy season when the river overflows, as the most vulnerable in Africa to rising sea levels.

The upheavals "are in part linked to climate change", but also "people have poorly designed their habitat space", says Pape Gombo Lo, a professor at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar. Named after Louis XIV, the UNESCO World Heritage site on the Mauritanian border was founded in 1659, becoming the first French settlement of l'Afrique Occidentale, trading in slaves.

Scientists say climate change is exacerbating the problem with increasingly heavy rain and a rise in the sea level. On a visit to Senegal in 2014, the UN special representative on disaster risk, Margareta Wahlstrom, expressed concern for the fate of coastal and riverside towns, with some mayors telling her their villages spent 10 months out of 12 underwater. "We want to move but we don't have the means. No authority has come to see us since the damage," says Abibatou Fall, another Goxu Mbath resident.

### Pessimism

In 2003, heavy rain in the drainage basin of the Senegal River alarmed the authorities who, fearing flooding, dug a new channel for the river water across the Langue de Barbarie. As the sea flooded into the river mouth the canal widened, from four meters at the outset to a gaping breach that is five kilometers (three miles) wide today. "The forecasts are pessimistic for the Langue de Barbarie," says Balla Gueye, the city official in charge of the environment.

"The whole coast of St Louis is threatened," he said, adding that the city council had called on the state for help. By way of response, the

government recently announced a breakwater construction project that will cost one billion CFA francs (\$1.6 million, 1.5 million euros).

The island community of Doune Baba Dieye, situated about ten minutes by motorized canoe from the mouth of the river, was the first casualty in St Louis. "The water has engulfed the island and the people are gone," said the former village chief, Ameth Sene Diagne.

enough money to build a new house further inland.

"We do not want it but in this country when you do not have a university degree, no one listens to you." The nearby village of Keur Bernard was also deserted and others including Pilote Barre are threatened with extinction, according to experts. The breach has also cost lives. Fishermen who use the canal to go to sea are



SAINT-LOUIS, Senegal : A picture taken in Saint-Louis du Senegal shows the remains of houses in the Gokhou Mbathe district that were abandoned because of the approaching sea. —AFP photos



SAINT-LOUIS, Senegal : A picture shows wave breakers to protect houses in the Gokhou Mbathe district against the approaching sea.

### Shipwrecked

Diagne and his 800 neighbors had made their living from the precious mullet, sardines, bonga and tilapia that once thrived in the mangroves but disappeared after the salt water of the Atlantic began encroaching into the river. Diagne, a father of 16 children from two wives, was the last to flee when the sea claimed his village in 2012. "All this is due to the breach," says Diagne, one of the lucky ones who had

sometimes shipwrecked on sandbanks, says El Hadji Boubacar Dia, a local environmental official, estimating at nearly 200 the number of people killed since 2003. Sea turtles and migratory birds are also at grave risk from the loss of habitat. The results of a government study are expected by the end of the year "to see what to do with the breach, to close it or stabilize it," says Moussa Fall, head of the Langue de Barbarie national park. —AFP

## FLIES, WASPS, BEETLES ARE IMPORTANT POLLINATORS TOO

**MIAMI:** Bees are declining worldwide but other insects are just as important for pollinating certain major crops and may be more resilient to environmental changes, scientists said Monday. The study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, a peer-reviewed US journal, was based on 39 field studies from five different continents. Researchers found that flies, butterflies, moths, beetles, wasps, ants and thrips visit provide, on average, 39 percent of visits to crop flowers.

And crops such as mangoes, custard apples, kiwi fruit, coffee and canola depend on non-bee pollinators, said the study led by Australian researchers. Therefore, farmers who use pesticides that spare bees but kill other insects might be making a mistake, they argued. "We are trying to get the message out there to use scientific findings such as these to promote a change in agricultural practices," said co-author Margie Mayfield, a plant ecologist at the University of Queensland. "The global reliance on honeybees for pollination is a risky strategy given the

threats to the health of managed honeybee populations due to pests and diseases such as Varroa mites and colony collapse disorder," Mayfield added.

"Non-bee insects are an insurance against bee population declines." Until now, little research has focused on the role of non-bee pollinators in the multi-billion dollar agriculture industry. But lead author Romina Rader from the University of New England, Armidale, said the team discovered that non-bee pollinators were crucial to the ecosystem, performing anywhere from 25 to 50 per cent of the total number of flower visits. "Although non-bees were less effective pollinators than bees per flower visit, they provided slightly more visits," Rader said. "These two factors compensated for each other, resulting in pollination services similar to bees." Non-bee pollinators were also found to be less sensitive to habitat fragmentation than bees, offering even more reason to protect them in the future, the authors said. —AFP

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The officials pose for a group photo at the ceremony. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## AL-QURAIN AUTOMOTIVE, ROBERT BOSCH GMBH CELEBRATE 50-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

**A**l-Qurain Automotive Company, a subsidiary of Abdulaziz Al-Ali Al-Mutawa Group of Companies, recently held a celebratory event to mark 50 years of partnership with Robert Bosch GmbH in the Kuwaiti market.

Present for the event were Ahmed Abdulaziz Al-Mutawa, Managing Director and Chairman of Al-Qurain Automotive, along with representatives from the Federal

Republic of Germany to Kuwait - His Excellency Eugen Wollfarth, Ambassador, and Bernd Ganter, Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Economic Section - Steven Young, President Robert Bosch Turkey and Middle East; Volker Bishcoff, General Manager Robert Bosch Middle East; Delegates from Robert Bosch Middle East and a long list of local Bosch dealers and employees.

In a speech, Ahmed extended his apprecia-

tion for the tremendous support provided by Bosch over the decades before thanking all those who played a role in the success of the partnership. "I wish to express my thanks to all Bosch employees, past and present, who have directly, by way of visits and interactions or indirectly by way of inventing, producing and shipping the products, helped us achieve this success in our 50 years of cooperation," stated Ahmed. He added that the partnership

between Al-Qurain Automotive and Bosch GmbH exemplifies the positive long-term economic relations between Kuwait and Germany.

Al-Qurain Automotive represents Bosch in Kuwait on two business fronts; Bosch Automotive Aftersales and Bosch Power Tools. The Bosch service center facility, located in the Shuwaikh area, provides European-grade automotive service and spare parts support to premium car owners. Separately on the Bosch

Power Tools front, Al-Qurain Automotive operates a vast distribution network servicing several resellers who supply a large portion of Kuwait's thriving construction and Oil industry. Founded in 1886, Robert Bosch GmbH is a well-established and innovative German business group operating in sectors such as Industrial Technology, Consumer Goods, Energy and Building Technology and Mobility Solutions.



Group photo for AUK President Dr Nizar Hamzeh; Dean and the recognized faculty members.

## AUK HOLDS FACULTY RECOGNITION EVENING

**T**he American University of Kuwait (AUK) organized its annual Faculty Recognition Evening to celebrate the accomplishments attained by its significant faculty members. The event was held at the Marina Hotel Six Palms restaurant and was attended by Her Excellency Nabeela Abdulla Al-Mulla, Former Honorary Member of the AUK Board of Trustees, Former Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brussels, Luxembourg, and the European Union, and Representative to NATO; Samer Khanachet, Group Chief Operating Officer at KIPCO and AUK Board Member; Robert Drolet, Senior Vice President, Technology and Media at KIPCO and Chair, CBE Advisory Board at AUK; in addition to the AUK President and Faculty members.

AUK President, Professor Dr Nizar Hamzeh welcomed the faculty members and guests to the Recognition Evening that was prepared in their honor. During his opening remarks, President Hamzeh said, "We are here tonight to celebrate accomplishment. Not accomplishment that is expected as an institutional ritual only, but accomplishment against a standard that we have set for ourselves as a University. A standard that reflects our values and what we expect of ourselves in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service," he added, "The honored faculty have distin-

guished themselves not only by their excellent scholarship records but also by understanding the balance between teaching and research and that the convergence of the two would lead to excellence."

This year, AUK recognized 65 faculty members whose research and creative work produced 4 books, 3 book chapters, 30 journal articles, 2 book reviews, 42 conference papers, and 8 exhibitions/designs/ performances. AUK also recognized 7 faculty members who received external grants, patents and fellowships.

### The faculty members who contributed to these successes are:

Dr Abid Vali, Dr Inas Mahfouz, Dr Mounib Khanafer, Dr Ahmad Rabaa'i, Dr Issam Damaj, Dr Muath Eleswed, Dr Ali Aljamal, Dr James Lambert, Dr Nicholas Scull, Dr Ali El Saheli, Dr James Rose, Dr Pellegrino Luciano, Dr Aly Mansour, Dr Jibran Yousafzai, Dr Rafiqul Bhuyan, Dr Amir Zeid, Dr Jin Wang, Dr Ralph Palliam, Dr Andrei Zavaliy, Dr John Russell, Dr Raymond Farrin, Dr Angelica DeAngelis, Dr Juliet Dinkha, Dr Rosalind Buckton Tucker, Dr Antonia Stamos, Dr Karim Jallad, Dr Seyed Ebrahim Esmaeli, Dr Arby Ted Siraki, Dr Kathleen Downs, Ramy Khair, Dr Ashraf

Zaher, Dr Kathy Nixon, Scott Berlin, Dr Athmar Al-Salem, Dr Lisa Urkevich, William Andersen, Dr Ayman Haddad, Dr Malek Mohammad, Yacoub Aljaffery, Dr Bashar Zogheib, Dr Marcelline Fusilier, Agnieszka Fajga, Benjamin Crace, Dr Mark Speece, Emanuela Buscemi, Dr Detlef Hummes, Dr Mohamed Cader, Ghaidaa Mohamad, Dr Fatima Shibly, Dr Mohamed Satti, Hanan Arnous, Dr George Bauer, Dr Mohammad Akbar, Lisa Waite Trago, Dr George Irani, Dr Mohammed Alsawafa, Maaly Jarrah, Dr Ghazi Nassir, Dr Mohammed El-Abd, Marcella Kulchitsky, Dr Gholam Vatandoust, Dr Mohsen Bagnied, Maryam Hosseinnia, Rima Ezzeddine, Viviana Peiretti.

AUK congratulated all those recognized this evening, and pledged to support faculty who continue to reach for scholarly and professional distinction. The American University of Kuwait (AUK) is an independent, private, equal opportunity, and co-educational liberal arts institution of higher education. The educational, cultural and administrative structure, methods and standards of AUK are based on the American model of higher learning. The language of instruction is English. More information on the American University of Kuwait can be found at [www.auk.edu.kw](http://www.auk.edu.kw)



**K**uwait Journalists Association's (KJA) official Faisal Al-Qanaie released the 2016 issue of his special calendar which commemorates martyr Sheikh Fahad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. This year's special edition includes rare pictures of the late Sheikh Fahad.

## TSC ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 'TRAVEL PACKAGES' CAMPAIGN

**T**he Sultan Center (TSC), announced the winners of its 'Travel Packages' campaign for TSC Rewards Card holders that ran from October 22nd till 31st across all TSC Sultan stores.



Any TSC Rewards card holder automatically gets one draw for every KD 15 spent to participate in the raffle draw to win one of eleven travel packages for couple including five stars hotels accommodations in several destinations (Istanbul, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Beirut, Amman, Sharm El-Sheik).

Commenting on the campaign, Mohammed Jalloul - TSC Rewards Program Manager at TSC said: "It was indeed an exciting promotional campaign just in time for the coming holidays travel season and our customers were excited to take part in this promotion, and have an opportunity to win free travel tickets with accommodations for couple".

TSC is committed to providing our TSC Reward cards customers with ongoing promotions that are exclusively designed to cater to our customers, while providing a unique shopping experience". Jalloul stated. Campaign's winners are: Ramesh Kumar, Tracey Walters Walters, Shah Jehan Ali, Chae Mun Ko, Latefa Al-Khamis, Pierre Bechara Nassar, Greg Louie, Saoud Abdullah Hmoud, Ashwaq Essa Al Attal, Jasper Sumawang Farolan and Emad Mouris Abeed. TSC congratulates all winners and participants in this year's Travel Packages Promotion.



