

FREE

Kuwait Times Friday Times



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NO: 16717- Friday, December 4, 2015

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in Syria**

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Kuwait's Unsafe Children's Playgrounds

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Local Spotlight

EXPATS WITHOUT DRIVING LICENSES



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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An interior ministry decision to deport expats from Kuwait will apply to all those who are caught driving without a license and also against expats who change their professions to job categories that are not permitted to obtain a driving license. Expats falling into this category will be deported if caught, regardless of the validity of the license.

I do not understand the connection between a person who has a driving license and his work permit in Kuwait. I do not see the importance of the decision to deport someone from the country for driving without a license or changing his profession to a job that does not allow him/her to have a driving permit. I really do not get it. This issue is complex and incomprehensible.

We are all fully aware that public transport in Kuwait has many problems, and taxis are expensive for low-income people. Bus stops are not suitable at all in Kuwait's climate, whether in summer or winter, and not all companies offer private buses that employees can use easily and safely. Therefore, many people prefer to use a car to facilitate their daily needs.

Now, to get a driving license is no longer easy and has many requirements too. Some of the conditions set by the traffic department for expats to get a driving license include earning a monthly salary not less than KD 600, two years of residency in Kuwait and higher educational qualifications. This means only certain professions will be granted this permit.

It is possible to inflict a financial penalty on a person who drives without a license, for example, but I do not understand the need to deport him from the country because he held on to his license when he transferred from one job to another. Often these administrative procedures take time. Besides, why would someone move from a job that requires a vehicle to another that is not entitled to get a license? Will a teacher change jobs to become a clerk?

The MoI also linked driving licenses with the duration of the validity of residence. Expats will now try to change their job title, work profession and salary in order to match the requirements for obtaining a driving license.

Traffic solutions must not be at the expense of expats, but must look at upgrades and development in line with the increase in the number of cars, by spreading traffic awareness, stiffening penalties against violators, immediate impoundment of all dilapidated and old cars, imposition of tolls such as the fees in force in Europe, US and UAE, enforcement of laws on the use of mobile phones, improving all means of public transportation, encouraging the establishment of a private traffic radio dealing with traffic conditions and setting a limit to annual driving license issuance without the interference of wasta.

TRANSLATION

KUWAIT FUTURE IS SAFE, BRIGHT: AMIR

By Abdellatif Al-Duaij

I stopped by mother's house before going to meet HH the Amir at Bayan palace, because one of my sisters who was a strong opponent to the rise of domestic help costs was there. My mother commented on her saying that the "Kuwaiti house has three to four domestic helpers, but families eat outside, and their children eat delivery, while the subsidized food is eaten by the domestic helpers, then they do not work and complain about the high cost of maids".

When HH the Amir spoke proudly about the good living in Kuwait and availability of the living necessities, I jokingly objected and told him about my sister's complaint and my mother's comment. He said "the government pays more than four billion for subsidies" and upon leaving HH said "say hello to your sister and ask her to work".

HH was optimistic, confident and enthusiastic when he spoke about the domestic and regional situation. He started with calm about his health condition in the past two weeks saying that he went through a health condition but at the end "there is nothing but good" and that he enjoys a good health with the grace of Allah.

About the regional situation he spoke extensively and enthusiastically and confirmed that Kuwait is safe and



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

there is nothing to worry about, we are a peaceful country and we do not have aggression policies. We are confident that our surrounding countries appreciate and respect our wish for peace and stability. Therefore the situation is comforting, though he mentioned that there are some interventions of some countries in the affairs of others, and HH wished such intervention stops and for each side to worry about its own affairs.

About the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its policy in the region he said once again that what Affects Saudi Arabia

affects us. And when bringing the Iranian danger and Iranian threats to the gulf countries HH was keen to confirm that he personally is convinced the Iranian leadership will understand the Kuwaiti and gulf interests and will maintain the region's security as much as it does its own interests.

About domestic affairs, HH said there is nothing that warrants worry as Kuwait remains a country of security and stability and all basic priorities are available. We have many development projects that will be completed soon. Jaber hospital's building is complete, and the opera house will be ready, as well as the cultural centers such Abdallah Al-Salem and Jaber Al-Ahmad. He said there is a plan to build a modern entertainment city that replaces the current one which has been in existence for a long time and no longer meets the purpose of building it.

And more important the development in housing projects and caring for the Kuwaiti human being, particularly the youth, as well as development of education and sciences programs. This besides completing the bridges network soon and solve the traffic problem.

HH concluded the meeting by saying that Kuwait is in good situation and the future is better and what is required is a neutral vision of the situation. — Al-Qabas

FIRE SERVICES CONFERENCE



By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Services Directorate participated in the 4th conference and exhibition to manage documents and electronic archives, which was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel. The participation aims at exchanging expertise and achievements of KFSD with the government and private participants in various fields.



Just kiddin', seriously

PROUD MOMENT FOR KUWAITI FASHION DESIGNERS

By Sahar Moussa

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Kuwait has always been a place with amusing contradictions. It takes the extreme - of almost everything in life. Kuwait is an Islamic country where women are expected to wear hijab or abaya, like they do in Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Islamic countries where hijab (or abaya) is a must. A lot of locals and non-local women do wear the hijab or abaya of course, but at the same time if you hit the mall, you will be amazed seeing so many elegant women and stylish teenagers wearing the latest trends and brands.

Last week, 'Kuwait Fashion Week' - a dazzling haute couture fashion event for women took place. Twelve Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti fashion designers showcased their collections on stage in the presence of international media including many famous fashion magazines and TV stations. The designs were so daring, stylish, artistic and elegant and left a very positive impression on the international media.

The designs were a mixture of sophisticated and elegant dresses that embrace the modern designs and show the soul of Kuwaiti heritage. It was a bold move from the Kuwaiti designers to showcase their artistic abilities and to show the other part of Kuwait. A statement to prove that Kuwait have so much potential - highlighting its trademark in the fashion industry. It also proves that Kuwaiti makeup artists and designers need so much support because they have so much to give and show.

The event was well organized and didn't fall to the Arab cliched events. The event didn't start with the Master of Ceremony (MC) like we usually do in this part of the world. The catwalk was perfectly executed to meet international standards and the design of the podium was made to leave a message. The design made history as it ushers in a new page in the Kuwait's fashion industry. And all models were professional models from Paris. To add a class to the event, the first day featured a harp player who enralls the audience with a new brand of classical music. The event got livelier the second day as guitar and voila players mesmerized the audience with a mixture of Arabic, Latin and classical live music - a gesture that raised the bar so high.

What surprised everyone was that even in the middle of wars, conflicts, pessimism, negative stereotype in this Islamic region, something so beautiful, elegant, classy and fresh came out of it. I do salute the Kuwait authorities for making it possible here - defying all odds. It is time for Kuwait to show that it is not less than any of its neighboring countries when it comes to fashion and creativity.

Photo

of the day

KUWAIT: A traditional fishing dhow off the shores of Kuwait. —Kuna/Ahmad Sorour



Know more about loans

As part of our commitment to transparency in communications with our customers, Gulf Bank is pleased to share the requirements needed to obtain consumer loans and installment loans as applied by the Bank.

General Requirements:

- The required minimum net monthly salary (after deductions) is KD300
- The percentage of the total installments should not exceed 40% of the monthly net income for employees or 30% for pensioners
- Customers should review a copy of the loan contract two days before signing the final contract. The only exception from this reflection period (two-working days) shall be for customers who are requesting a consumer loan for medical purposes
- Required documents:
 - Valid 6-month bank statement
 - Valid salary certificate
 - Valid Civil ID and passport for expats
 - Valid receipts required reflecting the loan purpose mentioned in the contract

Requirements by Type of Loan:

| | Consumer loans | Installment loans |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Qualifying loan purposes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal consumable and durable goods (example: car) • Medical • Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of private house • Repair of private house (non-commercial) |
| Number of months to repay loan | • Up to 60 months | • Up to 180 months |
| Maximum amounts you may borrow | • Up to KD15,000 (or 15 times of the net monthly salary, whichever comes first) | • Up to KD70,000 |

For more information, please visit e-gulfbank.com/loans or contact our call center 1805805.

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News

in brief

Vice gang busted, forger arrested

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

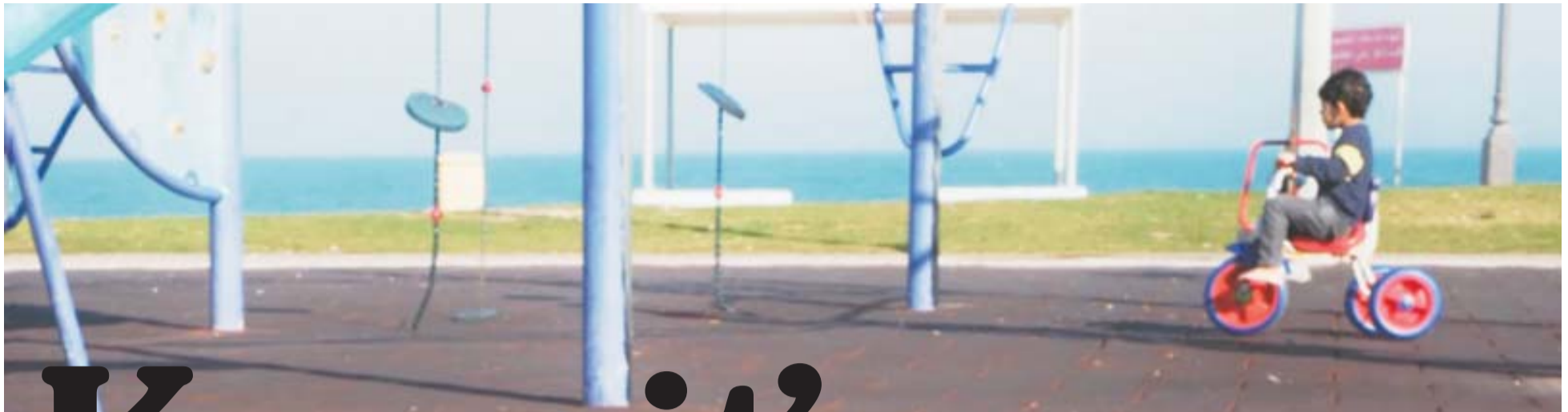
KUWAIT: Residency Affairs Detectives arrested an Ethiopian gang that urges domestic helpers to escape from their sponsors to become active in vice acts. Several flats used as brothels were raided and 12 persons were arrested. Four residency law violators were also arrested. The arrested were sent to concerned authorities.

Forger arrested

Criminal detectives arrested also arrested a Syrian who forged Syrian driver's license for some drivers in order to exchange them with Kuwaiti licenses. The man charged KD 300. An undercover source called him and he asked for KD 100 upfront, some papers and asked him a week later. The forger called the source and handed him the license and was arrested. He said he has partners in Turkey, who make the forged licenses. He said that he processed around 50 such transactions.

Medicine smuggler busted

Doha customs officers confiscated large quantities of subsidized medicine with an Iranian passenger, who was trying to smuggle it abroad.