## EMBASSY OF INDONESIA HOLDS CULTURAL EVENT

**I**n conjunction with the monthly International Women Groups meeting, Madame Marita Razak hosted the cultural event held at the ambassador's residence on 30 November 2015. In this occasion several performances and activities were displayed, namely: Cooking demonstration of Indonesian cuisines by Indonesian chefs who work at Regency Kuwait, angklung ensemble, traditional fashion show and mini bazaar of Indonesian products. The event was attended by spouses of ambassadors, members of diplomatic corps as well as the interested parties. This also is part of Embassy of Indonesia activities to promote more about Indonesia in Kuwait.





## MEN'S VOICE AND CHORAL SOCIETY BRINGS JERRY AMALDEV TO KUWAIT

The maestro of Malayalam Film and Christian devotional songs, Jerry Amaldev is arrived in Kuwait for the first time to grace the 15th anniversary of Men's voice and choral society. The choral group who blows the seasons trumpet every year is all set to perform their 15th Annual Christmas Concert "A Thrill of Hope" on the 4th December 2015 at 6.00 PM at the American International School,

Maidan Hawally. It is a grand moment of ecstasy for Men's Voice and Choral society as they are going to honor this great musician of all seasons, who has won the hearts of every Malayalam music lovers through his super hit songs in Manjil virinjil poolal has established his footprints on the sands of music for the past 35 years where only a few has tread. He has composed many a melodic strains to about 75

films and was thrice awarded the Kerala state best music director. Jerry Amaldev who will also lead few songs hosted by them.

In addition to this seasons joy Men's voice and choral society will present a 100 member Mass choir to sing Halleluiah Chorus and some hits of Jerry Amaldev. The group would also release a musical CD of Men's voice and choral society

during the event. The choral group is trained under the choir master Ajith Babu and Fredrick Nirmal. All musical lovers are cordially invited to attend this program. For more details visit <https://www.facebook.com/mensvoicekuwait> or [info@mensvoicekuwait.org](mailto:info@mensvoicekuwait.org) Mobile: 94064465, 99656419, 66044819. For Free transportation please contact: 66253034, 97805360

**Men's Voice & Choral Society - Kuwait**

**BRINGS**

Famous Indian Music Director, Composer, Best Music Director Award Winner & Choral Music Director of SING, INDIA with JERRY AMALDEV (ShwJA)

**Jerry Amaldev**

To **KUWAIT** for the **FIRST TIME.....**

To participate in **Men's Voice & Choral Society's 15th Annual Music Concert**

**a thrill of HOPE**

To become a sponsor of this Music Concert, Please contact 94064465, 99656419, 66044819 Email: [info@mensvoicekuwait.org](mailto:info@mensvoicekuwait.org)

Friday, 4th December, 2015 @ 6.00 PM  
American International School (AIS)  
Maidan Hawally, Kuwait

Also featuring:  
Men's Voice & Choral Society & 100+ Member Choir Performing Songs composed & conducted by Jerry Amaldev

Find us On Facebook [www.facebook.com/mensvoicekuwait](https://www.facebook.com/mensvoicekuwait)

**Men's Voice KUWAIT**



## GUST LAUNCHES GULF FINANCIAL CENTER

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) launched the Gulf Financial Center (GFC) during the Second Annual Economics and Finance Day. The Gulf Financial Center is an initiative developed and supported by the Amiri Diwan, Gulf University for Science and Technology and a group of leading companies from the private sector. The event was held in the presence

of Dr Yousef Al-Ebraheem, Advisor to the Amiri Diwan, Adel Al-Majed Vice Chairman and CEO of Boubyan Bank, and Faisal Al-Bader, Chairman of Kuwait Economic Society. Highlighting the great importance of educational institutions as an engine of economic growth and development, Professor Donald Bates, GUST's President said "We continually find new ways to enhance the GUST experience by organizing events that bring together great minds and present unique viewpoints to the benefit of our community".

Dr Sulaiman Al-Abduljader, (GFC Director) introduced the Gulf Financial Center as one of the most advanced academic applied financial center in the Middle East. He stressed on the fact that it is the center's responsibility to empower the young generation and enhance their knowledge and experience in financial literacy and igniting their entrepreneurial spirits and SME development to strengthen



their contribution to the country's transformation vision of becoming the region's financial center by 2035. He also highlighted the series of identified and carefully designed impact-driven programs that target academic curriculums, student active participation, community outreach and intellectual and social contributions. As well, the center's functions that involves Mentorship, Research/Publications, Trading Simulations, Active and Action-based Learning and Funding Ventures and Projects.

From that podium Dr Bates, Dr Al-Abduljader, Dr Al-Ebraheem, Al-Majed and Al-Bader walked to a stage that was created by the concept of the stock exchange ring bell and rang the bell of the GFC opening. Later, they were toured through the venue and introduced to the setup of high tech resources the center is equipped with in order to achieve the center's objectives.

The Economics and Finance Day is an annual activity established to help increase awareness among the GUST community about the importance of economics and finance in understanding the interdependent global economy of the twenty-first century. GUST continues to build on its mission to become a knowledge-hub that benefits and engages students, academics, and the wider Kuwait community as a whole.

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## GULF BANK WELCOMED KU STUDENTS TO 'COFFEE BREAKS WITH RED'



Gulf Bank concluded its collaboration with Kuwait University's (KU) College of Business Administration's Accounting Club (ACC) to launch 'Coffee Breaks with Red'. The event took place at the university's Red student lounges for male students at the Shuwaikh campus on 30 November 2015 from 12 pm until 2 pm. 'Coffee Breaks with Red' was a special recruitment event for KU's male students, while Gulf Bank's Human Resources (HR) team discusses the available opportunities for fresh graduates at the Bank. Gulf Bank boasts 64% Kuwaiti workforce and is dedicated to increasing that number by employing the most talented graduates. In November last year, Gulf Bank had inaugurated the red student lounges at the Business and Administration College, one provided for male students and the other for

female students, which serve as study lounges as well as helping them to become familiar with the Bank's red account and other banking products and services. The Bank remains strongly committed to supporting youth events and initiatives and doing its part to help empower the next generation of Kuwaitis. Earlier this April, Gulf Bank had launched its new red program tailored for youth customers, including monthly cash draws and quarterly car draws. New red customers who open an account and transfer their allowance will be eligible to enter the monthly cash draw for a chance to win up to KD 1,500. In addition to the mega draw where a lucky customer will have the chance to win a Cadillac SRX, Gulf Bank has also partnered with ZAIN, where red customers are exclusively offered the latest smartphone

bundles or internet plans. The red account is designed for university and college students aged 15 to 25 years old. Amongst other benefits, account holders receive an ATM card and there is no deposit required to open the account or minimum balance charge. Gulf Bank will continue to reach out to youth through ongoing programs which provide encouragement and support during their education, and by providing practical, superior services and attractive promotions which are designed specifically for the younger generation. For further information about Gulf Bank's red account, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, or visit the bank's bilingual website at [www.e-gulfbank.com](http://www.e-gulfbank.com).







03:40 Auction Hunters  
04:05 Garage Gold  
04:30 Storage Hunters UK  
05:00 Americarna  
05:30 How It's Made  
06:00 Alaskan Bush People  
06:50 Desert Car Kings  
07:40 Fast N' Loud  
08:30 Auction Hunters  
08:55 Garage Gold  
09:20 Storage Hunters UK  
09:45 Americarna  
10:10 How It's Made  
10:35 Deadliest Catch  
11:25 Outback Truckers  
12:15 Manhunt With Joel Lambert  
13:05 Auction Hunters  
13:30 Garage Gold  
13:55 Storage Hunters UK  
14:20 Ice Lake Rebels: Winter Is Coming  
15:10 Desert Car Kings  
16:00 Fast N' Loud  
16:50 Americarna  
17:15 How It's Made  
17:40 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown  
18:30 Dual Survival  
19:20 Treasure Quest: Snake Island  
20:10 Property Wars  
20:35 Storage Hunters UK  
21:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown  
21:50 Boy To Man  
22:40 River Monsters  
23:30 Desert Car Kings



03:10 Cosmic Collisions  
04:00 Mythbusters  
04:48 NASA's Unexplained Files  
05:36 Home Factory  
06:00 Home Factory  
06:24 Cosmic Collisions  
07:12 Weird Connections  
07:36 Weird Connections  
08:00 Strangest Weather On Earth  
08:25 Strangest Weather On Earth  
08:50 Food Factory  
09:15 Food Factory  
09:40 How It's Made  
10:05 How It's Made  
10:30 NASA's Unexplained Files  
11:20 Primal Connections  
12:10 Cosmic Collisions  
13:00 Mythbusters  
13:50 Food Factory  
14:12 Food Factory  
14:35 Primal Connections  
15:20 Cosmic Collisions  
16:05 Weird Connections  
16:27 Weird Connections  
16:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
17:35 Nyc: Inside Out  
18:20 NASA's Unexplained Files  
19:05 Mythbusters  
19:50 Food Factory  
20:15 Food Factory  
20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
21:25 How It's Made  
21:50 How It's Made  
22:15 How The Universe Works  
23:00 Food Factory  
23:22 Food Factory  
23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?



03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:45 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Wolfblood  
04:35 Wolfblood  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Lollipop  
06:25 Hank Zipzer  
06:50 Girl Meets World  
07:10 H2O: Just Add Water  
07:40 H2O: Just Add Water  
08:05 Austin & Ally  
08:30 Austin & Ally  
08:55 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
09:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
09:45 Jessie  
10:10 Jessie  
10:35 Read It & Weep  
12:05 Phineas And Ferb  
12:20 Hank Zipzer  
12:45 I Didn't Do It  
13:10 I Didn't Do It  
13:35 Liv And Maddie  
14:00 Liv And Maddie  
14:30 H2O: Just Add Water  
14:55 First Class Chels  
15:20 Dog With A Blog  
15:45 Girl Meets World  
16:10 Violetta  
17:00 The Next Step  
17:25 Mako Mermaids  
17:50 Girl Meets World  
18:15 Dog With A Blog  
18:40 First Class Chels

19:05 H2O: Just Add Water  
19:30 Violetta  
20:20 The Next Step  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 Good Luck Charlie  
21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
22:25 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
22:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Wolfblood  
23:35 Wolfblood



03:05 Calimero  
03:20 Zou  
03:30 Loopedidoo  
03:45 Art Attack  
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 Calimero  
04:35 Zou  
04:45 Loopedidoo  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 Calimero  
05:50 Zou  
06:00 Loopedidoo  
06:15 Art Attack  
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:50 Calimero  
07:00 Zou  
07:20 Loopedidoo  
07:35 Art Attack  
08:00 Calimero  
08:10 Zou  
08:25 Limon And Oli  
08:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
09:05 Sofia The First  
09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
10:30 Doc McStuffins  
11:00 Sofia The First  
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
11:55 Miles From Tomorrow  
12:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
12:55 Loopedidoo  
13:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
13:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
14:00 Sofia The First  
14:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
14:45 Calimero  
15:00 Doc McStuffins  
15:30 Zou  
15:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
16:15 Sofia The First  
16:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
17:10 Aladdin  
17:40 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears  
18:10 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers  
18:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
18:55 Cars Toons  
19:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
19:30 Sofia The First  
19:55 Doc McStuffins  
20:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
20:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
21:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
21:35 Sofia The First  
22:00 Aladdin  
22:30 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears  
23:00 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers  
23:30 Lilo & Stitch



03:15 Escape Club  
04:10 E! Entertainment Special  
05:05 The E! True Hollywood Story  
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:50 Style Star  
08:20 Giuliana & Bill  
09:15 Giuliana & Bill  
10:15 Giuliana & Bill  
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
12:05 House Of DVF  
13:05 House Of DVF  
14:05 Fashion Bloggers  
14:30 Fashion Bloggers  
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
17:00 Giuliana & Bill  
18:00 House Of DVF  
22:30 WAGs  
20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up  
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
22:00 Dash Dolls  
23:00 Dash Dolls



03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Chopped  
07:00 Man Fire Food  
07:30 Man Fire Food

08:00 Chopped  
09:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
10:00 The Kitchen  
11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
11:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
12:00 Chopped  
13:00 Guy's Big Bite  
13:30 Guy's Big Bite  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
15:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
16:00 Chopped  
17:00 The Kitchen  
18:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy  
18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook  
19:00 Chopped  
20:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:00 Man Finds Food  
22:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
23:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
23:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin



03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
04:20 The Jonathan Ross Show  
05:15 Come Date With Me Australia  
05:45 Come Date With Me Australia  
06:10 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
06:40 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
07:05 Coronation Street  
07:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
08:25 The Jonathan Ross Show  
09:20 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover  
09:15 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
10:40 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
11:05 Dancing On Ice  
12:30 Come Date With Me Australia  
13:00 Come Date With Me Australia  
13:25 Emmerdale  
13:50 Coach Trip  
14:20 Coronation Street  
14:45 Coronation Street  
15:10 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
15:35 Seven Days With A...  
16:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
17:50 Come Date With Me Australia  
18:20 Come Date With Me Australia  
18:45 Coronation Street  
19:10 Coronation Street  
19:35 Seven Days With A...  
20:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
21:50 Coach Trip  
22:20 Coronation Street  
22:50 Coronation Street  
23:15 Emmerdale  
23:40 Dancing On Ice



03:50 Explorer  
04:45 Bad Trip  
05:40 Apocalypse: The Second World War  
06:35 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
07:30 Monster Fish  
08:25 Is It Real?  
09:20 Riding Britain's Railways  
10:15 Yukon River Run  
11:10 Air Crash Investigation  
12:05 Hard Time  
13:00 Is It Real?  
14:00 Monster Fish  
15:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
16:00 Yukon River Run  
17:00 Air Crash Investigation  
18:00 Modern Family  
19:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
20:00 Yukon River Run  
20:50 Air Crash Investigation  
21:40 Drugs Inc Compilations  
22:30 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey  
23:20 Apocalypse: The Second World War



03:30 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
03:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
04:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
04:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
05:10 Warrior Road Trip  
06:00 Baking Good, Baking Bad  
06:25 Meat v Veg  
06:50 Dream Cruises  
07:40 Baking Good, Baking Bad

08:05 The Food Files  
08:30 Hotel India  
09:20 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
09:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
10:10 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
10:35 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
11:00 Warrior Road Trip  
11:50 Baking Good, Baking Bad  
12:15 Meat v Veg  
12:40 Dream Cruises  
13:35 Food School  
14:00 The Food Files  
14:30 Hotel India  
15:25 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
15:50 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
16:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
16:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
17:15 Warrior Road Trip  
18:10 Food School  
18:35 Meat v Veg  
19:05 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
19:30 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
20:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
20:25 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
20:50 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
21:15 Warrior Road Trip  
22:05 Food School  
22:30 Meat v Veg  
22:55 Dream Cruises  
23:45 Food School



03:45 The Monster Project  
04:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
05:35 World's Deadliest: Jaws & Sins  
06:30 Dangerous Encounters  
07:25 The Monster Project  
08:20 The Incredible Dr. Pol  
09:15 Unlikely Animal Friends  
10:10 Expedition Wild  
11:05 Swamp Men  
12:00 Shark Men  
12:55 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
13:50 Dangerous Encounters  
14:45 World's Deadliest Animal Apocalypse  
15:40 The Incredible Dr. Pol  
16:35 Killer Dragons  
17:30 Expedition Wild  
18:25 Swamp Men  
19:20 World's Deadliest Animal Apocalypse  
20:10 The Incredible Dr. Pol  
21:00 Killer Dragons  
21:50 Expedition Wild  
22:40 Swamp Men  
23:30 Shark Men



03:00 Young & Hungry  
03:30 2 Broke Girls  
04:00 The Goldbergs  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Last Man Standing  
06:00 Community  
06:30 My Name Is Earl  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:00 The Goldbergs  
08:30 Last Man Standing  
09:00 Young & Hungry  
09:30 About A Boy  
10:00 Last Man On Earth  
10:30 My Name Is Earl  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
12:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter  
12:30 The Goldbergs  
13:00 Last Man Standing  
13:30 My Name Is Earl  
14:00 2 Broke Girls  
14:30 About A Boy  
15:00 Last Man On Earth  
15:30 Melissa & Joey  
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
16:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter  
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
18:00 Young & Hungry  
18:30 2 Broke Girls  
19:00 Modern Family  
19:30 Modern Family  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Hot In Cleveland  
21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
22:00 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll  
23:00 Comedians  
23:30 Getting On  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



03:00 The Leftovers  
04:00 Suits  
05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
06:00 Backstrom  
07:00 Suits  
08:00 Criminal Minds  
09:00 Quantico  
10:00 Backstrom  
11:00 Suits  
12:00 Emmerdale  
12:30 Coronation Street  
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
14:00 Criminal Minds

15:00 Backstrom  
16:00 Emmerdale  
16:30 Coronation Street  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Criminal Minds  
19:00 The Voice  
21:00 Blood & Oil  
22:00 Supergirl  
23:00 Scream Queens



03:00 Tyrant  
04:00 Better Call Saul  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 Emmerdale  
07:30 Coronation Street  
08:00 Royal Pains  
09:00 Royal Pains  
10:00 Emmerdale  
10:30 Coronation Street  
11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:00 Castle  
13:00 Bones  
14:00 Royal Pains  
15:00 Live Good Morning America  
17:00 Castle  
18:00 Bones  
19:00 Royal Pains  
20:00 Castle  
21:00 Bones  
22:00 Tyrant  
23:00 Better Call Saul



02:00 Cat Run 2  
03:00 Act Of Valor  
04:00 Toxin  
06:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga

08:00 Christmas Twister  
10:00 Getaway  
12:00 The Day The Earth Stood Still  
14:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga  
16:00 Stranded  
18:00 Bloodsport  
20:00 Getaway  
22:00 Aeon Flux



00:00 Act Of Valor-PG15  
02:00 Toxin-PG15  
04:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga-PG15  
06:00 Christmas Twister-PG15  
08:00 Getaway-PG15  
10:00 The Day The Earth Stood Still-PG15  
12:00 Northmen: A Viking Saga-PG15  
14:00 Stranded-PG15  
16:00 Bloodsport-PG15  
18:00 Getaway-PG15  
20:00 Aeon Flux-PG15  
22:00 Enemies Closer-PG15



00:00 Behaving Badly  
02:00 The Waterboy  
04:00 Shanghai Calling  
06:00 Big Fat Liar  
08:00 Mousehunt  
10:00 Shanghai Calling  
12:00 The Waterboy  
14:00 Simon Birch  
16:00 Mousehunt  
18:00 Tooth Fairy  
20:00 Cadillac Man  
22:00 The Inbetweeners Movie 2



03:00 The Wee Man-PG15  
05:00 My Last Day Without You-PG15  
07:00 Transcendence-PG15  
09:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15  
11:00 My Last Day Without You-PG15  
13:00 Breathless-PG15  
15:00 Transcendence-PG15  
17:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15  
19:00 Two Men In Town-PG15  
21:00 Middle Of Nowhere-PG15  
23:00 Before Midnight-18



03:15 Inescapable  
05:00 The Butler  
07:15 See Girl Run  
09:00 Julie And Julia  
11:00 The Butler  
13:15 Diana  
15:15 Next Goal Wins  
17:00 Julie And Julia  
19:00 Gattaca  
21:00 What Dreams May Come  
23:00 Gainsbourg: A Heroic Life



03:00 Alexander And The Terrible... Very Bad Day-PG  
04:45 Great Expectations-PG15  
07:00 The Boxtrolls-PG  
09:00 Breathe In-PG15  
10:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy-PG15

13:00 A Christmas Wish-PG15  
15:00 Automata-PG15  
17:00 Breathe In-PG15  
19:00 Dracula Untold-PG15  
21:00 Stonehearth Asylum-PG15  
23:00 The Wedding Ringer-18



04:15 Back To The Sea  
06:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie  
08:00 Mamma Moo And Crow  
09:45 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
11:15 Ghatotkach - Master Of Magic  
13:00 Jelly T  
14:30 Tiny Heroes  
16:00 Earth To Echo  
18:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
20:00 Columbus In The Last Journey  
22:00 Tiny Heroes  
23:30 Earth To Echo



04:00 Maleficent-PG  
05:45 Million Dollar Arm-PG15  
08:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier-PG15  
10:30 Hellboy: Sword Of Storms-PG  
12:00 Godzilla-PG15  
14:15 Fatal Instinct-PG15  
16:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier-PG15  
18:30 Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit-PG15  
20:30 Lone Survivor-PG15  
22:45 Black Rock-18



07:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
07:25 Supa Strikas  
08:15 K.C Undercover  
08:40 Lab Rats  
09:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
09:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
10:00 Annedroids  
10:30 Phineas And Ferb  
10:55 Rocket Monkeys  
11:20 Boyster  
11:45 Super Matrak  
12:40 Mighty Med  
13:05 Marvel Avengers Assemble  
13:30 Supa Strikas  
14:00 Kickin' It  
14:25 Pokemon: XY  
14:50 Phineas And Ferb  
15:15 Rocket Monkeys  
16:10 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
16:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:35 Kirby Buckets  
17:00 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
17:25 K.C Undercover  
17:55 Supa Strikas  
18:20 Lab Rats  
18:45 Mighty Med  
19:10 Annedroids  
19:40 Kickin' It  
20:05 K.C Undercover  
20:30 Supa Strikas  
20:55 Lab Rats  
21:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
21:50 Kickin' It  
22:15 Mighty Med  
22:40 Phineas And Ferb  
23:05 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
23:30 Phineas And Ferb  
00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA



Duplex  
Cannon For Cordoba  
Saved!  
Apache  
One Summer Love  
Bound For Glory  
Big Screen  
Brannigan  
The Adventures Of Buckaroo Banzai  
American Rhapsody  
Death Rides A Horse  
Impromptu  
Hurly Burly



Gator Boys  
Call Of The Wildman  
Call Of The Wildman  
Bondi Vet  
Tanekd  
Ten Deadliest Snakes  
Gator Boys  
Treehouse Masters  
Gangland Killers  
Call Of The Wildman  
Call Of The Wildman  
Glory Hounds  
Treehouse Masters  
Tanekd  
Ten Rescuers  
Dog Rescuers  
Bondi Vet  
Bondi Vet  
Ten Deadliest Snakes  
Treehouse Masters  
Tanekd  
Gangland Killers  
Monster Croc Invasion  
Biggest And Baddest  
Tanekd  
Shamwari: A Wild Life  
Shamwari: A Wild Life  
Treehouse Masters  
Biggest And Baddest  
Whale Wars