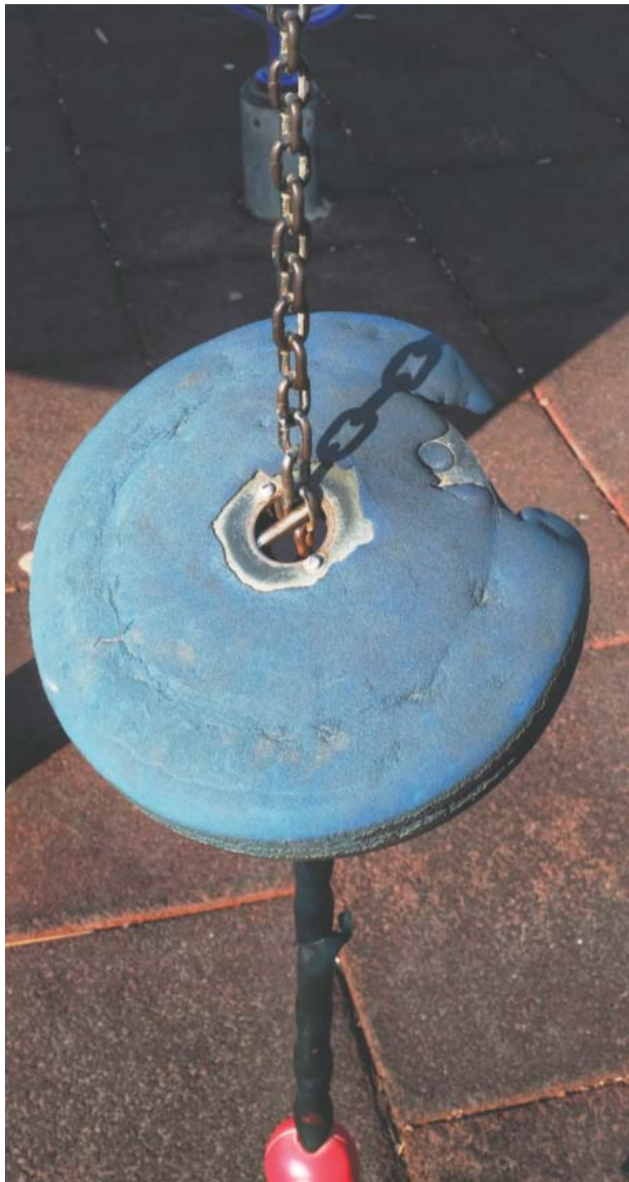


Kuwait's

vandalized
and neglected
playgrounds



KUWAIT: Images show damaged playground equipment in various areas of Kuwait including Anjafa Beach, Andalus Park in Kaifan, Marina Crescent park in Salmiya, Egaila Beach park and a park in Mishref. — Photos by Athoob Al Shuaibi



By Athoob A Al-Shuaibi

In Salmiya, nursery schoolchildren queue up to return to the bus after an unrewarding visit to a local playground filled with half a swing set and a broken jungle gym. This park could have been a neat place for kids to play and interact with each other, and for their parents to engage in friendly conversations as the weather turns cooler across the country.

But this was not to be. Vandalism and neglect affect all areas of Kuwait. Public spaces across Kuwait are routinely damaged, destroyed or neglected. Playgrounds which are suppose to be fun and safe places for children to enjoy instead have become dangerous hazards to be navigated with care. Across Kuwait, playgrounds in neighborhood parks are often broken or barren with swings damaged or hanging in part, playstructures have broken parts and nails and other joints torn, twisted or sticking up that pose a clear danger to any child playing on them.

Everyone is a part of this negligence, citizens and expats using these facilities as well as authorities that have failed to ensure proper maintenance, upkeep and cleanliness. These failures result in a waste of public money to maintain these facilities, because of those who are unwilling to enjoy or run them wisely.

The desired change will not happen overnight. The longer the damaged seesaws, slides and chin-up bars remain unfixed or not removed, chances are the number accidents and injuries will increase. The problem will also not be solved by employing more guards and setting up surveillance cameras. Preserving open spaces and public parks is a culture to be fostered, and these concepts must be planted from a young age.

With better weather conditions, many families want to get out of malls and enjoy the outdoors. The Municipality took a good step by promising to knock down iron and concrete park boundaries if they return the favor by fixing the recreational equipment in them.





ABK Hosts Long Service Recognition Awards for Information Technology Staff



The Information & Technology Division of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently honored employees who had completed between 5 and 15 years of service with the Bank.

Commenting on the long-standing commitment and value of their contribution to the development of the Bank, Somnath Menon, Chief Operating Officer took the opportunity to thank all staff receiving awards for

their loyalty and dedication to ABK.

Each department in the Bank hosts regular Long Service Awards for members of staff who have been with the bank for 5 years and longer. ABK has long enjoyed a reputation of strong staff retention and an event honoring staff that have spent 20 years and above was recently held at the Symphony Hotel where 77 staff members were recognized.

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR DESTINATION IN KUWAIT?

By Nawara Fattahova

Some people are well-oriented while others are completely lost when it comes to driving around Kuwait. Those who are constantly on the road due to their job quickly learn the short cuts and bystreets and are able to orient much better than those stuck in an office all day. Most people drive only from their home to work, drop the kids at school and do a bit of shopping. Kuwait can be a labyrinth of streets if you don't drive around a lot.

Some people who have been in Kuwait only for a couple of years can drive easily to most places around the country, while others who have been in Kuwait their whole lives still get lost in Salmiya or Kuwait City.

Disoriented

Maha, 35, arrived in Kuwait about 10 years ago. During this period, she has only worked at one place and only knows how to reach her office, home, gym and two shopping malls. "I don't have family here and not even friends outside my work, so I don't drive to visit anyone. The few friends I know either visit me at home or we meet at a mall or restaurant. I'm very bad at orienting myself even in my home country, and whenever I get lost, I call my friend whom I have named GPS, who gives me directions. Once I was going to a concert at the ice skating rink and I took a taxi rather than drive and get lost," she told Kuwait Times.

Nouf is the complete opposite of Maha, as she knows the way to all important places. Being a citizen is not the only reason for this, as she is orient herself anywhere she goes, even if for the first time. "My friends depend on me if we are trying to find a place. In Kuwait, not only my female friends, but even the guys have many times depended on me to show them the way. This doesn't mean I never get lost, but I never make the same mistake twice. I have a compass inside me that works to make me oriented. Sometimes I check the place if it is new to me on Google Maps just to know in which area it is and remember how to reach it. I don't like to stay at home, so I'm out

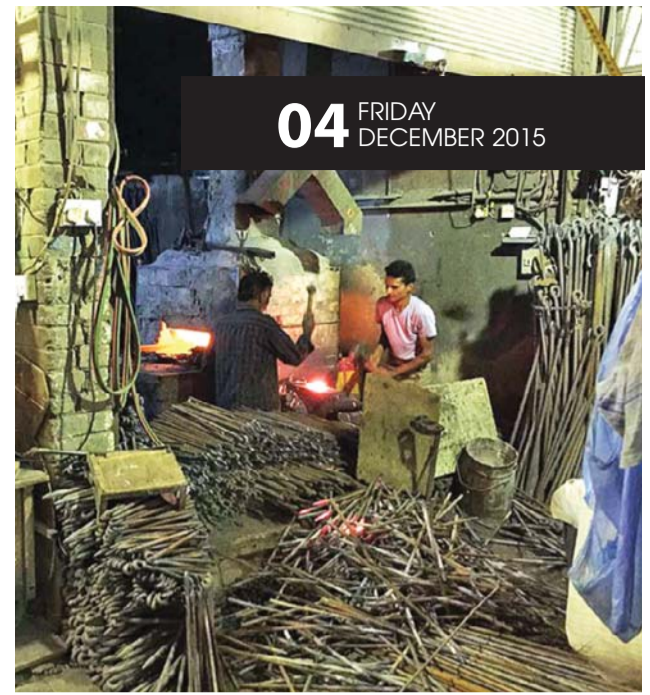
most of the time, which has improved my experience on the roads," she pointed out.

Taher, 52, works as a medical representative, and always has to visit new places, which has made him an experienced driver. "I'm living in Kuwait for the past 23 years, so I'm familiar with most areas in Kuwait, even the faraway ones, as I have to visit all polyclinics. But many new areas are built every few years and my job requires me to visit these areas. Usually, when I have to meet somebody in a new place, I ask him to send me the location, which is the easiest way. If there is no contact with the desired destination, then I check Google Maps in advance to get oriented with the direction, and then I scout the area myself," he noted.

Google Maps and Road Signs

Omar is not a frequent visitor to far-flung areas, and is mostly familiar with popular places. Google Maps is the main guide for him, then road signs. "I always use Google Maps if I don't know the place, and I have never experienced any problems or errors. If I have to find a place suddenly while driving and for any reason I cannot use Google Maps, then I follow the road signs, which are very useful and exact. I'm familiar with the old areas, especially those with markets and commercial activities including Salmiya, Hawally, Kuwaiti City and surrounding areas. But for faraway or new areas, I'm completely lost," he stated.

Nadeen, 40, depends on her husband or friends if she needs help with directions. "I know how to reach most shopping malls and markets as well as popular places and restaurants in almost all areas of Kuwait. But when it comes to new areas, I need help, so I ask my husband to take me there as he knows them better. If I am on the road and get lost, I call my friends who I expect may know the area better to help me, as I don't have navigation tools in my vehicle and I don't trust applications on the phone. More than once the map application led me to the wrong place. But my husband sometimes uses map applications if we go on a picnic deep in the desert," she explained.



Three-golden months finally arrive for Souq Safafeer

By Ben Garcia

Cooler weather means camping season in Kuwait and for all the businesses that provide camping supplies, a three month boon in sales. In Souq Safafeer, the music of hammer against corrugated tin combine with the voices of customers haggling for the best price to create a symphony of sound that signals the camping season swinging into high gear. "I always consider the next three months the busiest because I get a lot of bulk orders from companies and shops for 'dua' (brazier) people use in camp sites to boil water for either tea or coffee," explained Sher Ali, a Safafeer merchant originally from India. "I get many orders for 'dua' because it's a traditional kitchen tool here in Kuwait," he told this reporter.

"Yes we have three golden months in a year at least. Hamdulillah...it is the busiest months for us and the remaining months are slow but we could survive and my shop is still open," he said.

For the last 20 years Sher Ali has ran a shop in Souq Safafeer, the traditional iron and tin market in Sharq. With a history that can be traced to the early 1950s, Souq Safafeer remains a popular destination for desert campers and others seeking corrugated tin, iron or stainless steel products like braziers, storage lockers, barbeque stands, cooking pots or other items.

Nowadays, Souq Safafeer is visited either by people who are finally moving out of the country or people who wish to buy cheaper or affordably priced cargo baskets or boxes, a shop assistant said. The store is also frequented by various cargo companies and marketing personnel from the smallest to the biggest shopping or departmental stores in Kuwait, who negotiate a price for orders placed by their respective businesses. The store, which is situated away from the crowded area of Mubarakiya is still replete with noisy smashing, pounding or burning sounds that can be overheard in the street nearby.



News

in Brief

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE ARRESTED IN BRIBE PROBE

KUWAIT: Public funds detectives arrested a municipality employee who received a KD10,000 bribe he shared with a mandoob in exchange for issuing a specifications certificate, and it was discovered that they processed a similar transaction before that concerns a residential complex. Both were preparing for many other transactions. Acting Director of Criminal Detectives Brigadier Mohammad Al-Sharhan learned about the municipality employee's activities so an undercover agent was sent to him and asked him for a specs. certificate and agreed to pay him KD10,000 in exchange. The employee was arrested in the act. A security source said the mandoob, an Egyptian confessed that he has contacts with the municipality employee and that he processed a similar transaction before and received the same amount of money. The employee was also arrested and both sent to the prosecution.

Four charged with identity fraud, robbery

Hawally prosecutor ordered the arrest of four persons charged with storming expats residence claiming to be detectives then committing armed robbery. A security source said this order was made following a complaint from an expatriate woman from Madagascar and a man from India who told police the thieves stole seven phones and KD 600 before escaping.

Phone harasser charged

Hawally detectives sent a 24 year old Kuwaiti man to the prosecution after he confessed to inviting a girl to commit indecent acts over the phone. A Kuwaiti girl told Salwa police that a person called her over the phone urging her to commit the acts. He was arrested and confessed to the charges. In another incident, Hawally detectives arrested a citizen who beat another following a traffic dispute on Fahaheel highway.

Doctor questioned

A 32 year old Kuwaiti doctor was interrogated by police following a complaint by a Kuwaiti student in which he claimed the doctor beat him and smashed his mobile phone. The doctor denied the charge.

Goats stolen

A citizen accused an unknown person of cutting out the wire fence and breaking into his farm and stealing 12 rare goats. Jahra police went to the scene and began investigating the case.

Policeman arrested

A police officer arrested for beating three expatriates denied that he also insulted him. The officer confessed to beating three Egyptian expatriates, once in Jabriya and the second at Mubarak Hospital. The policeman's confessions were made following his arrest by Hawally detectives. The three Egyptians told Jabriya police that an unknown person beat and insulted them in Jabriya in July, then he beat them again inside Mubarak Hospital.