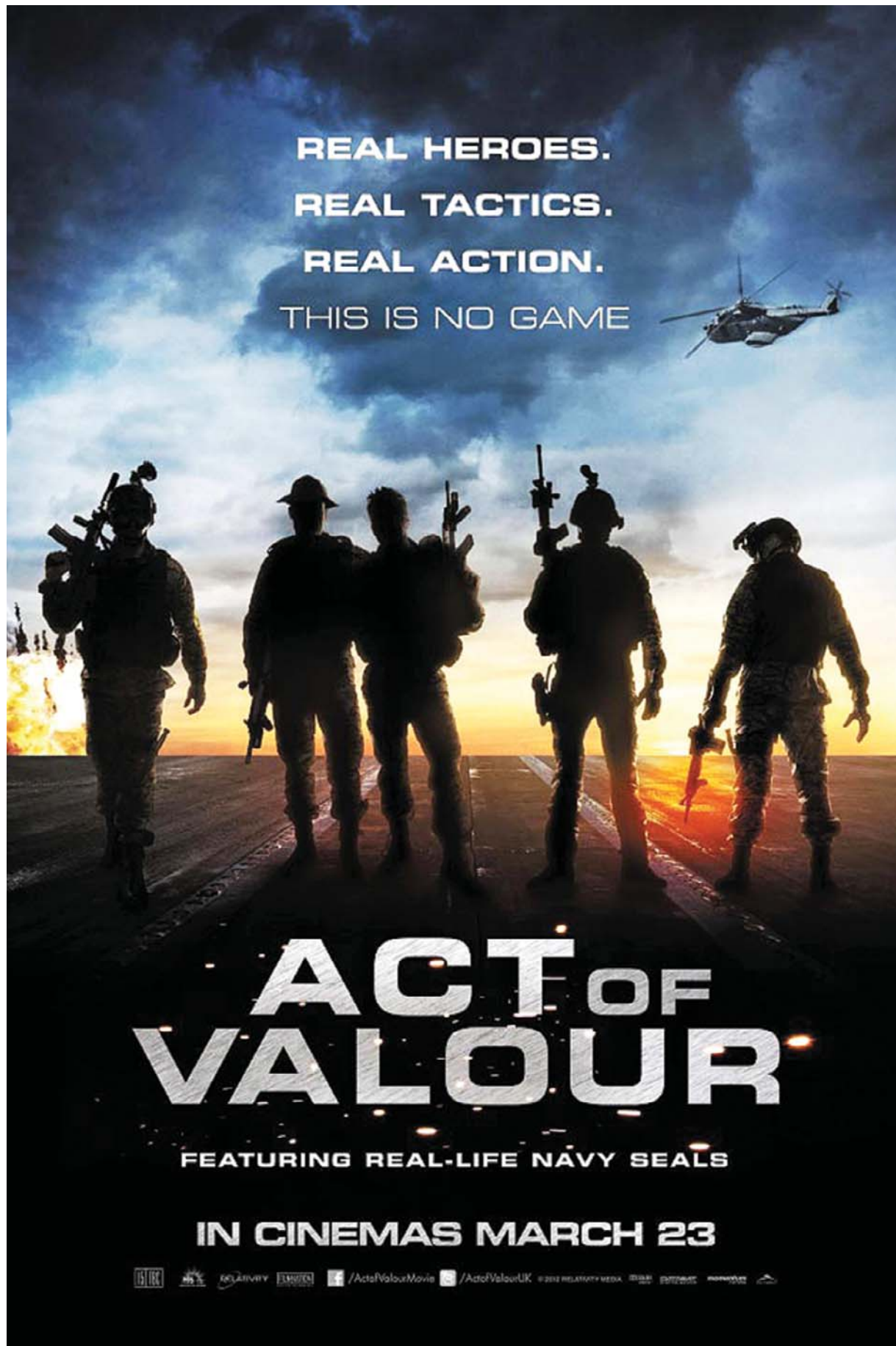


entertainment

Eastenders  
Upstairs Downstairs  
The Paradise  
The Paradise  
Friday Night Dinner  
The Cafe  
Only Fools And Horses  
Teletubbies  
The Green Balloon Club  
Gigglibiz  
Teletubbies  
The Green Balloon Club  
Gigglibiz  
Woolly & Tig  
The Weakest Link  
My Hero  
Doctors  
Eastenders  
Upstairs Downstairs  
Outcasts  
The Weakest Link  
Blackadder II  
My Hero  
Upstairs Downstairs  
Outcasts  
Blackadder II  
My Hero  
Doctors  
Eastenders  
The Weakest Link  
Blackadder II



GETAWAY ON OSN MOVIES ACTION



ACT OF VALOR ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION



# CLASSIFIEDS



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (26/11/2015 TO 02/12/2015)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b> MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY CREED MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY THE FORGOTTEN	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:30 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM	BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY	6:00 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM	BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE THE FORGOTTEN THE FORGOTTEN	4:30 PM 6:45 PM 9:00 PM 11:15 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b> MISS YOU ALREADY SPECTRE MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY SPECTRE	12:30 PM 2:30 PM 5:30 PM 7:45 PM 10:00 PM 12:15 AM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b> THE FORGOTTEN CREED CREED THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 CREED CREED	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 4:15 PM 7:00 PM 9:45 PM 12:30 AM	TAMASHA-Hindi TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TAMASHA-Hindi TALES OF HALLOWEEN	1:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM	<b>AVENUES-3</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:15 PM 3:15 PM 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b> CREED CREED CREED CREED CREED	1:00 PM 3:45 PM 6:30 PM 9:15 PM 12:05 AM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b> BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE THU+SAT CREED NO THU+FRI+SAT BRIDGE OF SPIES BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE TAMASHA-Hindi BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	11:45 AM 11:30 AM 11:30 AM 2:00 PM 4:45 PM 6:45 PM 9:30 PM 12:15 AM	<b>FANAR-3</b> TAMASHA-Hindi TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TAMASHA-Hindi TALES OF HALLOWEEN	1:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM	<b>AVENUES-4</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES MISS YOU ALREADY PREM RATAN DHAN PAYO-Hindi MISS YOU ALREADY BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:30 PM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 6:45 PM 9:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	11:45 AM 2:45 PM 5:45 PM 8:45 PM 11:45 PM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY BRIDGE OF SPIES MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY	11:30 AM 2:30 PM 4:45 PM 7:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:15 AM	<b>FANAR-4</b> THE FORGOTTEN CREED CREED CREED CREED	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 4:15 PM 7:00 PM 9:45 PM 12:30 AM	<b>AVENUES-5</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES MISS YOU ALREADY PREM RATAN DHAN PAYO-Hindi MISS YOU ALREADY BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:30 PM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 6:00 PM 9:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b> MISS YOU ALREADY PREM RATAN DHAN PAYO-Hindi BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE TAMASHA-Hindi MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:15 AM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES THE FORGOTTEN SIZE ZERO-Telugu TAMASHA-Hindi TAMASHA-Hindi BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:45 PM 1:30 PM 3:45 PM 3:45 PM 6:45 PM 9:45 PM 12:30 AM	<b>MARINA-1</b> MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2	12:30 PM 2:45 PM 5:00 PM 7:45 PM 10:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>360°- 1</b> CREED CREED CREED CREED CREED	11:30 AM 2:30 PM 5:30 PM 8:30 PM 11:30 PM	<b>PLAZA</b> TAMASHA-Hindi ANARKALI-Malayalam INJI IDUPPAZHAGI-Tamil THU+FRI+MON CREED NO THU+FRI+MON	3:45 PM 6:45 PM 9:45 PM 10:00 PM
<b>MUHALAB-3</b> BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE THU+SAT MISS YOU ALREADY NO THU+FRI+SAT CREED BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 CREED CREED	11:45 AM 11:45 AM 1:45 PM 4:30 PM 6:30 PM 9:15 PM 12:05 AM	<b>MARINA-2</b> CREED PINOCCHIO CREED CREED SPECTRE CREED	1:00 PM 1:45 PM 3:45 PM 6:30 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM	<b>360°- 2</b> KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM KNIGHTS OF BADASSDOM	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>LAILA</b> CREED BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE BRIDGE OF SPIES CREED	3:15 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:45 PM
<b>FANAR-1</b> SPECTRE THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 PREM RATAN DHAN PAYO-Hindi THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 SPECTRE	11:45 AM 2:45 PM 5:30 PM 8:45 PM 11:45 PM	<b>MARINA-3</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:15 PM 3:00 PM 5:00 PM 7:00 PM 9:45 PM 12:30 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b> MISS YOU ALREADY CREED CREED CREED CREED CREED	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 4:15 PM 7:00 PM 9:45 PM 12:30 AM	<b>AJIAL.1</b> ANARKALI-Malayalam ANARKALI-Malayalam ANARKALI-Malayalam	3:30 PM 6:30 PM 9:30 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b> MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM	<b>AVENUES-1</b> TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN ANARKALI-Malayalam INJI IDUPPAZHAGI-Tamil TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM 6:15 PM 8:30 PM 10:45 PM 1:00 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b> TALES OF HALLOWEEN BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY-PART 2 TALES OF HALLOWEEN TALES OF HALLOWEEN	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:45 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM	<b>AJIAL.2</b> AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY-Malayalam SIZE ZERO-Telugu AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY-Malayalam SIZE ZERO-Telugu AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY-Malayalam SIZE ZERO-Telugu	4:00 PM 4:00 PM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM 9:45 PM 9:45 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b> MISS YOU ALREADY MISS YOU ALREADY BLINKY BILL THE MOVIE	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM	<b>AVENUES-2</b> THE FORGOTTEN PINOCCHIO	12:00 PM 2:15 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b> BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES BRIDGE OF SPIES	12:00 PM 3:00 PM 6:00 PM 9:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>AJIAL.3</b> TAMASHA-Hindi TAMASHA-Hindi TAMASHA-Hindi	4:00 PM 6:45 PM
						<b>AJIAL.4</b> INJI IDUPPAZHAGI-Tamil INJI IDUPPAZHAGI-Tamil INJI IDUPPAZHAGI-Tamil	4:15 PM 6:45 PM 9:15 PM

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2-12-2015

Passport No. K2099492, 6 Tajmention, 3rd floor, Room-33, 1st Sankli Street, Byculia, Mumbai-8, have changed my name to Kaeed Zoher Hatimali Bhinderwala. (C 5088)

1-12-2015

### LOST

It is notified for the information that my original examination certificates, secondary, senior secondary examination of year 2012n2014, for X roll No. 8105518 n for XII roll No. 9103978 issued by SBSE has been actually lost. Name of the candidate Sana Amjad. Tel: 66472691. (C 5089)

2-12-2015

I, Kaeed Zoher Hatimali Bohra holder of Indian

## THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY FOR CIVIL INFORMATION

Automated enquiry  
about the Civil ID card is

1889988

EMERGENCY

112

### Prayer timings

Fajr: 05:01  
Shorook: 06:25  
Duhr: 11:37  
Asr: 14:30  
Maghrib: 16:49  
Isha: 18:11



## Flight Schedule

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

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation  
of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 2/12/2015				Departure Flights on Wednesday 2/12/2015			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	IRM	1186	Tehran	14:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	KAC	672	Dubai	14:45
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC	284	Dhaka	14:45
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	KAC	512	Mashhad	14:50
MSR	614	Cairo	01:20	KNE	462	Jeddah	14:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	GFA	221	Bahrain	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	KNE	472	Jeddah	15:05
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	OMA	645	Muscat	15:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	562	Amman	15:40
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:45
KKK	6507	Istanbul	02:50	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	JZR	787	Riyadh	16:25
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	FDB	051	Dubai	16:30
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	JZR	357	Mashhad	16:30
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:40
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	RJA	640	Amman	16:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	KAC	542	Cairo	16:55
AGY	680	Alexandria	04:30	SYR	341	Damascus	17:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
CLX	872	Luxembourg	05:45	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:40	KAC	502	Beirut	18:00
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	FDB	063	Dubai	18:05
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	KAC	786	Jeddah	18:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45
OMA	641	Muscat	07:55	KAC	1080	Doha	18:55
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	GFA	774	Riyadh	19:25
KAC	356	Kochi	08:20	KAC	166	Paris/Rome	19:30
KAC	202	Islamabad	08:25	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30	KAC	618	Doha	19:35
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	KAC	154	Istanbul	19:45
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	ETD	919	Abu Dhabi	19:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	KAC	792	Madinah	19:55
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	102	New York/London	19:55
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	KNE	480	Taif	20:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	FDB	061	Dubai	20:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	MSR	606	Luxor	20:45
IRA	665	Shiraz	10:40	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:50	JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:55
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:15	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
AGY	684	Sohag	11:35	ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
IRM	1188	Mashhad	12:25	JZR	125	Bahrain	22:00
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25
KAC	546	Alexandria	12:30	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:25
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	KAC	564	Amman	22:25
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	FDB	059	Dubai	22:30
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	BBC	044	Dhaka/Dammam	22:40
CLX	792	Luxembourg	13:15	JZR	239	Amman	23:05
IZG	4167	Mashhad	13:30	JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
YVE	826	Sanaa/Mukalla	13:30	JZR	555	Alexandria	23:25
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50	FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	THY	764	Istanbul	23:50
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55
				MSC	403	Asyut	23:55