Company charged in forgery

Deputy Director General at the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources Hanadi Bastaki said the authority, at the instructions of Director General Faisal Al-Hasawi, referred a company to the public prosecution for forgery and manipulation of the import permit issued by PAAAFR by changing the names of some birds to monkeys. Bastaki said the company changed the names of some birds into monkeys and the shipment was confiscated in cooperation with the customs department following the discovery of the permit manipulation.

Woman's prison supervisor caught smuggling

A supervisor at the women's prison failed in smuggling cigarettes to a prisoner by hiding the package in a sensitive place of her body. A colleague of the supervisor discovered her before entering the wards. The supervisor was sent to Sulaiybiya police station and charged with violating prison rules and attempt to smuggle banned material inside the prison.

KOC SURVEYS KUWAIT BAY, BURGAN FIELD

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) announced yesterday launching wide-scale exploratory surveys at Burgan field and Kuwait Bay noting they will also include some residential areas in the country. Specialized teams started transfer of equipment to the locations mentioned. They are currently stationed at some residential areas, including Abdullah Al-Mubarak district, KOC official spokesman Saad Al-Azmi said.

The company is keen on ensuring safety

of these areas' residents, and the operations will not cause any disruption to regular lives of the inhabitants and their daily activities, said Al-Azmi, who's also KOC Executive Vice President for Administrative and Financial Affairs.

The equipment used in the project do not pose any danger to government or private facilities, and the KOC is always keen on abiding by global standards for health and safety especially in populated areas. — KUNA



Saad Al-Azmi, KOC official spokesman.

PEARL DIVING AND KUWAIT



KUWAIT: Hundreds of Kuwaiti youth reenact pearl diving through an annual heritage where they go to sea, live on traditional dhows and dive for pearls like their ancestors before them. — Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat

KUWAIT: The relationship between Kuwait and pearl diving is intertwined and connected with generations of Kuwaitis carrying on the legacy left by the forefathers of the countries. Pearl diving, in the old days, was the main source of income for many Kuwaitis despite the hardships faced by many divers in the vast wide ocean.

A typical day for the divers back then began with early morning (Fajr) prayers followed by a cup of tea or coffee and a small portion of dates. By sunrise, the sailors and divers begin their daily activity of pearl diving which continues between 12 hours to 16 depending on the season. To aid them during their work, pearl divers used to wear specific clothing to enable them to dive and swim properly and also provide minimal protection against jellyfish stings.

Unlike the high sophisticated technology developed for diving today, pearl divers back then had to endure tremendous amount of pressure while diving and also long expeditions which lasts for months all in order to feed their families back at home.

At sunset, the ship's captain, (Nukhatha) in Kuwaiti dialect, orders the divers to halt their activity to perform Maghreb prayers which is followed by a hefty meal of rice and fish followed by



Isha prayers and a much needed sleep. After a long much needed slumber, by the next day (Al-Saib), usually an individual in charge of pulling divers from the deep sea floor, and other sailors begin to open the oysters that have been salvaged in the previous day to find those precious pearls.

Though pearl diving has long been abandoned as the main source of livelihood in Kuwait, the younger generation keep the tradition alive by conducting several expeditions during summer season under supervision and sponsorship of the Kuwaiti authorities. — KUNA

USD FIRM AGAINST DINAR

KUWAIT: The USD stabilized against the Kuwaiti dinar yesterday trading at KD 0.304 where the euro dropped to KD 0.322, as compared to Wednesday's rates, the Central Bank of Kuwait said. The sterling pound dropped to KD 0.454 and Swiss franc rose to KD 0.298 while the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002. — KUNA

RESEARCH FOCUSES ON DUST POLLUTANTS

KUWAIT: A seminar was presented this week by Dr. Arafat Al-Shuaibi at the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Science, Kuwait University, summarizing his research from 2008 to 2015.

Al-Shuaibi presented six papers with contributions from Professors Fikry I. Khalaf, Michael J. Duane, Dr. Huda Mahmoud, Jassim Al-Awadhi and Dr. Abdullah Al-Zamel. The main objectives of the seminar were to elaborate on the credibility of researchers and whether they merit to be promoted, update



Dr. Arafat Al-Shuaibi during the seminar.

we provide the community with valuable knowledge in a specific discipline in geology," Al-Shuaibi said.

Significant findings in paper number 5

"Kuwait City was selected as a target to investigate the concentrations of heavy metals/pollutant elements in dust particle. Limited studies are available on heavy metals of urban dusts in Kuwait. No work, to our knowledge, has been undertaken to investigate the heavy metal accumulation in the dust fallouts in Kuwait City," Al-Shuaibi explained.

The purpose of the study is to provide a widespread picture of the current load of pollutants in the form of dust in one of the rapidly growing urban areas in the Arab Gulf countries. The researchers offered several suggestions for protecting Kuwait's environment

and reducing the levels of toxic elements in dust particles in Kuwait.

"Actions should be taken to reduce emission and studies are needed to assess the role of local and regional sources on long-term trace element enrichment of soils and its environmental impacts.

Vehicle emission control, extending the green belt around the city and leaving a protective plant cover on the soil surface of Kuwaiti deserts by restricting grazing could be vital management practices to reduce the input of trace elements, in the atmospheric dust, from human and natural sources," Dr Al-Shuaibi added.

Assistant professor Arafat Al-Shuaibi has a PhD from University of Texas at Dallas in Geosciences, Stratigraphy/Micropaleontology. He has over 12 publications was awarded in Kuwait and the United States thrice during his career.



ILLICIT DETERGENTS FACTORY BUSTED



By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Commerce and Industry Ministry said Jabriya Evening Inspection System uncovered an unlicensed detergents factory. Hundreds of bottles were labeled fraudulently with names of international brands. The ministry is working on procedures against selling such material in order to take the necessary legal action against them.

Eservices from Mol

The Interior Ministry will introduce new electronic services through which citizens can process their transactions through smart phone applications such as drivers license renewal, passports and domestic help residency renewals. The project is still under study at the Data System Center.

Camel slaughter circular

Acting Municipality Director Eng Ahmad Al-Manfouhi issued a circular for all officials to allow slaughter of camels in municipality slaughter houses, provided that all procedures are taken to guarantee correct procedures.



the faculty members, teaching assistants, students and those interested in ongoing research in the department and to propose solutions and recommendations for natural hazards and phenomena that might cause illness to humankind. "Seminars are one of the major cultural activities in the department as

CAMPUS FASHION SHOW STIRS CONTROVERSY

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Dr Mansour Al-Dhafiri asked Education and Higher Education Minister Dr Bader Al-Essa to form an investigation committee to look into reported violations at the Basic Education College.

Unconfirmed reports indicate that female students were involved in a 'fashion show' attended by male faculty and that they received extra credit for participation. It's unclear when the fashion show took place or under what circumstances. Mixed parties, dancing and fashion shows are banned on campus.



JAZEERA AIRWAYS REDUCES CAPITAL

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait Stock Exchange announced that shares of Jazeera Airways will be traded after the company reduces its capital starting Thursday Dec 10. It said that the share will be suspended on 9/12 at the company request until the Kuwait clearing company finishes updating the share holders records.

The extraordinary general assembly of Jazeera Airways decided earlier to reduce the company's capital, because it exceeds its needs, from KD 42 million to KD 20 million (52.38%). The reduction at (5.238 shares for each 10). The value of the shares that were reduced and cancelled which is 220 million shares for the company shareholders at the underwriting value of 100 fils per share at a total value of KD 22 million. It also decided to distribute cash profits to shareholders at 25.219085%.

SHIPS UNLOADING PERIOD TO BE MINIMIZED: PORTS AUTHORITY

KUWAIT: Kuwait Ports Authority (KPA) is keen on minimizing the waiting period of unloading ships that carry crusted rocks due to the increasing developmental projects in the country. KPA Director Sheikh Yousef Abdullah Al-Nasser said yesterday, that he discussed this decision in a meeting with the General Administration of Customs and the Cabinet's security committee.

The decision will allow ships' containers to be offloaded in a shorter amount of time by speeding the inspection process. He added the KPA has agreed with concerned governmental bodies to facilitate this process.

Shuaiba Port is the only port in the country that receives ships loaded with crusted rocks; these ships carried 2.1 million tons by the end of November, an increase of 84 percent of the same period of last year where it carried 1.1 million tons. Unloading process, meanwhile, has increased by 84 percent as well since November 2014. The swelling number of ships that carry rocks is due to the increasing amount of developmental projects that have been undergoing in the country. — KUNA

International

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015

New start for Syria refugee in Lebanon after online campaign

12



14 dead, 17 wounded in California shooting

15



Chennai city remains under water

17



LIMASSOL: Two British Tornados warplanes fly over the RAF Akrotiri, a British air base near coastal city of Limassol, Cyprus yesterday as they arrive from an airstrike against Islamic State group targets in Syria. (inset) A second pilot looks out from a British Tornado warplane. — AP



UK BOMBS SYRIAN OIL FIELD AFTER MPs VOTE

BRITISH PARLIAMENT AUTHORIZES AIR STRIKES ON IS

LONDON: Britain joined the US-led bombing campaign over Syria yesterday, hitting an oil field held by Islamic State jihadists just hours after a decisive parliamentary vote authorized air strikes.

Royal Air Force planes based in Cyprus carried out the "first offensive operation against Daesh terrorist targets inside Syria," the defense ministry said in a statement, using an alternative name for IS. The strikes with Paveway guided bombs were carried out by four Tornado fighter jets and focused on targets in the Omar oil field in eastern Syria, 30 miles (48 kilometres) from the Iraq border. The field "represents over 10 percent of their potential income from oil," the ministry statement said, adding: "Initial analysis of the operation indicates that the strikes were successful".

US President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande and Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman welcomed Britain's participation.

Momentum to join the strikes grew after last month's terror attack on Paris in which 130 people were killed and Hollande on Thursday hailed a "new response to the call for European solidarity".

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian news agencies there should be a single coalition to improve the "effectiveness" of the air strikes. Prime Minister David Cameron's government was backed by 397 lawmakers with 223 opposing the bombing in a vote late on Wednesday after a sometimes raucous debate lasting more than 10 hours.

A wide range of MPs including main opposition Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn spoke out against air strikes, condemning Cameron's "ill thought-out rush to war" and saying his proposals "simply do not stack up". But Labor's own chief foreign affairs spokesman Hilary Benn delivered an impassioned speech in favor of bombing, illustrating deep divisions in the party. In the end 66 of Labor's 231 MPs voted in favor, including 11 members of Corbyn's shadow cabinet.

Cameron also refused to apologize to opposition MPs for reportedly telling fellow Conservatives in a private meeting ahead of the vote that they should not side with "a bunch of terrorist sympathisers".

Knee-jerk reactions?
"Tornados at dawn" read Thursday's front-

page headline on Britain's top-selling paper, The Sun, while The Times ran with: "PM wins huge backing for war". Britain already has eight Tornado fighter jets plus drones involved in the US-led coalition striking IS targets in Iraq, operating out of RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. They will be joined by six Typhoon jets, which took off from RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland, and two more Tornado fighters, which took off from RAF Marham in southeast England.

But experts question how much Britain, which has been wary of joining foreign conflicts in recent years after unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, would add to the campaign against IS in Syria. "It will not make a big operational difference," said Professor Malcolm Chalmers of military think-tank the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

"It is important symbolically, useful operationally, but not transformative." Tim Eaton and Chris Phillips of foreign affairs think-tank Chatham House accused ministers of "knee-jerk reactions... not part of a well-considered long-term strategy to defeat and degrade IS".

'Plotting to kill us'
Cameron has pledged that Britain joining

air strikes on Syria will be matched by a major diplomatic push to resolve the crisis. The last Syria peace talks in Vienna held last month brought together 17 countries including Russia, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Iran. The talks set a fixed calendar for a ceasefire followed by a transitional government in six months and elections one year later. Syrian opposition figures have called this unrealistic. During the debate, the government also faced a string of questions about whether joining the international military action on Syria could make Britain more vulnerable to attacks from IS.

The last major attack on British soil was the July 7, 2005 bombings in which 52 people died. And in June this year, 30 Britons were among 38 tourists killed in an attack at a holiday resort in Tunisia claimed by IS. Officials say seven plots have been foiled by intelligence services in the last year alone.

Cameron said this figure showed it was right to take immediate action. "These terrorists are plotting to kill us and radicalize our children right now," he said. "They attack us because of who we are, not because of what we do". — AFP

DIVORCED SAUDI WOMEN TO GET ID CARDS

RIYADH: Female divorcees and widows in Saudi Arabia are set to get their own ID cards allowing them to act independently from men, local media reported on Thursday. The changes will allow women to register a child for school, access records and authorize medical procedures once their marriages have ended, the reports said. Without their own identity documents, divorced women in Saudi currently need

permission from their husbands or a court order to perform those tasks, the Arab News said.

No date has been set for the change, it said. Newspapers reported that 28 percent of Saudi marriages end in divorce and 65 percent of court cases in the kingdom involve family matters. Male-dominated Saudi Arabia allows men to take up to four wives according to Islamic law. Women face

a series of restrictions in the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom, the only country in the world where they are not allowed to drive.

They have to cover themselves in black from head-to-toe in public, and require permission from a man in their families to travel, work or marry. The sexes remain strictly segregated in public, with separate sections for single men and "families." There has however been a slow expansion of

some rights for women. This week more than 900 women are engaged in their inaugural campaigns for public office. The December 12 municipal ballot is also the first time women can vote for officials. The late king Abdullah in 2013 named women to the appointed Shura Council which advises the cabinet. And two years ago, a Saudi woman registered for the first time as a trainee lawyer.— AFP

ERDOGAN 'HAS PROOF' OF RUSSIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ISLAMIC STATE OIL TRADE

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday said Turkey had proof Russia was involved in illegal oil trade with the Islamic State (IS) group in Syria, countering "immoral" Russian allegations that his own family was importing oil from the jihadists. "We have the proof in our hands. We will reveal it to the world," Erdogan said in a televised address in Ankara. The Russian defense ministry on Wednesday accused Erdogan and his family of involvement in the illegal oil trade with IS jihadists after Ankara's downing of one of Moscow's warplanes last month which plunged the two countries' relations into a crisis. "In recent days a fashion led by Russia has emerged. Actually, Russia does not believe this either," said Erdogan, referring to the alleged oil trade with IS group.

"Look, Russia has to prove that the Turkish republic buys oil from Daesh, otherwise this is a slander," he added, using an Arabic acronym for IS extremists. "The immoral side of this issue is involving my family in the affair," Erdogan added. Erdogan repeated that he would resign if Moscow proved the allegation and said it was actually Russians who were involved in oil dealings. "Who is buying oil (from IS)? Let me say it. George Haswani, holder of a Russian passport and a Syrian national, is one of the biggest merchants in this business," Erdogan said.

In November, the US Treasury imposed sanctions on Haswani, who was also placed on an European Union sanctions list, for serving as a middleman for oil purchases by the Syrian regime from the IS group. Erdogan said yesterday "a famous Russian chess player" was also involved in the oil business with IS, without giving a name. "He's also in this race," he said. The new US sanctions also apply to Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, a wealthy Russian businessman and long-standing president of the World Chess Federation (FIDE) who was formerly president of the southern Russian region of Kalmykia.—AFP



ANKARA: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan addresses a labor union meeting in Ankara, Turkey yesterday. Russia's President Vladimir Putin yesterday hinted at more sanctions against Turkey and accused Turkey of a 'treacherous war crime' in downing a Russian jet at the border with Syria. — AP



GUSH ETZION: An Israeli soldier from the elite infantry unit stands guard as Israeli settlers stand at a bus station at the Gush Etzion junction in the Israeli occupied on the main road between Jerusalem and Hebron on December 2, 2015. — AFP

FEAR REIGNS AT JUNCTION WHERE JEWS, PALESTINIANS CROSS PATHS

SERIES OF KNIFE, CAR-RAMMING AND GUN ATTACKS

GUSH ETZION JUNCTION: Abu Malak has spent 17 years working at a petrol station at a major junction near Jerusalem where Israelis and Palestinians cross paths, but lately there's been a change. "Some (Israeli) customers still talk to us normally, but others look at us strangely and think that we're all terrorists," said the 38-year-old Palestinian. "They tell us: 'Surely it's your brother or your cousin who is attacking us.'" Gush Etzion Junction, located near a large block of Israeli settlements and Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank, has been the site of around 10 attacks over the past several weeks. Situated along a major highway between Jerusalem and Hebron, cities sacred to both Jews and Muslims, Israeli settlers and Palestinians have long stopped there to fill up their cars or buy groceries.

Workers at the junction's businesses are also both Israelis and Palestinians, and residents of nearby settlements often gather there to hitch rides. But a series of recent knife, car-ramming and gun attacks by Palestinians has turned it into a heavily guarded location where fear now reigns. The anti-Israeli attacks have been part of a

wave of violence since the start of October. Violence in Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has since killed more than 120 people, including 103 Palestinians and 17 Israelis.

At the junction itself, two Israelis, a Jewish American and a Palestinian have died. Seven Palestinian assailants have also been shot dead by Israeli forces at the site. Heavily armed and masked Israeli soldiers now stand guard among concrete blocks, and Palestinians, whether they be in cars or on foot, are searched. Illustrating how the junction has become a flashpoint, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu toured the area on November 23, the day after a 21-year old Israeli woman was stabbed to death at the site, and pledged increased security measures.

Everyone pays the price

Throughout the West Bank, some 400,000 Israeli settlers live among 2.5 million Palestinians in a near constant state of tension. The Gush Etzion settlement bloc as well as the nearby settlement towns of Efrat and Beitar Illit are home to some 92,000 Israelis. An estimated 2,000

Palestinians work in those areas. The Rami Levy discount supermarket at the junction says 40 percent of its employees are Palestinian and counts many Palestinians among its customers. But on a recent day it was nearly empty, like other businesses in the area. Fear and checkpoints seem to have kept many away. Rivka Pavié, an Israeli woman who lives in a nearby settlement, said as she waited at a bus stop: "We cannot imagine avoiding this junction. We are not going to allow ourselves to be terrorized."

However, she also acknowledged that she no longer brings her children said. A Palestinian supermarket worker said he puts aside his fear to show up for his job and "feed his family". "Customers see that we are employees and respect us," said the Palestinian man, who declined to be identified. "The real problem is going to and from work. Someone can single us out (as an attacker). One shot and we can disappear in a snap." At the bus stop where Pavié waited, Israeli soldiers stood by with guns and wearing black hoods. One of them said the hoods were aimed at "scaring" potential attackers.—AFP

27 MUSLIMS ON TRIAL FOR APOSTASY IN SUDAN

KHARTOUM: Some 27 Sudanese Muslims are standing trial in a Khartoum court accused of apostasy, risking the death penalty if they are convicted, their lawyer said yesterday. The men are accused of taking the Quran as the sole source of religious legitimacy and rejecting other Islamic texts. "The court in Kalakla in south Khartoum has started the trial of 27 defendants brought before it under

Article 126 of Sudanese criminal law, apostasy from Islam," defense lawyer Ahmed Ali Ahmed told AFP by telephone.

If convicted of apostasy, the defendants could face the death penalty under the Sharia Islamic law that has been in place in Sudan since 1983. They are also charged with disturbing the public order, Ahmed said. Ahmed said investigators told the court that

police arrested five of the defendants on November 2 inside a market in the southern Khartoum neighborhood of Mayo "when they were talking to people about their conviction in the belief in the Quran and how they don't recognize" other religious texts.

He said that the remainder were arrested the next day for the same reasons. The defendants are accused of belonging to adheres strictly to the

Quran and rejects the authority of the sunnah, traditions attributed to the Muslim Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Both Sunni and Shiite Muslims rely on the sunnah as a source of Islamic law. The trial of the 27 started last Sunday and went through four sessions during which the judge heard the investigators' case against the men before it adjourned on Wednesday. It resumes on December 8. — AFP



BEIRUT: Abdul Halim al-Attar, kisses his daughter Reem, 4, at their house, in Beirut, Lebanon. Al-Attar, a refugee from Syria who was photographed selling pens in the streets of Beirut, is now running three businesses in the city after an online crowdfunding campaign in his name collected \$191,000. —AP

NEW START FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE IN LEBANON AFTER ONLINE CAMPAIGN

BEIRUT: Abdul Halim Al-Attar, a refugee from Syria who was photographed selling pens in the streets of Beirut, is now running three businesses in the city after an online crowdfunding campaign in his name collected \$191,000. The 33-year-old father of two opened a bakery two months ago and has since added a kebab shop and a small restaurant to his business venture. He employs 16 Syrian refugees. The photograph of Al-Attar carrying his sleeping daughter on his shoulder while trying to sell pens to passing motorists in the scorching heat went viral this past summer and touched people across the world.

One of those moved by his plight was an online journalist and web developer in Norway, Gissur Simonarson, who created a Twitter account under the name @buy_pens and an Indiegogo campaign to raise \$5,000 for al-Attar and his family. When it closed three months later, the campaign had collected almost forty times more: \$188,685. Another \$2,324 in donations has trickled in since then. "Not only did my life change, but also the lives of my children and the lives of people in Syria whom I helped," he said. Al-Attar said he gave away about \$25,000 to friends and relatives in Syria. Al-Attar also quickly built a better life for himself and his family in Beirut. His wife returned to Syria and they are currently separated. In addition to the food businesses, al-

Attar moved his children from the one bedroom that they all shared to a two-bedroom apartment in an unfinished building overlooking the highway in southern Beirut. The apartment is noisy and sparse, but 4-year-old Reem, who was draped over her father's shoulder in the viral photo, proudly displays her new toys: plastic kitchenware, a swing and a stuffed bear that seems to be her favorite. Her brother, 9-year-old Abdullelah, is back in school after three years of absence.

For al-Attar, it's a long way from Yarmouk, the Palestinian refugee camp on the southern edge of Damascus where he was employed at a chocolate factory. The camp is now devastated by fighting. Although he is from Syria, Al-Attar is Palestinian and does not have Syrian citizenship. Getting the funds to al-Attar has been a struggle. So far he has only received 40 percent of roughly \$168,000, after Indiegogo and PayPal took out about \$20,000 in processing and banking fees. PayPal does not operate in Lebanon, so at the moment the cash is brought over to Lebanon bit-by-bit by a friend of the campaign who can make withdrawals in Dubai.

"Seeing that he opened a restaurant and his kids look well taken care of, I'm really happy," Simonarson said in a phone interview from Oslo. But he also said he was disheartened "after seeing how difficult the disburse-

ment has been, and complications with refugees not being able to open a bank account in Lebanon. I think that will be my last fundraiser." Despite his frustration and the uncertainty about when and whether he'll receive the rest of his money, al-Attar feels grateful. He is breaking even with steady orders of fresh bread and shawarmas from nearby workers and families in the working class neighborhood of Ared Jaloul. "I had to invest the money, otherwise it will be lost," he said, bagging a roasted chicken sandwich.

Stay positive

He sported a T-shirt reading "Stay positive," and a large smile. "When God wants to grant you something, you'll get it," he said. He and his 16 employees are lucky to have jobs in Lebanon. There are about 1.2 million registered Syrian refugees in the country, most of them struggling to find work. Only a third of all Syrian refugees in Lebanon have some form of employment, according to a 2014 report by the International Labor Organization. Al-Attar is also getting used to his newfound status. Once an anonymous street vendor, he now feels like a member of his community. Lebanese and Syrians alike are nicer to him. "They just greet me better now when they see me. They respect me more," he said with a smile. — AP

LONG-TIME GITMO INMATE IN CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

WASHINGTON: US officials have acknowledged that a Yemeni man held at Guantanamo Bay since 2002 is not entirely the person they thought he was. In what it concedes is at least a partial case of mistaken identity, the Pentagon said the 37-year-old inmate is not responsible for some of his supposed offenses-after a mix-up over his name. The embarrassing admission comes as Barack Obama struggles to close the prison before the clock ticks down on his presidency.