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION



CROSSWORD 1097

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ACROSS

1. The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
4. Brightly colored carnivorous fish of western Atlantic and West Indies waters.
12. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
15. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
16. A resident of Arizona.
17. Tag the base runner to get him out.
18. Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
19. Not capable of movement or of being moved.
20. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
21. European weed naturalized in southwestern United States and Mexico having reddish decumbent stems with small fernlike leaves and small deep reddish-lavender flowers followed by slender fruits that stick straight up.
23. In a chatty loquacious manner.
25. Either extremity of something that has length.
28. An emotion experienced in anticipation of some specific pain or danger (usually accompanied by a desire to flee or fight).
29. The distinctive form in which a thing is made.
32. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
34. The eleventh month of the Hindu calendar.
37. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
40. A flat mass of ice (smaller than an ice field) floating at sea.
42. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
43. A female ballet dancer.
45. Support consisting of a place to rest the foot while ascending or descending a stairway.
47. Used of a single unit or thing.
50. A fatal disease of cattle that affects the central nervous system.
51. Leaf bugs.
54. Flightless New Zealand birds similar to gallinules.
56. Pasture grass of plains of South America and western North America.
59. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
60. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
63. Make attractive or lovable.
64. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
65. Too numerous to be counted.
67. Canadian hockey player (born 1948).
71. Appeal or request earnestly.
73. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
74. A public promotion of some product or service.
75. United States sculptor and architect whose public works include the memorial to veterans of the Vietnam War in Washington (born in 1959).
76. Tending to promote or preserve health.
80. An affirmative.
81. Often cultivated for the decorative foliage.
82. Having undesirable or negative qualities.

DOWN

1. Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
2. (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
3. The bottom of a shoe or boot.
4. A mound of stones piled up as a memorial or to mark a boundary or path.
5. (used of persons or the military) Characterized by having or bearing arms.
6. An instance or single occasion for some event.
7. Relating to or containing the azo radical.
8. An easy return of a tennis ball in a high arc.
9. Any division of quantity accepted as a standard of measurement or exchange.
10. (Middle Eastern) Small croquette of mashed chick peas or fava beans seasoned with sesame seeds.
11. Administer an oil or ointment to.
12. Small genus of evergreen trees of tropical America and western Africa.
13. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
14. In a competent capable manner.
22. Yellow-fever mosquitos.
24. A mountain in the Himalayas in northern India (25,450 feet high).
26. A French abbot.
27. Being ten more than one hundred forty.
30. Of or relating to Oman or its people.
31. A person who avoids the company or assistance of others.
33. A rounded thickly curled hairdo.
35. A Japanese woman trained to entertain men with conversation and singing and dancing.
36. Living quarters reserved for wives and concubines and female relatives in a Muslim household.
38. A circular segment of a curve.
39. A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.
41. A law passed by US Congress to prevent employees from being injured or contracting diseases in the course of their employment.
44. Of a stern or strict bearing or demeanor.
46. A port city in southwestern Iran.
48. Proboscis worms.
49. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
52. Region of western Asia Minor colonized by Ancient Greeks.
53. Advanced in years.
55. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
57. A verse line with a dactyl followed by a spondee or trochee.
58. Of or relating to the sea.
61. An Australian boomerang.
62. A particular environment or walk of life.
66. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
68. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
69. A Chadik language spoken south of Lake Chad.
70. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
72. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
77. A period of time containing 365 (or 366) days.
78. Not out.
79. A unit of information equal to one million (1,048,576) bytes.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You assume all will turn out well, even if the dynamics at work are in a state of flux. Your ability to maintain a positive attitude could be tested today when someone starts to throw shade on your best ideas. Others may even go so far as to accuse you of ignoring the interpersonal complexity of the present moment. Naturally, an optimistic outlook is a healthy one as long as you're not trying to avoid the truth. Leave your ego at the door and address the concerns of others with an open mind and an honest heart.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be looking at the exact same things you saw yesterday, but now you can imagine potential that wasn't previously there. Lovely Venus lights up your life by showing you the silver lining to every dark cloud. However, you could have such unrealistic expectations that you need to adjust your perspective today. Injecting a shot of reality into your thinking enables you to create middle ground. You will be free to get on with the work at hand once you clearly see both sides of the picture.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You swiftly lose track of the mundane world today as visions of distant horizons seem close enough to reach out and touch. You are ready to jump on your unicorn and fly off into the rainbow-filled sky, but you don't have a clue as to which way to go. Interdimensional travel is best done without maps; let your infamous curiosity take you on a memorable ride. Give yourself a few days for this mind-bending excursion. Allow your thoughts to gradually drift down to Earth before trying to make your dreams come true.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You could fool yourself into believing that you have all the support you need to accomplish your goals today. But working extra hard may not be sufficient to get the job done. To make matters worse, your coworkers might disappear when the heavy lifting begins. It's not that others are lazy; it's just that they can't visualize the possibilities you do now, so they remain unmotivated. Instead of attempting to convince everyone that they should join your cause, scale back your expectations for a day or two and then try again.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You exude a special kind of love that goes beyond your personal needs and your judgments of others. You can see people's shortcomings now, but you're happy to accept them as part of the package. You're also temporarily willing to work with the understanding that your desires are not being fully addressed. Although the novelty may fade, the truth is more satisfying than a dream based upon an impossible fantasy.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Try to finish as much as you can today, whether or not you are wrestling with a non-negotiable deadline. The cosmic energy patterns shift tonight, and you might not be able to continue your work on the same trajectory as before. The real danger is complacency; if you think that everything will turn out fine then you aren't as motivated now to take immediate action. Don't drop the ball; sometimes being your own taskmaster is the best way to reach your goals.

WORD SEARCH

FLORIDA WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

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

ALLIGATORS  
BUCCANEERS  
BUSCH GARDENS  
DAYTONA BEACH  
DISNEY WORLD

EPCOT CENTER  
EVERGLADES  
FT LAUDERDALE  
GOLF COURSES  
JACKSONVILLE

KEY WEST  
MIAMI BEACH  
ORANGE TREES  
ORLANDO  
PALM TREES

PENSACOLA  
ST PETERSBURG  
SUNSHINE STATE  
TALLAHASSEE  
TAMPA BAY

Daily SuDoku

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



Libra (September 23-October 22)

It's time to reveal your dreams to those around you especially if you've recently been absent, wandering around lost in your fantasies. This disclosure might seem like a risk, but keeping things to yourself will only lead to further isolation. At least, if you tell others what you need now, you are giving them a chance to deliver the goods. But there's still a strong possibility that you won't be satisfied with what you receive today. Nevertheless, learning to be grateful for life's little blessings is a gift in itself.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You might act as if you're at peace with whatever happens now. However, the truth is that your attractions are pulling you strongly in two opposing directions and you don't want to let go of either choice. Unfortunately, it's time to stop living under the illusion that you can follow divergent paths for much longer. You are at a fork in the road and you must make a final decision before moving forward. Calibrate your compass, say a little prayer, and trust your intuition to lead you down the right path.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You appear to have an extra dose of charm working in your favor today as flirtatious Venus hypnotizes loquacious Mercury in your sign. Although you might not feel any different now, people see you glowing in a more captivating light. The cosmos is offering you a window of opportunity, whether you use it or not is up to you. But don't push your luck too far; instant karma will get you if you overstep your boundaries. Love is best given when nothing is expected in return.



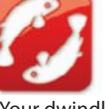
Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may be required to take charge at work today, even if you're not the boss. It's just that you can spot what needs to be done and, thankfully, everyone trusts your judgment. Don't let your power go to your head. Even if you must reject someone's impractical idea or cut people from your project, listen to the advice of others before making your final decision. Careful considerations, not impulsive actions, will ensure your success without compromising your integrity.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Although you've encountered resistance in your path recently, your true friends are finally riding to your rescue. Thankfully, their support arrives in the nick of time because you might seriously consider quitting today. You can still envision all the possibilities, but you just don't know if your well of energy is deep enough to sustain your efforts for much longer. At least, give your peeps a chance to change your mind before walking away. Their confidence in you acts as an elixir for your weary heart, leaving you refreshed and ready to take on the world.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your dwindling resources make it nearly impossible to start a new relationship or project now. A lack of time complicates scheduling activities with a friend or potential partner. Meanwhile, finances can also play into the equation since it's harder to justify an extravagance if you don't have enough cash to cover your basic expenses. The rewards are priceless if you can learn how to get by on less. Paradoxically, it's your belief in the ultimate abundance of the universe that will bring prosperity into your life.

Yesterday Solution

SOLUTION TO DISNEY MOVIES PUZZLE

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



For labor-related inquiries  
and complaints:  
**Call MSAL hotline 128**

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



## PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

## STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw

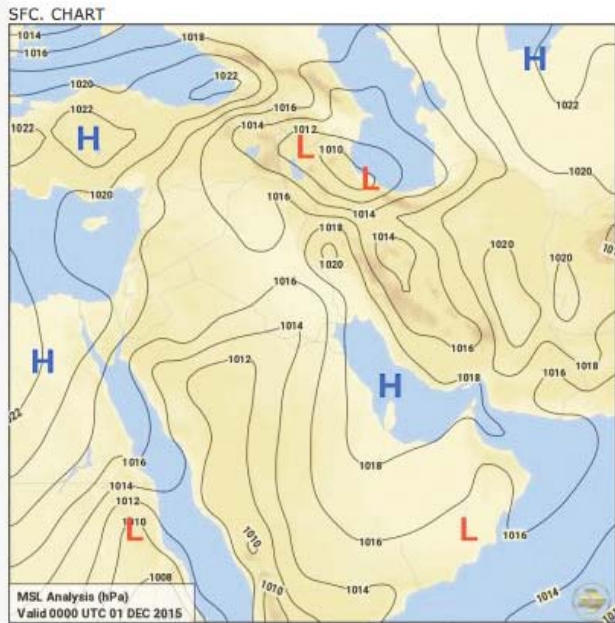


### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 01/12/2015-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

**MAX Temperature 29 °C**

**By Day :** Sunny with light to moderate southerly to south easterly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h  
**By Night :** Cool with light to moderate south easterly to southerly wind, with speed of 10 - 30 km/h



#### Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy + scattered rain	cloudy + scattered rain	sunny + raising dust	partly cloudy + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	15	16	13	09
Max Temp °C	29	22	20	16
Wind Direction	southerly to south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly	north westerly	north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	12 - 35	08 - 28	20 - 45	20 - 45

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

#### Warnings

**NO CURRENT WARNINGS**

#### Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	19	27
KUWAIT AIRPORT	15	29
ABDALY	14	29
BUBYAN	18	25
JAHRRA	15	30
FAILAKA ISLAND	18	26
SALMIYAH	20	25
AHMADI	19	26
JAL ALIYAH	14	29
QAROH ISLAND	23	29
UMM AL-MARADEM	22	28
NUWAISIB	13	29
WAFRA	15	30
MANAGISH	14	30
SALMY	15	30
MUTRIBA	15	29