Opened in the months following the September 11, 2001 attacks, 107 inmates remain in the controversial facility. Their fate remains unclear. The detainee in question is Mustafa Abd-al-Qawi Abd-Al-Aziz Al-Shamiri-referred to in legal documents by his detainee number YM-434. Though the military maintains he fought in "jihadist theaters," officials acknowledge al-Shamiri was not an Al-Qaeda facilitator or trainer, as they had long asserted. "We now judge that these activities were carried out by other known extremists with names or aliases similar to YM-434's," an unclassified military document released Monday read.

It goes on to state that "fragmentary reporting" linked the detainee to fighting in Bosnia in 1995, and says he told investigators he fought in Yemen's civil war in 1996, as well as for the Taliban in Afghanistan from 2000 to 2001. He also "may" have stayed in a safehouse with people who plotted the USS Cole bombing in 2000, but there are no indications Al-Shamiri was involved in the attack, the statement adds. Obama pledged to shut the facility-reviled by critics as a stain on America's moral character that helped fuel anti-US jihadist propaganda-when he took office in 2009, but his efforts have failed. Inmates are kept without recourse to regular US legal processes and some likely will die in prison without ever being convicted of a crime.

Made pastries

A statement from Al-Shamiri's unnamed representative said he'd been compliant throughout his 13 years in Guantanamo, on the southeastern tip of Cuba. "During the last feast, Mustafa generously took the time to prepare over 30 plates of pastries for his fellow detainees," the statement reads. It adds Al-Shamiri had remorse "for choosing the wrong path early in life." "While he cannot change the past, he would definitely have chosen a different path," the statement reads. "He wants to make a life for himself." Obama has faced numerous roadblocks to closing the prison, mainly from a reluctant Congress. Opposition lawmakers say bringing Guantanamo prisoners to the United States poses security risks.

Periodic review

The facility has housed about 780 detainees since the start of 2002, and 48 of the remaining 107 have been cleared for release. But many are from conflict-torn Yemen so cannot be sent back. It was not immediately known if the mix-up in al-Shamiri's case would result in his approval for release. Pentagon spokesman Commander Gary Ross said: The PRB (Periodic Review Board) will make the decision on the detainee's status and that decision will be posted to the Periodic Review Secretariat website as soon as it is available. — AFP

HUNGARY LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST EU MIGRANT QUOTAS

MIGRANT ELECTROCUTED ON BORDER AFTER CLASHES

BUDAPEST: Hungary has launched a vitriolic media campaign attacking the EU's plan to distribute 160,000 asylum-seekers among member states, and warned it would file a legal challenge against the quota scheme later.

Full-page messages appeared in national newspapers with the headline: "The quota increases the terror threat!" against a black background. Other messages read: "An illegal immigrant arrives in Europe on average every 12 seconds"; "We don't know who they are, or what their intentions are"; and "We don't know how many hidden terrorists are among them".

The ads are part of a nationwide campaign which will also see billboards bearing the slogan "Let's defend the country" go up in the coming days.

Prime Minister Viktor Orban said yesterday Hungary was joining Slovakia in mounting a legal challenge to the EU's asylum-seeker distribution plan. "Hungary is today filing a challenge to the European Court against the EU's decision regarding mandatory quotas for the distribution of migrants," Orban said in a speech in Budapest. "It is not enough to protest, action must be taken," he added.

The announcement came a day after Slovakia filed its challenge. Under the EU's quota system, both Budapest and Bratislava are expected to take in around 2,300 migrants each.

In September, Hungary had voted against the scheme together with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania at an EU meeting, revealing a deep split between western and eastern bloc members.

Orban has long taken a hard line against the migrants, saying that the influx of so many Muslims posed a security threat and threatened the continent's Christian identity. "As long as this government is breathing, there won't be any quota, or any (failed asylum seekers) taken back," he said in November.



Stranded migrants show the body of a man believed to be from Morocco, at the Greek-Macedonian border, near the northern Greek village of Idomeni yesterday. The man was electrocuted after touching high-power overhead railway cables when he climbed on top of a train carriage. — AP

Nearly 860,000 migrants have landed in Europe so far this year, with many fleeing violence in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Hungary was a key transit country for people trekking along the western Balkan route to reach northern Europe, until it sealed its southern borders with razor-wire fence to the migrants in October.

Migrant electrocuted

A migrant died of electrocution yesterday after clashes broke out between refugees and migrants trapped on the Greek-Macedonian border, Greek

police said. The man, believed to be from Morocco, died after climbing on to a carriage of a stationary train near the border and touching a high-tension cable overhead, local police spokesman Petros Tanos said.

Holding his body, a group of Moroccan men then advanced towards the border crossing with cries of "Allahu akbar" ("God is greatest"). Greek police fired tear gas to push them back.

Another Moroccan had been badly burned in a similar incident on Saturday. With Macedonian authorities only permitting passage to refugees

from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, other migrants have been sleeping inside railway carriages. Train connections between Greece and Macedonia have been blocked for days by a protest by Iranian migrants occupying the railway tracks.

Earlier Thursday clashes broke out between refugees, those allowed to cross the border, and the blocked migrants, each group throwing stones at the other. Violence had also broken out over the weekend as Macedonian crews raced to complete a three-kilometre (1.8-mile) fence on the frontier. — AFP

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OBAMA WELCOMES BRITISH VOTE TO JOIN SYRIA AIR CAMPAIGN

WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama hailed a vote Wednesday by British lawmakers to join the air campaign against the Islamic State group in Syria. In a statement that also praised a German government decision to provide 1,200 military personnel to support the fight against the radical group, Obama praised a "special relationship" with Britain "rooted in our shared values and mutual commitment to global peace, prosperity, and security."

Parliamentarians voted by an over-

whelming majority to expand British participation in a counter-Islamic State air war in Iraq to neighboring Syria, offering Prime Minister David Cameron a much needed foreign policy victory.

Cameron had been humiliated in 2013 when parliament voted against strikes against the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad, a vote that left Obama isolated in pressing for air strikes in response to chemical weapons use. "Since the beginning of the counter-ISIL campaign the United Kingdom has been one of our

most valued partners in fighting ISIL," Obama said in a statement.

"We look forward to having British forces flying with the coalition over Syria and will work to integrate them into our Coalition Air Tasking Orders as quickly as possible." Obama also praised a German cabinet move to bolster Berlin's role in the crisis. Ministers approved a package of measures, which still requires legislative approval, that would supply Tornado reconnaissance jets, a naval frigate and up to 1,200 troops.

"While this still requires German parliamentary approval, this is a clear sign of Germany's continued commitment to the counter-ISIL campaign and to working with a broad range of partners to defeat this shared threat," Obama said.

"ISIL is a global threat that must be defeated by a global response. The United States welcomes any partner's genuine counter-ISIL efforts in Syria and Iraq, and I applaud the steps taken by the UK and Germany that demonstrate our unity and resolve." — AFP



LONDON: Pilots walk in front of a Tornado GR4 aircraft at the British Royal Air Force airbase RAF Marham in Norfolk in east England on Wednesday. — AFP

SYRIA DEBATE CREATES NEW STAR, BUT PROBLEMS FOR UK'S LABOR OPPOSITION'S DEEP DIVISIONS UNDER SPOTLIGHT

LONDON: An electrifying speech on Syria air strikes by the foreign affairs spokesman of Britain's Labor party brought together rival MPs in an emotional display but shone a spotlight on the opposition's deep divisions. The House of Commons fell silent as Hilary Benn implored MPs to approve the government's plan for air strikes on Islamic State jihadists in Syria, to which his party leader Jeremy Corbyn is opposed.

"We are here faced by fascists," he told lawmakers. "They hold our values in contempt, they hold our belief in tolerance and decency in contempt, they hold our democracy in contempt."

"What we know about fascists is that they need to be defeated," he said. As the 62-year-old returned to his seat next to a grim-faced Corbyn, both sides of the House of Commons broke out into a rare round of applause with members shouting "more" and some even reduced to tears, according to Labor MP Angela Smith. Conservative Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond called it "one of the truly great speeches" in parliamentary history, a view echoed by commentators and politicians of all stripes.

"It is about to become the House of Commons 'where were you when Kennedy was shot' moment," Labor-supporting journal-

ist Dan Hodges wrote in the Daily Telegraph. "It was a truly incredible moment. Hilary Benn did not look like the shadow foreign secretary. He did not look like the leader of the opposition. He looked like the prime minister."

But Benn's new-found authority poses a clear threat to Corbyn's embattled leadership, an ironic twist given that Benn's father Tony was both a political hero and close friend of the Labor chief.

Wednesday's speech had striking similarities to one given in parliament by his socialist father the year after the Gulf War in 1991 — except that Benn senior was mounting an impassioned plea against war.

'A potentially great leader'

Corbyn's victory in September's leadership race, thanks to support from grassroots activists, sparked a battle for control within Labour between his leftist allies and party moderates, who now have a figure to unite around.

"Hilary Benn offers hope to the party," former policy strategist for ex-prime minister Tony Blair and moderate John McTernan told AFP. The speech puts Benn "in pole position to be a future leader" of the party, added McTernan, a critic of Corbyn's leadership.

"I've known him since he was an advisor, I

wasn't surprised but it's great the country has seen what a potentially great leader he would make."

However, any move to depose Corbyn will be vehemently opposed by the party members, 66 percent of whom believe he is doing "well" in his role, according to a recent poll. The issue of war and terrorism has laid bare the divisions, with Corbyn being forced to allow his MPs a free vote on air strikes as all-out conflict threatened to break out in the party. Corbyn supporters have accused Benn of "undermining" the leader and positioning himself as a potential replacement during the build-up to Wednesday's vote. British bookmakers slashed the odds on Benn being the next Labor leader to 3/1 from 25/1 just two weeks ago.

The issue also sparked bitter debate on social media, with both sides accusing the other of personal abuse. A stark example of the disunity came as MPs prepared to vote, when protesters from Stop the War, a group previously chaired by Corbyn, chanted "Hilary Benn, shame on you!" outside parliament.

Corbyn's authority will be tested again later when voters in Oldham, northwest England, elect a new MP after the death of Labor incumbent Michael Meacher in October. — AFP

SWEDEN STRUGGLES TO HOUSE REFUGEES AS HARSH NORDIC WINTER LOOMS

MALMO: Plastic bags containing clothes and a few belongings are placed along the walls of a chilly, dimly-lit church in Malmo, Sweden, where 20 refugees from Syria and Afghanistan join around 30 Roma beggars seeking shelter for the night.

Donated sleeping mats and blankets make do for beds as they huddle up close to the radiators or on church benches. This is the reality for some of those who come to seek a new life in Sweden - a self-styled 'humanitarian superpower' - as the record number of asylum seekers overwhelms the country's capacity to cope. "Sweden is cold and this is not what I expected but I'm glad to be here anyway," said Tarek, a Syrian in his late twenties who spent nearly \$3,000 on a three-week trek to Sweden. His wife and two children remain in Syria for now.

Sweden has taken in about 145,000 asylum seekers so far this year, more than any other European country proportionate to its population. They have been drawn by its generous asylum rules, its wealth and stability and reputation for social justice.

Refugees have mostly been met by kindness, but Sweden has also seen a wave of arson attacks on asylum centres. A sword-wielding man killed two people in a racist killing spree in October at a largely immigrant school in south-west Sweden.

Meanwhile, the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats have surged in the polls to around 20 percent while the mainstream parties have moved to clamp down on immigration.

After initially throwing open its doors to asylum seekers, the centre-left government has introduced border controls and plans for temporary residency permits to stem the flow and force other European countries to share the burden. From saying "my Europe doesn't build walls" in September, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven has made a U-turn. "We have taken in too many for too long. We need a pause for breath," he said in late November.

SLEEPING ROUGH

So far Sweden has managed to house the vast majority of immigrants and conditions are better than those many have left behind. But authorities have been forced into drastic measures such as using tents and churches to house asylum seekers.

Nevertheless, some young refugees have been forced to sleep rough in harsh wintry conditions. Eva Blomdell, a deacon at the Sankt Johannes church in Malmo that now stays open through the night to provide shelter for the refugees, gives them coffee and hands out translated cards with information about toilets and showers. "It's not at all what they pictured. For them Sweden has been the promised land and now they get this," she said, pointing to the stone church floor. The Save the Children charity warned this week of squalid conditions in a large convention centre in Malmo, where up to 1,000 asylum seekers are staying while their applications are registered. It said sick children were sleeping directly on the floors and lacked sufficient medical care or even showers.

"The accommodation question is critical," said Mikael Ribbenvik, deputy director at the Migration Agency. "We try all kinds of ways to resolve the situation and yet we had to turn people down last weekend." This week a winter storm damaged half of the 16 tents the agency had set up in a first, provisional tent camp in southern Sweden, underscoring the challenges posed by the Nordic winter.

The camps have also been delayed by red tape - rigid planning and fire safety rules mean that most planned tents will only be ready in six months. The weekly number of refugees arriving in Sweden has dropped somewhat since it introduced the first large-scale border controls in more than two decades last month. But Lofven has said more must be done to stem the influx. — Reuters

14 DEAD, 17 HURT IN CALIFORNIA SHOOTING

ARMED COUPLE SHOT DEAD IN SHOOTOUT WITH POLICE

SAN BERNARDINO, California: A heavily armed man and woman dressed for battle opened fire on a holiday banquet for his co-workers, killing 14 people and seriously wounding more than a dozen others in a precision assault, authorities said. Hours later, they died in a shootout with police.

Authorities were trying to determine a motive, which could include workplace violence or terrorism. Wednesday's shooting happened at a social services center for the disabled where the suspect's colleagues with the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health were renting space for a celebration. It was the nation's deadliest mass shooting since the attack at a school in Newtown, Connecticut, three years ago that left 26 children and adults dead.

San Bernardino Police Chief Jarrod Burguan identified one dead suspect as Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, the other as Tashfeen Malik, 27, his wife or fiancée. Burguan said Farook was born in the United States; the chief said he did not know Malik's background.

The attackers invaded the Inland Regional Center about 60 miles east of Los Angeles around 11 am, opening fire in a conference area where county health officials were having an employee banquet, said Marybeth Feild, president and CEO of the nonprofit center.

"They came prepared to do what they did, as if they were on a mission," Burguan said. Farook attended the event before leaving - and returning to kill. Co-worker Patrick Baccari said he was sitting at the same table as Farook, who suddenly disappeared, leaving his coat on his chair. Baccari said when the shooting started, he sought refuge in a bathroom and suffered minor wounds from shrapnel slicing through the wall.

Baccari described Farook as reserved and said he showed no signs of unusual behavior. Earlier this year he traveled to Saudi Arabia and returned with a wife, later growing a beard, Baccari said. The FBI is investigating several possible motives, including workplace violence and terrorism, according to David Bowdich, assistant director of the bureau's Los Angeles office. He did not elaborate.

Farook was a restaurant inspector for the health department, according to public records. Police chief Burguan said he had been a county employee for five years. The couple dropped off their 6-month-old daughter with relatives Wednesday morning, saying they had a doctor's appointment, Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said after talking with family. Farhan Khan, who is married to Farook's sister, told reporters he last spoke to his brother-in-law about a week ago. He said he was in shock, condemned the violence, and had "absolutely no idea why he would do this."

About four hours after the morning carnage, police hunting for the killers riddled a black SUV with gunfire in a shootout 2 miles from the social services center in this Southern California city of 214,000 people. Farook and Malik were found with assault rifles and semi-automatic handguns, and were wearing "assault-style clothing" with ammunition attached, authorities said.

Television news helicopters captured the aftermath, as officers slowly approached the mangled SUV. In the morning, as the day's first bursts of gunfire echoed through the large three-building complex, some people locked themselves in offices, desperately waiting for police and texting or making hushed phone calls to loved ones.

"People shot. In the office waiting for cops. Pray for us. I am locked in an office," Terry Petit's daughter, who works at the center, texted him. Petit choked back tears as he read his daughter's words for reporters outside the center, where social workers find jobs, housing and transportation and provide other services to people with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Olivia Navarro said her daughter, Jamile Navarro, a case manager at the social service center, called her and whispered that she was hiding in a locked room.

"I said, 'All right, I'll be there, turn off the lights, don't make a sound,'" Navarro said. "And that was it."

Her daughter survived. That the violence happened at a place dedicated to helping people with developmental disabilities - even if they were not targeted - made it even harder for some to comprehend. "These are all disabled kids, very disabled," said Sherry Esquerro, who was searching for her daughter and son-in-law, both of whom work at the center. "She gets all the services she possibly could for these kids. So I just don't understand why somebody would come in and start shooting."

According to its web page, the center has a client base of more than 30,000 people and their families. It is a privately run nonprofit, the largest of its kind in California with about 670 employees.—AP



SAN BERNARDINO: Authorities guard the perimeter near the location of an officer-involved shooting on Wednesday in San Bernardino, California, following a shooting that killed multiple people at a social services center for the disabled.—AP

CALIFORNIA SHOOTING: WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR

SAN BERNARDINO: At least 14 people were killed in a gun attack on a holiday party in San Bernardino, California on Wednesday, the country's worst mass shooting since the massacre of 26 people at Sandy Hook elementary school in Connecticut three years ago. Here is a summary of the latest developments:

14 dead, 17 wounded

Fourteen people were killed and 17 wounded—two critically—when shooters opened fire inside the Inland Regional Center late morning, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

The attack took place inside a packed conference room rented out for a Christmas holiday event by the center, which provides services for people with developmental disabilities. No details have been released so far on the victims, in particular whether any of the Inland facility's staff were among those killed. Police said they had no knowledge of any children being involved.

Three suspects: Two men, one woman

A man and a woman suspected of carrying out the attack were killed in a dramatic shootout with police in the hours that followed, police said, as a huge manhunt closed in on their bullet-riddled vehicle. A third person was detained while fleeing the scene of the shootout, which took place in a street a few miles from the Inland Center. US media reported that one of the suspects has been identified as a man named Syed Farook.

Public records show that a man bearing the same name worked as an environmental health specialist for San Bernardino County, where the shooting took place. NBC News said the second

male suspect was believed to be Farook's brother. The identity of the woman was unknown.

Heavily armed

San Bernardino police chief Jarrod Burguan told reporters the slain suspects were armed with assault rifles and handguns. Investigators were also looking at the possibility they had left an explosive device at the scene of the shooting.

Link to terrorism?

Authorities said it was too soon to say whether the shooting was in some way linked to terrorism. "Obviously at minimum we have a domestic terrorist type situation that occurred here," Burguan told reporters. David Bowdich, the FBI assistant director in charge of the Los Angeles field office, told reporters: "I

know one of the big questions that will come up repeatedly is, 'Is this terrorism?'

"And I am still not willing to say that we know that for sure."

Motive unknown

"We don't know what the motive is at this point," police chief Burguan said. "The information we have is that they came prepared to do what they did as if they were on a mission."

"They came in with a purpose. They came in with the intent to do something." Authorities said they were looking at reports the attack might be linked to a disgruntled employee.

Burguan said he was informed that someone left the event following a dispute prior to the shooting. "Somebody did leave, but we have no idea if that is the person that came back." —AFP



ANAHEIM: Farhan Khan (left), brother-in-law of one of the suspects involved in a shooting in San Bernardino, stands by as Hussam Ayloush, executive director of Council on American-Islamic Relations, speaks during a news conference at the Greater Los Angeles Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, in Anaheim, California.—AP

PERU DEPORTS AMERICAN AFTER 20-YR TERROR SENTENCE

LIMA: An American woman jailed for 20 years in Peru on terrorism charges was deported early yesterday after completing her sentence, authorities said. Lori Berenson, a 46-year-old New York native, was arrested in 1995 and convicted of helping the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), an armed leftist group, in a failed plot to storm the Peruvian legislature.

She was released on parole after serving 15 years of her prison sentence, but was barred from leaving the country, except for one court-authorized trip home for the holidays in 2011.

Police escorted her to Lima airport and placed her on a commercial flight bound for the United States, the Peruvian immigration department said. She is permanently banned from Peru, said special terrorism prosecutor Milko Ruiz. "This is a measure that applies to (convicted) foreigners: once they leave they can never legally return to

Peru," he said.

The daughter of two university professors, Berenson was drawn as a young woman by the lure of engaging in Latin America's leftist political struggles. She followed her passion first to El Salvador, which was emerging from a brutal civil war pitting leftist guerrillas against a repressive regime, and then to Peru, where she joined the MRTA.

Together with Maoist rebel group Shining Path, the MRTA waged a bloody guerrilla campaign against the Peruvian government that left 70,000 people dead or missing from 1980 to 2000. While in prison, Berenson gave birth to a son fathered by her attorney and now ex-husband Anibal Apari. Six years ago she asked for forgiveness from those who were affected by her actions. She admitted being an MRTA member but said she was not a leader and had committed no violent acts. —AFP



LIMA: US activist Lori Berenson, organizes a group of family photos, in her home in Lima, Peru. Berenson is heading home to New York, two decades after being found guilty of aiding leftist rebels. — AP

AMID PROTESTS, SOME SYRIAN REFUGEES FIND HOME IN TEXAS

'NOT TO CONFLATE TERRORISTS WITH REFUGEES'

DALLAS: On a sofa in their small apartment, Bashar al Jaddou's three children climb on his lap and speak in quick, soft Arabic as a photographer takes their picture. They smile and mug for the camera.

The 30-year-old al Jaddou decided to leave Syria in 2012 after his family's home in Homs was bombed and there was nowhere safe left to live. Five months after arriving in Dallas, he works at a local Wal-Mart and takes weekly trips to parks with his wife and children. "We moved here because of our kids," he said through a translator. "We want a good future for them." In the last five years, Texas has taken in more refugees than any other state, including 243 Syrians, according to the US State Department. Two more families from Syria were to arrive in Dallas in the next 10 days, even as Texas continued to oppose their arrival.

After the Nov. 13 Paris attacks, which were linked to the Islamic State group, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and other Republican governors said they didn't want new Syrian refugees. But Texas has fought the hardest of any state, threatening one refugee aid group, the International Rescue Committee, with loss of funding and suing that organization as well as the US government on Wednesday.

The IRC said earlier this week that it was "important not to conflate terrorists with the Syrian refugees who are seeking sanctuary in the United States," and vowed to continue its work.

Syrians, like all refugees, undergo rigorous screening, the federal government has said, and states lack the legal authority to block funding for such aid groups. In the weeks since the Paris attacks, about 200 Syrian refugees have settled in the US - including in states whose governors resisted, according to the State Department. Refugees in Texas have found a mixed reception - some residents have warmly welcomed them even as a series of incidents over the last year suggest growing anti-Muslim and anti-Syrian



DALLAS: Syrian refugee Maryam Al-Jaddou (center) looks on as her children twins Maria (left) and Hasan, sit with her at their apartment in Dallas. —AP

sentiment.

Two weeks ago, anti-Islam protesters carrying long guns marched outside a suburban Dallas mosque, and the protest organizer later posted the names and addresses of Muslims and "Muslim sympathizers" on Facebook. The organizer, David Wright, said in a Facebook interview that people who are afraid to oppose Islam publicly are part of a "fantasy that will come crashing down around them," and that "the Syrian refugees are part of that strategy."

The mosque protest in Irving followed the highly publicized case of a Muslim teenager, Ahmed Mohamed, who was arrested in the same town after bringing a homemade clock to school that a teacher feared was a bomb. He and his family moved out of Texas, and his attorneys have threatened to sue the city and school district.

And in May, a provocative Prophet Muhammad cartoon contest in another Dallas suburb ended in gunfire when two

Muslims who drove from Phoenix tried to storm the building and were killed by police. Many Muslims consider any depiction of Muhammad, revered in Islam as God's final prophet, to be offensive.

Following the Paris attacks, some state lawmakers also explicitly denounced Muslims and Syrian refugees. Texas agriculture commissioner Sid Miller posted two photos on his Facebook page, one of snakes, the other of apparent refugees. "Can you tell me which of these rattlers won't bite you? Sure some of them won't, but tell me which ones so we can bring them into the house," he wrote.