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport		
Max Temp (°C)		26
Min Temp (°C)		11
Max Rel Hum (%)		94
Min Rel Hum (%)		32
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction		25 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR		0 mm

	Sunrise	06:24
	Sunset	16:49

#### Prayer Times

Fajr	05:01
Sunrise	06:24
Zuhr	11:37
Asr	14:30
Sunset	16:49
Isha	18:11

## INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Lesotho	00266
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Bahamas	001242	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahrain	00973	Martinique	00596
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritania	00222
Barbados	001246	Mauritius	00230
Belarus	00375	Mayotte	00269
Belgium	0032	Mexico	0052
Belize	00501	Micronesia	00691
Benin	00229	Moldova	00373
Bermuda	001441	Monaco	00377
Bhutan	00975	Mongolia	00976
Bolivia	00591	Montserrat	001664
Bosnia	00387	Morocco	00212
Botswana	00267	Mozambique	00258
Brazil	0055	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brunei	00673	Namibia	00264
Bulgaria	00359	Nepal	00977
Burkina	00226	Netherlands	0031
Burundi	00257	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Cambodia	00855	New Caledonia	00687
Cameroon	00237	New Zealand	0064
Canada	001	Nicaragua	00505
Cape Verde	00238	Nigar	00227
Cayman Islands	001345	Nigeria	00234
Central African	00236	Niue	00683
Chad	00235	Norfolk Island	00672
Chile	0056	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
China	0086	North Korea	00850
Colombia	0057	Norway	0047
Comoros	00269	Oman	00968
Congo	00242	Pakistan	0092
Cook Islands	00682	Palau	00680
Costa Rica	00506	Panama	00507
Croatia	00385	Papua New Guinea	00675
Cuba	0053	Paraguay	00595
Cyprus	00357	Peru	0051
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Philippines	0063
Czech Republic	00420	Poland	0048
Denmark	0045	Portugal	00351
Diego Garcia	00246	Puerto Rico	001787
Djibouti	00253	Qatar	00974
Dominica	001767	Romania	0040
Dominican Republic	001809	Russian Federation	007
Ecuador	00593	Rwanda	00250
Egypt	0020	Saint Helena	00290
El Salvador	00503	Saint Kitts	001869
England (UK)	0044	Saint Lucia	001758
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Pierre	00508
Eritrea	00291	Saint Vincent	001784
Estonia	00372	Samoa US	00684
Ethiopia	00251	Samoa West	00685
Falkland Islands	00500	San Marino	00378
Faroe Islands	00298	Sao Tone	00239
Fiji	00679	Saudi Arabia	00966
Finland	00358	Scotland (UK)	0044
France	0033	Senegal	00221
French Guiana	00594	Seychelles	00284
French Polynesia	00689	Sierra Leone	00232
Gabon	00241	Singapore	0065
Gambia	00220	Slovakia	00421
Georgia	00995	Slovenia	00386
Germany	0049	Solomon Islands	00677
Ghana	00233	Somalia	00252
Gibraltar	00350	South Africa	0027
Greece	0030	South Korea	0082
Greenland	00299	Spain	0034
Grenada	001473	Sri Lanka	0094
Guadeloupe	00590	Sudan	00249
Guam	001671	Suriname	00597
Guatemala	00502	Swaziland	00268
Guinea	00224	Sweden	0046
Guyana	00592	Switzerland	0041
Haiti	00509	Syria	00963
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Serbia	00381
Honduras	00504	Taiwan	00886
Hong Kong	00852	Tanzania	00255
Hungary	0036	Thailand	0066
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Toga	00228
Iceland	00354	Tonga	00676
India	0091	Tokelau	00690
Indian Ocean	00873	Trinidad	001868
Indonesia	0062	Tunisia	00216
Iran	0098	Turkey	0090
Iraq	00964	Tuvalu	00688
Ireland	00353	Uganda	00256
Italy	0039	Ukraine	00380
Ivory Coast	00225	United Arab Emirates	00976
Jamaica	001876	United Kingdom	0044
Japan	0081	Uruguay	00598
Jordan	00962	USA	001
Kazakhstan	007	Uzbekistan	00998
Kenya	00254	Vanuatu	00678
Kiribati	00686	Venezuela	00582
Kuwait	00965	Vietnam	0084
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Laos	00856	Virgin Islands US	001340
Latvia	00371	Wales (UK)	0044
Lebanon	00961	Yemen	00967
Liberia	00231	Yugoslavia	00381
Libya	00218	Zambia	00260
Lithuania	00370	Zimbabwe	00263



## PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists  
/Psychotherapists

Soor Center  
Tel: 2290-1677  
Fax: 2290 1688

info@soorcenter.com  
www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center  
25716707

Noor Clinic  
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677  
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677





A scene during the shooting of Pashto film 'Ma Chera Gharib Sara'.



Pakistani actor Shahid Khan (center) takes part in the filming of a scene with actresses.



Pakistani actor Shahid Khan (center) is filmed by a cameraman (right) during the shooting of Pashto film 'Ma Chera Gharib Sara' (Don't Pester the Poor) in Murree, some 65kms north of Islamabad. — AFP photos

## The romance and the Kalashnikov: Pashtun cinema reborn

Their tunics drenched in sweat, hundreds gather by the big screen, shouting and dancing their pride in being Pashtun amid clouds of hashish. In Pakistan's northwest, devastated by a decade of terrorism, this is how cinema is done now the local film industry is enjoying a renaissance. In the packed, concrete Arshad Cinema in Peshawar, the air conditioning has failed rendering the darkened room a kind of bathhouse filled with the steam of hashish smoke. No matter the spectators have fallen silent-gripped by a turning point in the new film they are watching: "Don't Pester the Poor".

On the screen, a slight silhouette enters a gun shop: the mother of the hero, devastated by the death of her husband, a victim of police torture. Facing the arms dealer, she lifts her veil, revealing the withered face of an elderly woman drunk on vengeance, and utters a command: "KA-LASH-NI-KOV!" The room explodes into manly roars of "Yeah!" and "Come on, mother!". The story is of vendetta, that established principle of the Pashtun tribal people living in the borderlands between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Back home, the woman hands the weapon to her son Gul Khan and orders him to avenge his father.

Last year there were two fatal attacks in other cinemas, likely the work of radical Islamists angered by the "perverse" movies, which appeared to have been the death knell for an industry already struggling against competition from the Internet and DVDs. But provincial Peshawar, the cradle of local cinema, has resisted on the first day of Eid El-Fitr, seven new Pashtun films were released. In this region, where half the population is illiterate and many only speak the local Pashto dialect, cinema has always been able to find an audience.

### Frenetic pop

Filed during the summer in the eastern city of Lahore, home of the Pakistan film industry known as "Lollywood", and in the hills of Murree near Islamabad, "Don't Pester the Poor" was edited in five weeks. At the Peshawar premiere, tickets were selling for 400 rupees (\$4), double the usual price, snapped up in an fair-like atmosphere of jovial masculinity. Faithful to the canon of the Pashtun genre, the hero, Gul Khan, is peaceful, honest and upright-but forced to rebel against oppression, a criminal elite and corrupt police.



Pakistani actor Shahid Khan adjusts his moustache.

Director Arshad Khan adds references to current events-like the death of Gul Khan's nephew in an attack at his school, inspired by the Taliban carnage that killed more than 130 children in Peshawar in late 2014. Romance is another prerequisite. There will of course no kiss between the hero and the beautiful nurse who makes his heart race, but their dances against a backdrop of frenzied local pop are suggestive.

The scene raises the temperature of the already-sweating cinema. Some hypnotized spectators start to dance, waving their arms. Others roll another joint. But Gul Khan sacrifices his romantic idyll on the altar of revenge, morphing into a sort of local Rambo who goes on a gun rampage in between making dark speeches of vengeance. He and his men eventually spray a convoy with rocket fire, the scene depicted with special effects worthy of a 1970s epic, including lasers transforming each 4X4 into a fireball. At the end of the film, which marches

through its plot without too much downtime, the hero impales his worst enemy, a corrupt deputy, after having amputated both his arms.

### Smoke and see girls

It is a far cry from the black and white films of the 1970s, works of art both prudish and poetic which canonized the Pashtun genre. The influence of war, including the conflict ravaging neighboring Afghanistan, has made it more violent; the influence of the West has made it sexier. This "vulgarity", according to the influential local conservatives, has driven away women and families, either because they are unwilling or banned by men from mingling with the working classes who attend the films.

"Scripts could be stronger, but producers make movies for their main audience: illiterate laborers who come to relax,

smoke and see action and girls," said Fakr ul Islam, a professor at the University of Peshawar. The film's message is "Give job opportunities to young people instead of pushing them to pick up guns. Otherwise you will get the wrong results," argues the star, Shahid Khan, who plays hero Gul and is brother to director Arshad. On leaving the cinema, many of the audience are satisfied. "The government should listen to the message and take care of us because we are poor!" said one spectator with a nascent mustache. But another youngster says the cinemas "should be closed because they show bad movies in a bad atmosphere for families". Pashto cinema may have survived the attacks, but it will take longer for a day at the movies to become a family activity once more. — AFP



Australian actor Luke Bracey poses for photographers during a red carpet event for the movie 'Point Break' in Beijing yesterday. — AP

## Luke Bracey says 'Point Break' remake bigger and better

Hollywood actor Luke Bracey said yesterday the remake of the action crime thriller "Point Break" is bigger and better because it's got extreme sports that weren't even invented when the original 1991 hit came out. Bracey is the new Johnny Utah, the FBI agent played by Keanu Reeves in the 1991 movie who goes undercover among a gang of surfers led by Patrick Swayze. In the remake that comes out in China on Friday and in the US on Christmas Day, extreme sports take center stage. Bracey's Utah infiltrates a group of thrill-seeking athletes suspected of being criminals. Action adventure feats include big-wave surfing, wingsuit flying, sheer-face snowboarding, free rock climbing and high-speed motorcycling.

The film's promoters are billing "Point Break" as the first Hollywood film to have its world premier in China, and Bracey, who attended the premiere in Beijing yesterday, said he expected it to be the start of a new trend in Hollywood movies. The movie also stars Venezuelan actor Edgar Ramirez as the athletes' leader Bodhi, Australian actress Teresa Palmer as a surfer, and British actor Ray Winstone. The original film directed by Kathryn Bigelow was a hit that grossed \$83.5 million worldwide - less than the remake's more than \$125 million budget.

Some stunts and sports in the latest movie "hadn't even been thought of when the original was made, in the original they were still paddling into waves," said Bracey. Wing suiting, the sport of flying through the air in a special suit, hadn't been conceived at that time and it was in the mid-1990s that people "started using jet skis just to catch waves that were bigger than they could paddle into." "So, to use a cliché, it's bigger, and it's better and it's just a huge movie in terms of how different it is from the original," he said.

### Young age

The Australian actor said that while the original was based in California, the remake has been "expanded across the world." It was filmed in nine countries in four continents, including scenes of wingsuit flying in Switzerland, free rock climbing in Venezuela, snowboarding in the Italian Alps and surfing in Hawaii. The world has become more interconnected since the last movie, so "what occurs on one side of the world doesn't just affect that side of the world these days, it affects the other side of the world in terms of a lot of things, be it geopolitical, economic, be it environmental," he said. "I think the sooner that humanity figures that out and comes to terms with that, we'll start working together even more."