Such rhetoric worries those who work with refugees and officials trying to help them. "When you have this sort of political speech from the leaders in the state, and you have armed militias that stand outside mosques, it gives a powerful tool to those who wish to radicalize weak-minded, susceptible people," said Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins, a Democrat and the county's top administrator. —AP

PLANNED PARENTHOOD SHOOTING: DOMESTIC TERRORISM? IT'S KNOTTY

WASHINGTON: The man accused of killing three people at a Colorado Planned Parenthood clinic brought several guns, ammunition and propane tanks that officials say he assembled around a car. For hours, he holed up inside the clinic, unleashing a fusillade that wounded nine others, scattering post-Thanksgiving shoppers who scrambled to hide inside surrounding buildings until the standoff ended. To some in the community, the attack resembled an act of domestic terrorism, sparking a debate over what to call Robert Lewis Dear's rampage even before he was taken into custody.

But the legal system may not resolve that question. Dear faces state charges of first-degree murder, and the federal criminal code has no specific, catchall charge for acts of domestic terrorism. That means federal prosecutors pursuing charges for ideologically motivated violence often turn to other statutes - such as those for firearms, explosives, hate crimes or murder - to cover offenses that could arguably be labeled as terror. The punishment may be the same, but generally without the branding more often associated with international terrorism.

"There has long been some interest in defining acts of domestic terrorism as terrorism. It's become quite a partisan issue," said William Yeomans, a former high-ranking official in the Justice Department's civil rights division. But given the number of laws already available to federal prosecutors, he added, "Whether it's domestic terrorism or not, it doesn't really matter."

Police have not yet detailed a motive in the Friday killings of one police officer and two civilians at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, though a law enforcement official has said Dear said "no more baby parts" during rambling comments after his arrest.

Dear used a rifle in the shooting and also brought other firearms and ammunition, according to an official familiar with the case who was not authorized to talk publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper has called the killings a "form of terrorism," and Planned Parenthood has said witnesses believe the gunman was motivated by opposition to abortion. But Dear also has been described by acquaintances as a loner who once gave neighbors anti-Obama literature but never any indication he would target a clinic.

A coalition of advocacy groups is calling on the Justice Department, which is reviewing the case, to investigate violence against abortion clinics as domestic terrorism. Federal authorities have the option of filing their own charges but haven't yet said whether they will do so. Among the federal government's potential avenues is a 1994 law known as the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, which makes it a crime to injure or intimidate abortion clinic patients and employees. —AP

CHENNAI CITY REMAINS UNDER WATER

INDIA ARMY ON WAR FOOTING AS FLOOD TOLL NEARS 270

CHENNAI: The Indian military evacuated more than 2,000 residents stranded in the southern state of Tamil Nadu yesterday as the death toll from flooding rose to 269 after the heaviest cloudburst in over a century. Forecasts of more rain over the next 48 hours forced the army to work on a war footing to rescue survivors trapped in inundated parts of Chennai, India's fourth most populous city.

Chennai saw only slight rains yesterday, but water levels had not receded since Wednesday morning, when a massive release of water from a brimming reservoir swamped low-lying areas of the city. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has blamed climate change for the deluge, travelled to Chennai to get a first-hand view of a rescue effort that has so far been halting.

"Chennai has become a small island. This is unprecedented," Home Minister Rajnath Singh told parliament. "Rapid rescue and relief is the need of the hour. We are working very hard to restore normality."

After auto manufacturers and IT outsourcing firms suspended operations on Wednesday, state-run Chennai Petroleum shut down its 210,000-barrels-per-day oil refinery due to heavy flooding. The cloudburst earlier this week dumped as much as 345 mm (14 inches) of rain over 24 hours. "We live in a city expecting that we will have access to basic facilities. But today, we have no drinking water, no fresh food and no control over our lives," said Sudha Raman Murthy, a mother of two teenage daughters.

Soldiers set up 25 temporary shelters and community kitchens and installed portable toilets. "We will have to resurrect an entire city," said Abhijit Shaw, an army officer who was setting up a makeshift maternity ward in a government building. Floods cut off more than three million people from basic services and hampered rescue efforts by the army, which has so far evacuated 18,000 people from rooftops and outlying villages.

City authorities were deploying bulldozers and bags of concrete to repair collapsed roads, while several bridges were under water as urban lakes in the low-lying coastal city of six million overflowed.

Train services and flights to Chennai, capital of Tamil Nadu, were washed out and the navy has pressed fishing boats into service to evacuate people from the worst-hit suburbs to temples, schools and wedding halls. A senior federal official said more than 1,000 people had been critically injured and were rushed to government hospitals by paramilitary forces.

More rains

Additional rainfall of 100-200 mm (4-8 inches) was predicted from yesterday through Sunday, keeping the situation critical for several more days. The federal government pledged \$141 million in immediate relief and launched a survey to assess losses to life and property. Assocham, an industry lobby, estimated that the floods may cause financial losses of over \$2.25 billion.

Experts said haphazard construction, faulty drainage and a build-up of garbage had contributed to the disaster. "Chennai is stinking and it is shocking to see how it has collapsed in the last 48 hours," said Anant Raghav, 56, a professor at the University of Madras.

More than 5,000 houses were under water with many people still trapped on rooftops, while others crowded in relief camps. About 30 families have been sleeping rough under a flyover in central Chennai for the last week after their huts and small concrete houses were washed away.

Seema Agarwal, from the central district of Alwarpet, said she had seen many angry people queuing at bus stops to leave town. "There are people who haven't eaten for days," she said. "They have seen their possessions float away from the house. Food, clothes - all gone." —Reuters



CHENNAI: The flood-hit Chennai city after heavy rains in Chennai yesterday. — AP

RESIDENTS RESORT TO SELF-HELP AS FLOODS INUNDATE CHENNAI



CHENNAI: An aerial photo shows flood-hit Chennai after heavy rains lashed the city inundating most part of it yesterday. —AP



CHENNAI: A man carries an elderly woman as she is rescued from a flooded area following heavy rains in Chennai yesterday. The heaviest rainfall in more than 100 years has devastated swathes of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, with thousands forced to leave their submerged homes and schools, offices and a regional airport shut for a second day yesterday. —AP

BANGALORE/NEW DELHI: Tech enthusiasts across India joined hands to help those left stranded by deadly flooding in the southern city of Chennai, using social media to crowd-source information to supply food, top up mobile phone credits and offer refuge.

Incessant rainfall in India's fourth most-populous city has cut off more than three million people from basic services and disrupted power supplies, with the authorities under fire for slow relief and rescue operations. Volunteers and companies have responded by using online tools such as Google documents and social networks like Facebook and Twitter to organize their own crisis response, with some setting up dedicated online resources to help others in need. "We are passing rescue requests to government officials and local people," said Krish Ashok, part of a team running ChennaiRains.org, which lists verified details of those offering shelter, water and clothing. The Indian military has struggled to evacuate thousands of residents stranded in and around Chennai. Heavy rains in Tamil Nadu state have killed at least 269 people and critically injured 1,000. Mobile and internet services, though intermittent, have become the key mode of communication between those offering and seeking aid in the coastal IT outsourcing hub.

Practo, a company that connects patients to doctors, issued a public Google document with a list of 57 doctors available for consultation. The list was being updated by a five-member team.

"We are checking doctors' availability hourly due to the connectivity issues. We're also adding details of doctors who've reached out and volunteered to help," a Practo spokesman said.

Social media

On social media, citizens used hash tags such as #ChennaiRainsHelp to share helpline numbers, offer free food and drugs and even arrange conference calls for those out of credit on their mobile phones. Ammar Kanchwala, a Hyderabad-based IT executive, said he had used his own funds to add calling credits to about 50 mobile phone users who were stranded.

Sriharan Balan, a 25-year-old travel consultant in Chennai, was using Facebook to reach out to those in need and supplying them with home-cooked food. "These are all my people. Obviously, I need to help them," he said.

Three software developers also used data from several sources to build a dynamic map that shows flooded roads in the city (<http://bit.ly/1TtRB2e>) While 18,000 people have been evacuated from rooftops and outlying villages, many remain in dire need of basic supplies. — Reuters

PAKISTAN REJECTS 30 DEPORTEES FROM GREECE, SENDS BACK PLANE

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan refused to allow 30 migrants deported from Greece to leave a plane at Islamabad yesterday, a week after talks with the European Union to settle a dispute over forced repatriations. The charter plane later took off with the 30 still aboard, though others that Pakistan deemed legitimate deportees were allowed to disembark.

A top EU official said last week Pakistan would stick to an agreement to take back citizens deported from mainland Europe, days after Pakistani Interior Minister Nisar Ali Khan said Islamabad was suspending a

deal under which thousands per year are repatriated. An estimated 50,000 Pakistanis travel legally to Europe for work each year. Last year, about 21,000 living there without permission were ordered to return to Pakistan, according to EU statistics. But the Interior Ministry said the 30 arriving yesterday were "unverified deportees".

"On the interior minister's orders, the FIA has not allowed these illegally deported people and the aircraft crew to leave the plane," the ministry said in a statement, referring to the Federal Investigation Agency. "Despite having settled all issues

with the European Commissioner, Pakistani laws have been violated, which absolutely cannot be allowed," Khan said.

He did not specify the reasons for not accepting the 30. Nineteen "verified" deportees were allowed to disembark, a ministry spokesman said.

The EU mission in Pakistan had no immediate comment yesterday. Clashes erupted on the Greek-Macedonian border on Tuesday when Macedonian riot police fired tear gas to repel up to 1,000 mostly Pakistani migrants trying to force their way across a newly erected border fence, a

Reuters witness said. Migrants later blocked the crossing for Syrians and others who would be let in as refugees. "If we don't cross, no one does!" they chanted. Police stood guard. Buses full of people who have landed elsewhere in Greece kept arriving.

So far, 886,662 people seeking safety have reached European shores this year, about four times the total in 2014, William Spindler, of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said in Geneva this week. Half of those arriving are Syrians fleeing war. The vast majority reaching Europe arrive by sea. — Reuters



HAEMI: Catholic faithful take part in a mass conducted by Pope Francis to conclude the 6th Asian Youth Day in Haemi, some 150 kilometres south of Seoul. After a debate stretching back more than 40 years, South Korea's parliament has approved a bill late on Wednesday that will finally compel the country's influential clergy to pay taxes. — AFP

S KOREA CONVERTS MONKS AND PRIESTS TO TAXPAYERS

LEGISLATION TO TAKE FORCE FROM 2018

SEOUL: After a debate stretching back more than 40 years, South Korea's parliament has approved a bill that will finally compel the country's influential clergy to pay taxes. The bill was passed shortly before midnight Wednesday by 195 votes to 20, with 50 legislators abstaining.

It has been a long road to legislation, with previous efforts to bring monks, priests and pastors into the national tax fold being repeatedly foiled by vehement clerical opposition and political timidity. In a reflection of the issue's sensitivity, the new bill has a lengthy built-in time delay, only coming into effect from the start of 2018. Kang Seog-Hoon, a legislator with the ruling Saenuri Party, said the grace period would be used to communicate with religious groups "so that the policy can settle down without turbulence".

South Korea has an estimated 360,000 priests and monks whose earnings will be reclassified as "religious income" rather than the current label of "honorarium". A sliding bracket means those earning 40 million won (\$34,500) or less a year will only be taxed on 20 percent of their income. At the upper end,

those earning more than 150 million won will have to pay tax on 80 percent of their income.

Public opinion polls have long favoured extending tax responsibilities to religious groups, some of whom are highly secretive about their financial arrangements. "Pastors who receive benefits and gifts outside of their monthly income and do not pay income taxes can be perceived as not doing their duties as members of the community," said Kim Ai-Hee, secretary general of the Korean Christian Alliance for Church Reform.

Muscular religious faith

For many first-time visitors to Seoul, a common take-away memory is the surprising multitude of neon crosses glowing across the South Korean capital's nightscape. The theory that prosperity and socio-economic development tend to breed secularism holds little water in a country where modernity appears to have fuelled religiosity. In the last national census to include religious affiliation, conducted in 2005, close to 30 percent of South Koreans identified themselves as Christian, and 23 percent as Buddhist.

Catholic priests have voluntarily paid

income tax since the mid-1990s, and the most vocal opponents of the new policy are within the larger Protestant community which wields considerable political clout.

Some individual Protestant churches boast enormous congregations and considerable wealth, and are run like mini-fiefdoms with pastors passing control of the church and its business down to their children.