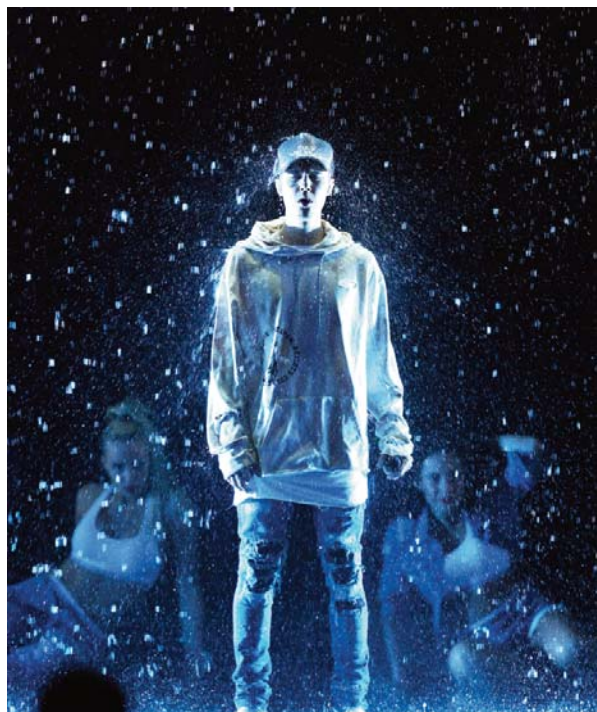
The movie's makers say they used world-class athletes rather than stunt doubles in the film, and Bracey, who grew up in Sydney and learned to surf from a young age, also took part in snowboarding and rock-climbing - including a sequence on Venezuela's Angel Falls, the world's tallest waterfall. "It's a kilometer above the Earth, and that had me hanging off Angel Falls looking down, telling them to turn on the cameras in case I fell so at least it was on camera," he said. The movie opens in China on Friday, three weeks before the US, showing how the Chinese movie-going market, on course to surpass the US as the biggest, is increasingly important to global blockbusters. Hollywood has been increasingly chasing the rapidly growing Chinese market as box office receipts fall at home. Box office revenue in China last year was \$4.9 billion, almost three times as much as 2010. — AP

## Drake is Spotify's most streamed artist of the year globally

Spotify users are clearly listening to Drake. The rapper was the most streamed artist of the year globally. Spotify announced its end-of-the-year list yesterday and said Drake earned 1.8 billion streams in 2015. Rihanna was the year's most streamed female performer with 1 billion streams, while Major Lazer's ubiquitous hit, "Lean On," was the most streamed song of the year with 540 million streams.

The Weeknd's breakout album, "Beauty Behind the Madness," was the most streamed album of the year, beating Drake's "If You're Reading This It's Too Late," which was No. 2. Ed Sheeran, who was the top streaming artist last year, was second behind Drake. The Weeknd, Maroon 5 and

Kanye West rounded out the top five. In the United States, Drake topped the list of most streamed artists, followed by the Weeknd, West, Sheeran and Eminem. Drake's "If You're Reading This" also topped the US albums list, while Fetty Wap's "Trap Queen" was the most streamed song in America. In Spotify's all-time lists, Sheeran is the most streamed act with more than 3 billion streams; Justin Bieber has the record for most streams in a day with 36 million streams; and Major Lazer's "Lean On," which features MO and DJ Snake, is the leading song. — AP



In this Sunday, Nov 22, 2015, file photo, Justin Bieber performs at the American Music Awards at the Microsoft Theater, in Los Angeles.



File photo shows Major Lazer arrive at the Cannes festival palace, to take part in the NRJ Music awards ceremony, in Cannes, southeastern France.



File photo shows Drake performs at the Austin City Limits Music Festival in Zilker Park in Austin, Texas.



In this Oct 24, 2015, file photo, Rihanna performs at the 2015 We Can Survive Concert at the Hollywood Bowl, in Los Angeles.





A special edition of a postal stamp issues in Beirut conference of the heads of the Arab kings and heads of 1959. — KUNA photos



A special edition of postal stamp on the occasion of The Charter of Arab League in 1945.



A Stamp celebrating the 100th anniversary of the beginning of parliamentary life in Lebanon.

# Postage stamps exhibition narrates Lebanon's history

The Central Bank of Lebanon launched an exhibition of more than 3,000 postage stamps narrating the history of Lebanon and captured prominent international and regional events. The exhibition offered stamps on 120 panels according to their historical sequence of issuance starting from the end of the Ottoman Empire rule in Lebanon between

1885 and 1918 and then the French military rule stage between 1918 and 1920.

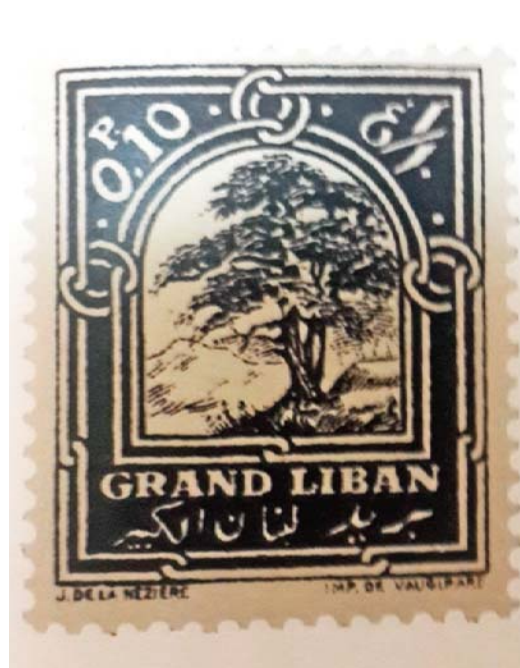
Moreover, the exhibition included stamps from The State of Greater Lebanon and the establishment of the Republic under the French mandate, while the stamps issued after Lebanon's independence in 1943 were divided in accordance with the heads of the Republic.

The stamps collection recorded major events including the United Nations Charter with the Arab League and the Arab Summit Conferences in Beirut in 1956 and 2002, in addition to stamps issued in cultural, artistic and sport occasions and stamps honoring historical figures from Lebanon and the world. — KUNA

A stamp dating to the year 1925.



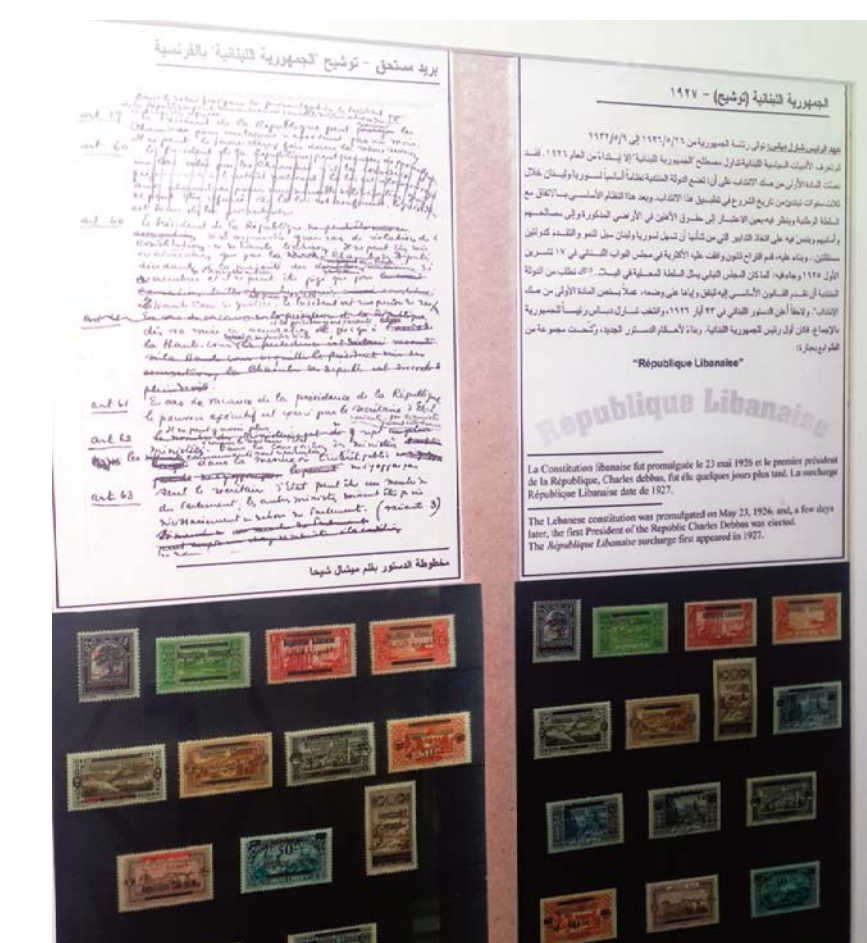
A stamp issued on the occasion of choosing Al-Quds as Capital of Arab Culture.



A stamp dating to the year 1925.



A stamp dating to the year 1925.



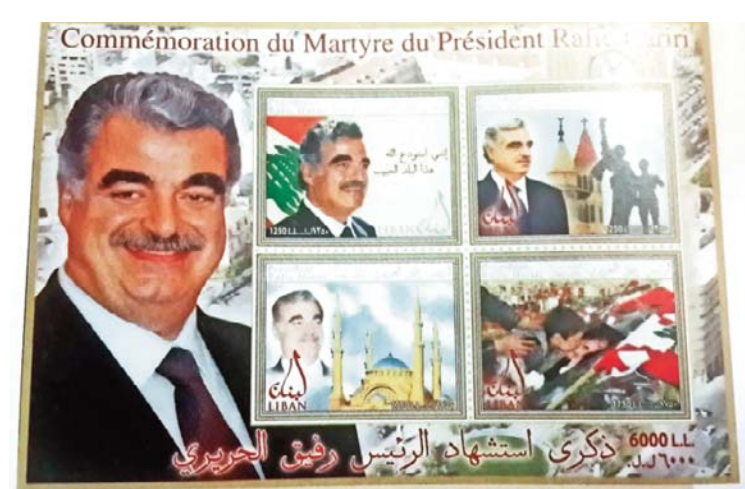
Collection of stamps from the French Mandate era.



A Stamp was issued in 1947 to support the rescue fund for Palestine based on the decision of the Arab League.



Stamp issued during the reign of former President Michel Suleiman.



An Honoring postage stamps in commemoration of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.



Postage stamp was issued on the anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter.



Stamps from the Ottoman Empire, the oldest dating back to 1885.

## Leibovitz shots of Ono, Schumer adorn 2016 Pirelli calendar

After reverting to type last year with scantily clad models in patent leather, Pirelli has chosen Annie Leibovitz to photograph women of all types and from across industry for its 2016 calendar. Tennis player Serena Williams, comedian Amy Schumer, artist Yoko Ono, singer Patti Smith, blogger Tavi Gevinson and model Natalia Vodianova all feature, some wearing more clothes than others.

The calendar, produced in book format, is traditionally pub-

lished in a limited run for top Pirelli clients. The 2016 edition will be its 43rd. "It was really Pirelli that wanted a change and I didn't believe them ... But then once I started taking these pictures it wasn't really like we were doing the Pirelli calendar," Leibovitz said at the calendar's London launch on Monday night. "We were just taking these portraits of incredible, smart, creative, great women and it just started," she told Reuters. Leibovitz also shot the 2000 Pirelli calendar. — Reuters







(From left) Liev Schreiber, Billy Crudup, Rachel McAdams, Mark Ruffalo, Brian d'Arcy James, John Slattery and Michael Keaton of 'Spotlight' attend the 25th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards at Cipriani Wall Street. — AP/AFP photos

# 'SPOTLIGHT' NAMED BEST FEATURE AT 2015 GOTHAM AWARDS

"Spotlight" was named best feature at the 2015 Gotham Awards, capping an evening of wins that also included the award for screenplay and a previously announced special jury prize for its acting ensemble. Actress Bel Powley beat out heavyweight competition including Cate Blanchett, Blythe Danner and Lily Tomlin to win the award for best actress, picking up the trophy for her work in "The Diary of a Teenage Girl," while Paul Dano snagged best actor for his work in "Love & Mercy." The Gothams also singled out "Mr Robot" as the winner of its award for breakthrough longform series.

The Gotham Awards mark the start of film industry's awards season with a Nov 30 ceremony in New York, honoring winners drawn from a pool of independent contenders including "The Diary of a Teenage Girl," which earned four nominations, as well as "Carol" and "Tangerine," which picked up three apiece. Hosted by the "Broad City" duo of Ilana Glazer and Abbi Jacobson, the evening also included the inaugural winners in new serialized content categories, which encompassed nominees from TV and digital.

"Spotlight" picked up the award for screenplay, snagging the trophy for Tom McCarthy, who also directed, and Josh Singer. The film went into the ceremony with one award already under its belt, having been the recipient of a previously announced special jury award for its acting ensemble, which includes Mark Ruffalo, Michael Keaton, Rachel McAdams, Liev Schreiber, John Slattery, Stanley Tucci, Billy Crudup and Brian D'Arcy James.

The whole crew showed up to collect the award. "To get one actor to give an ego-sublimated, selfless performance is an achievement," Ruffalo said. "To get a whole group of actors do it together is a frickin' miracle!" "Tangerine" won the audience award at the 2015 Gotham Awards, with the film snagging that award soon after its win for the breakthrough actor award for star Mya Taylor. Broadcast live streaming video on Ustream Taylor wasn't there to accept her award (she'd missed a flight), but "Tangerine" director Sean Baker spoke on behalf of the trans actress. "My hope is that the industry embraces Mya and embraces Kiki," he said from the podium, referring also to Taylor's co-star, Kitana Kiki Rodriguez. "They've also proven there's trans talent out there, it's just up to us to look, and up to us to cast."

Nadia Manzoor and Radhika Vaz's indie web series "Shugs and Fats" picked up the 2015 Gotham Award for breakthrough shortform series, becoming one of the first winners of the independent film awards' new honors for serialized content. Joshua Oppenheimer's "The Look of Silence" won the honor for best documentary.



Cast of Spotlight, named best feature, screenplay and acting ensemble, pose at the 2015 IFP Gotham Independent Film Awards.

Glazer and Jacobson kicked off the ceremony with a little gentle ribbing of the Gothams, which earned a few jabs for a lineup of nominees full of dark subject matter. "You know what's not too dark? The nominees for best actor and best actress," Jacobson cracked. "That's right. Eleven white people!" Glazer added.

The full list of 2015 nominees is below, with winners marked in bold. The list will update as the ceremony progresses.

**Best Feature**  
**Spotlight**  
Tom McCarthy, director; Michael Sugar, Steve Golin, Nicole Rocklin, Blye Pagan Faust, producers (Open Road Films)

**Best Documentary**  
**The Look of Silence**  
Joshua Oppenheimer, director; Signe Byrge Sorensen, producer (Drafthouse Films)

**Best Screenplay**  
**Spotlight**, Tom McCarthy and Josh Singer (Open Road Films)

**Best Actor**  
**Paul Dano** in Love & Mercy (Roadside Attractions, Lionsgate, and River Road Entertainment)

**Best Actress**  
**Bel Powley** in The Diary of a Teenage Girl (Sony Pictures Classics)

**Breakthrough Actor**  
**Mya Taylor** in Tangerine (Magnolia Pictures)  
The 2015 Best Actor/Best Actress nominating panel also voted to award a special Gotham Jury Award jointly to Mark Ruffalo, Michael Keaton, Rachel McAdams, Liev Schreiber, John Slattery, Stanley Tucci and Brian D'Arcy James for their ensemble work in Spotlight. (Open Road Films).

**Breakthrough Series - Long Form**  
"Mr Robot," Sam Esmail, Creator (USA Network)

**Breakthrough Series - Short Form**  
"Shugs and Fats," Nadia Manzoor and Radhika Vaz, Creator (ShugsandFats.TV). — Reuters



Sunrise Coigney, left, and Mark Ruffalo.



Presenter Glenn Close and best actor winner Paul Dano. Actors Brian d'Arcy James (left) and Michael Keaton.



Comedians Radhika Vaz (left) and Nadia Manzoor of "Shugs And Fats" winners of Breakthrough Series - Short Form are seen on stage.



Awards



Best actress winner Bel Powley.



Rachel McAdams



Actress Cynthia Nixon



Liev Schreiber



Talia Balsam and John Slattery



Actress Emmy Rossum speaks onstage.



Actress Glenn Close speaks onstage.



Actress Julianne Moore speaks onstage.



Comedians Abbi Jacobson (left) and Ilana Glazer speak onstage.



(From left) Sean Baker, Sarah Paulson and Michael Shannon speak onstage.



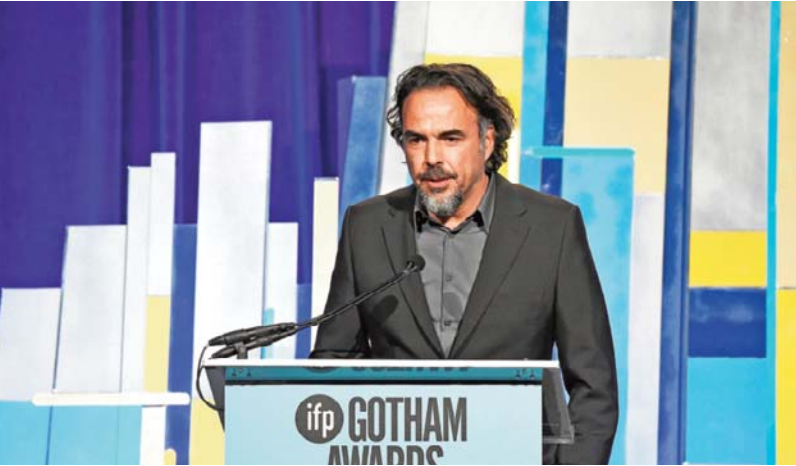
Director Chanelle Aponte Pearson.



Actress Helen Mirren speaks onstage.



Actor Robert De Niro speaks onstage.



Director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu speaks onstage.



Actress Dascha Polanco



Actress Lake Bell



Executive Director of IFP, Joana Vicente (left) and actress Sarah Paulson.



Presenters Sarah Paulson and Julianne Moore



Actors Olivia Cooke (left) and Christopher Abbott.



Actor Christian Slater



Actor Robert Redford



Actor John Turturro





In this Nov 25, 2015 photo provided by Donnie Walters, Walters' son Zeke snuggles up on Santa's lap during a visit to a shopping mall in Evansville, Ind. Walters said his son fell asleep waiting in line and when they go to Santa, he asked him not to wake the boy. Santa leaned back in the big green chair with Zeke and a copy of The Night Before Christmas posing for a photo that makes it look like the pair fell asleep. — AP

# Tokyo noodle shop awarded world's first ramen Michelin star

A tiny Tokyo noodle shop joined the ranks of the world's top restaurants yesterday as it scooped up a star from the respected Michelin Guide. The food bible gave a nod to nine-seat Tsuta-a first for a ramen eatery as Tokyo also kept its title as the world's culinary capital with the most Michelin-starred restaurants. Ramen is one of the most common fast foods in Japan and small shops serving the soup-and-noodle concoction can be found on almost every corner.

In recent years, the dish's popularity has exploded with restau-

rants popping up in major cities around the world, from Hong Kong to New York. Tsuta-which sells bowls from \$7 to \$9.75 apiece at its shop in the north Tokyo neighborhood of Sugamo-features gourmet offerings such as rosemary-flavored barbecued pork and soy sauce ramen with a hint of porcini mushroom.

"The most important thing is that customers like our ramen," Takatoshi Itami, one of the restaurant's cooks, said yesterday. "We have good reviews thanks to them-getting a star was not our priority." The guide, released yesterday, listed 27 other Tokyo ramen

shops as Bib Gourmand, a notch below its three-tiered star system. While sophisticated, high-end Japanese restaurants including sushi and tempura venues, are no strangers to Michelin stars, it is rare for casual eateries to receive the award. The latest Tokyo guide gave its coveted three-star rating to 13 restaurants, with two stars awarded to 51 restaurants and another 153 restaurants receiving one star. — AFP



Including noodle shop Tsuta's representative Yuki Onishi (front center), the heads of one-star restaurants selected by the new Michelin Guide Tokyo 2016 guidebook pose at a photo session.



Japanese restaurant Kohaku's chef Koji Koizumi (center) receives a trophy by Michelin guide International Director Michael Ellis after he was selected as the new three-star chef by the new Michelin Guide Tokyo 2016 guidebook during the publication announcement ceremony in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP photos

## High-tech Barbie stokes privacy fears

The new Barbie doll is "intelligent" and connected. Too connected for some privacy activists. The high-tech "Hello Barbie" doll unveiled earlier this year by toy giant Mattel and likely to be a holiday hit allows children to speak and get a response from their favorite toy. But to make that happen, conversations travel over Wi-Fi networks to Internet "cloud" servers that use artificial intelligence to deliver a personal reply.

For the activist group Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, the privacy risks of the intelligent Barbie outweigh the benefits. "Children confide in dolls and reveal intimate details about their lives, but Hello Barbie won't keep those secrets," the group said in a statement. "When Barbie's belt buckle is held down, everything your child says is transmitted to cloud servers, where it will be stored and analyzed by ToyTalk, Mattel's technology partner."

"Employees of ToyTalk and their partner corporations listen to recordings of children's conversations and ToyTalk won't even say who their partners are." The consumer group says the new Barbie could become a marketing tool even though the makers have pledged not to do that. And it argues that the high-tech toy could undermine creativity. "Children should use their own initiative and creativity to hold conversations with a doll, impart a personality and build their relationships," the statement said. "With Hello Barbie, Mattel and ToyTalk's programmers and algorithms drive the conversation, undermining the creative play that is so critical to children's development." To make matters worse, the organization says Hello Barbie "could be a tempting target for hackers, who could access data stored by your family on home devices and networks through the doll."

### #HellNoBarbie

The group is urging parents to shun the new doll and earlier this month launched an online campaign with the hashtag #HellNoBarbie. Mattel did not respond to requests for comment. But ToyTalk pointed in a blog post last week to the "many safety features that have been integrated" into the design of Hello Barbie. "We are not aware of anyone who has been able to access your WiFi passwords or your kid's audio data," the company said. ToyTalk says passwords are stored in a hardware-encrypted section of the doll, and no conversation history is stored on the toy. It added that stored data "is never used for advertising purposes" and that the doll has been certified as compliant with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. To address security concerns, Mattel and ToyTalk have launch a "bug bounty program," where security researchers are rewarded for responsibly disclosing potential vulnerabilities. —AFP

ToyTalk said it expects kids to warm to the new connect-



In this February 14, 2010 file photo, a woman photographs a wall of Barbie dolls in the Mattel display at the annual Toy Fair, in New York. — AP



US Army Pfc Daniel Hurst cuts down a Christmas tree at the John T Nieman Nursery, Saturday, Nov 28, 2015, in Hamilton, Ohio. The farm belonged to his grandfather where he works while on leave. The fourth generation family business is home to 60,000 trees that require regular maintenance throughout the year. The family began planting cut-your-own trees in 1987. — AP

## Letterman donating talk show memorabilia to Ball State

Comedian and Ball State University graduate David Letterman is donating memorabilia from his career in television to his alma mater. Ball State president Paul Ferguson made the announcement Monday night before Letterman spoke to a sold-out crowd at Emens Auditorium with filmmakers Spike Jonze and Bennett Miller. Ferguson said Letterman plans to donate Emmy Awards, a talk-show set, props and other items to create "The David Letterman Experience" at the Muncie school.

Letterman graduated from Ball State in 1969 and has since returned to the school for a lecture series with other celebrities. He shared the stage at Emens Auditorium with Oprah Winfrey in 2012, Rachel Maddow in 2011 and Twitter co-founder Biz Stone in 2010. — AP