Last year, the pastor of the biggest congregation of all, at the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, was handed a three-year suspended jail term for embezzling millions of dollars. But the opponents of taxation insist their stance is grounded in principle rather than self-interest.

"Taxing religious practitioners equates religious activities with commercial activities," a conservative Protestant group, the Commission of Churches in Korea, said in a statement. A spokesman for the commission, Choi Kwi-Soo, also noted that Protestant pastors who, unlike monks and Catholic priests, generally marry and have families, would be hardest hit. "They are different from monks or priests who can live on a relatively meager income. That should be taken into account," Choi told AFP. — AFP

NEW ANALYSIS SHOWS MH370 HUNT IN RIGHT AREA: AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY: Australia yesterday said fresh analysis of data on missing jet MH370 confirmed authorities are searching in the right place, with hopes remaining that it will one day be found.

Australia has been leading the difficult search in the remote southern Indian Ocean for the Malaysia Airlines plane since it mysteriously disappeared on March 8 last year en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board. Based on satellite analysis of the jet's likely trajectory after it diverted from its flight path, ships have been scouring the seabed off Australia's west coast, so far covering 75,000 square kilometres (29,000 square miles) of a 120,000 square kilometre target zone without result.

Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said the Australian Defence Science and Technology Group had been tasked with crunching all available data once again to make sure nothing had been missed. The conclusions, using models of Inmarsat satellite communications data, aircraft dynamics and meteorological data to determine likely flight paths, were released in a new report—"MH370 - Definition of Underwater Search Areas."

"The key outcomes of this additional work validate what has happened so far. It affirms that the aircraft is likely located somewhere in the 120,000 square kilometre area along the seventh arc," Truss said, referring to the area where authorities believe the plane went down. "The new research further emphasises that we are searching in the right direction, it uses different methodology and has come to the same conclusions."

"That gives us real encouragement that every effort is being made to ensure the search is well focused and well targeted and hopefully will therefore achieve someday a satisfactory result." Three ships continue to scour the area, in between returning to port to resupply—a four-day voyage in each direction through often harsh conditions. "Weather continues to impact on search operations but the onset of summer is expected to bring more favourable conditions over the coming months," the Joint Agency Coordination Centre said in a separate update Thursday.

Speculation on the cause of the plane's disappearance has focused primarily on a possible mechanical or structural failure, a hijacking or terror plot, or rogue pilot action.

Investigators believe the aircraft ran out of fuel and crashed somewhere in the southern Indian Ocean, sparking one of the biggest mysteries in aviation history. Despite the satellite evidence pointing to the plane going down, many Chinese relatives of those on board remain skeptical, and are convinced their loved ones are alive, perhaps being held at an unknown location. — AFP



An undated and unplaced handout photo obtained from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) yesterday shows Havila Harmony, one of three ships scouring the southern Indian Ocean for the remains of missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. — AFP

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THE

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Grumpy Cat arrives at the 84th Annual Hollywood Christmas Parade in Los Angeles. —AP

Sandra Bullock adopts 3-year-old daughter



Review

This image released by Polk and Co shows Aisha Jackson during a performance of 'Invisible Thread,' at the Second Stage Theatre in New York. — AP

'Invisible Thread' is a vibrant, pulsating musical

Is it possible for one person to change the world for the better, even a little bit? This was the question facing young American actor Griffin Matthews in 2005, when he went to Uganda to help build a school. There he was inspired to help educate a few of the young people he met, and that experience set the scene for the lively, upbeat musical "Invisible Thread," which opened Wednesday night at off-Broadway's Second Stage Theatre.

Matthews, who plays a character based on himself with casual charm, co-wrote the fictional production with Matt Gould, who also did similar volunteer work. The duo has created iterations of the show, formerly titled "Witness Uganda," that have been shown around the world. This production is directed by Tony Award-winner Diane Paulus, who helmed the 2014 premiere at Harvard University's American Repertory Theater. After being dismissed from his church choir for being gay, fictional Griffin unwittingly chooses Uganda for his charitable endeavors, not realizing it's a country that still jails people for life just for being homosexual. As a naive do-gooder, Griffin navigates some local hostility and a corrupt pastor, but manages to find a group of teenage street orphans he might truly help.

The unschooled orphans are given appealing individual personalities by Tyrone Davis Jr, Kristolyn Lloyd, Nicolette Robinson and a sweetly goofy Jamar Williams. Unbeatable optimism follows as Griffin begins teaching the kids, with the cast and audience swept along by hopeful, melodious songs like "Beautiful"

and "Put It All on the Line." Griffin briefly gives in to despair in "New World," but all eventually join in the buoyant, rhythmic "Bela Musana," and the stunning finale, "Njakuwangula." Paulus stages the energetic proceedings with a careful eye for both small moments and high-voltage, ensemble dance numbers. Limber moves are choreographed by Darrell Grande Moultrie and Sergio Trujillo. Pulsating musical numbers combine a vibrant, layered pop score and earnest lyrics with African beats. Some scenes feel like a mashup of "Felafel" and "Rent," with a little "The Lion King" thrown in. The titular thread is love, described in song as something that "wraps around my heart and wraps around your head."

The book gives a nod to serious issues like corruption, poor medical care, AIDS and bigotry, but comedy and the theme of empowerment run firmly throughout the play. It's a palatable, deeply Western perspective on living in poverty under a repressive government. The design team effectively conjures up impressions of multiple African locations on a reddish, clay-like surface, from ramshackle buildings to a busy open-air market to a peaceful hilltop. After urging the kids to "put it all on the line/while you still have the time," Griffin eventually learns that not everyone wants to be empowered. Despite the rosy prism coloring the social issues, this musical has a good heart, and there's no harm in raising awareness to help educate underprivileged kids in Africa. — AP

Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop comes to life for the holidays

Gwyneth Paltrow's lifestyle site Goop is alive and well in the analog world. Paltrow, with a hand from the fashion house of Valentino, hosted the media Wednesday at her pop-up shop Goop Mrkt, open through Dec 24 at The Shops at Columbus Circle in midtown Manhattan's Time Warner Center. "It's so nice for all of us as a company to experience the digital come to life in brick and mortar, and to be able to bring the whole lifestyle piece to an actual physical store," Paltrow told The Associated Press.

Among the beauty products, housewares and other goods selected by Paltrow for the shop is a playful collection of sparkly, star-adorned dresses, jackets, sneakers and accessories from Valentino creative directors Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli for the capsule collection dubbed Valentino x goop. They're displayed in the shop under a bright Wonder Woman mural. "I think of the Wonder Woman aesthetic being like Goop in a dream," Paltrow said. "It's kind of like the highest possible end of what we do, you know. And it's fantasy in a way. It's really high fashion and it really embodies the luxury aspect of the business."—AP



Sandra Bullock adopts 3-year-old daughter

Sandra Bullock has adopted a 3-year-old girl named Laila. The adoption was reported by People Magazine in a cover story published Wednesday. Bullock posed for photos with Laila and her son for the magazine. Bullock previously adopted Louis Bardo, a 3-year-old boy born in New Orleans. A representative for Bullock didn't return messages Wednesday.—AP



In this June 23, 1979 file photo, singer Frank Sinatra performs during his concert at the Nassau Coliseum, in Uniondale, NY. — AP

Sinatra gets star-studded tribute for centennial birthday

2015 is turning out to be a very good year for Frank Sinatra. What would have been the musical icon's centennial birthday on Dec 12 has been celebrated with an HBO documentary about his life, a Grammy museum exhibit, even dinner specials at an old Las Vegas steakhouse. A star-studded, Grammy-produced tribute show at the Wynn Las Vegas resort-casino on Wednesday night caps the festivities. Among the stars paying tribute to Frank Sinatra are Tony Bennett, Garth Brooks, Alicia Keys, John Legend, Adam Levine, Carrie Underwood and Usher. The two-hour concert airs Sunday from 9 to 11 pm EST/PST on CBS. Daughter Tina Sinatra says the family had been

developing plans for a tribute concert in the back of their minds since her father's death in 1998. "His legacy is the music, and his music is the legacy. And that's what cannot die," she said. It was after the Grammy's tribute to the Beatles last year that Tina Sinatra walked into the office of CBS chairman and CEO Les Moonves and her question was answered before she could even ask it. "I know what you're here for and the answer is yes," she said Moonves said. The same producer, AEG Ehrlich Ventures, responsible for The Beatles tribute and shows honoring Whitney Houston and Stevie Wonder is returning for the Sinatra concert. Choosing a fitting location to honor the

Hoboken, New Jersey-native came down to New York or Las Vegas, where he crooned often. "Las Vegas seemed more on the nose," she said. Asked what Sinatra himself might think of the lineup and performances if he were sitting in the front row, Grammy president and CEO Neil Portnow said, "I hope he'd feel the love and the joy in the room about being able to celebrate all that he has provided for so many millions, for so many decades and will continue in the future," adding that the crooner would have a blast. "Doobie-doobie do."—AP



This photo provided by the Sundance Film Institute shows Michalina Olszanska in a scene from the film, "The Lure," directed by Agnieszka Smoczyńska. — AP photos



This photo provided by the Sundance Film Institute shows Daniel Friedman and Rae Tuter in a scene from the film, "Suited," directed by Jason Benjamin.



In this Jan 26, 2013 file photo, Trevor Groth walks to present an award during the 2013 Sundance Film Festival Awards Ceremony in Park City, Utah.

Sundance Film Festival reveals drama, documentary contenders

The dramatic contenders at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival span history, genre and setting, from the slave days in the South to the gay-sex scene today in LA's Korean spas. What unites them, says festival director John Cooper, is excellent storytelling and a "thorough understanding of the craft of filmmaking, especially writing." On Wednesday, Cooper and programming director Trevor Groth announced the slate of American and international dramas and documentaries in competition this year at the annual festival in Park City, Utah.

"Independent film is evolving right now," Cooper said. "There seems to be a real want and need for different kinds of stories." Tales of a slave who helps his owner, for example, as in writer-director-actor Nate Parker's "The Birth of a Nation"; or of a first-generation Korean-American navigating traditional cultural expectations and his own emerging identity in "Spa Night." Other selections include "Swiss Army Man," starring Paul Dano and Daniel Radcliffe, about a hopeless loner who befriends a dead body; and "Tallulah," starring Ellen Page and Allison Janney, about a young woman who steals a baby from a wealthy family.

While most Sundance films won't be seen outside the festival for many months, moviegoers everywhere should be excited about what these movies say about the state of cinema, Cooper said. The 117 feature-length films showing at the January festival were culled from more than 12,700 submissions. "It proves that there's a choice out there, that there are other options for your entertainment," he said. "The whole notion of discovery is big...

It's the beginning of a cultural year, and also the discovery of new talent: talent that go onto direct other films, and acting talent that go on to be in other films and really become what's driving the film business forward."

Recent Sundance success stories include Colin Trevorrow's hyper-charged career trajectory, from premiering his first feature at Sundance in 2012 to directing the summer smash "Jurassic World"; and "Fruitvale Station" director Ryan Coogler and Michael B Jordan, who followed up their 2013 Sundance hit with this year's "Creed." Jennifer Lawrence also first broke out at Sundance five years ago with "Winter's Bone," which brought her first Oscar nod. The festival's domestic documentary slate features stories of unsung heroes, such as ALS advocate and former NFL star Steve Gleason, and perspectives on gun violence and social media. Titles include "Newtown," about the community's recovery from the 2012 mass shooting at an elementary school, and "Audrie & Daisy," about two teenage victims of online bullying.

Cooper and Groth said there's a sexy undercurrent to the international dramas: A group of college brainiacs try to lose their virginity in "Brahman Naman" from India; a mermaid falls in love with a man in Poland's "The Lure"; a woman forms a relationship with a wolf in Germany's "Wild"; and "Male Joy, Female Love" from China is described as a portrayal of "an unlimited cycle of love stories." The Sundance Film Festival runs from Jan 21 to 31. — AP

Cairo and Carthage: How Mid-East film festivals deal with terrorism, freedom

Two of the Arab world's longest-running film festivals concluded their 2015 editions in the last couple of weeks, both valiantly trying to offset safety concerns with full programs of screenings and a significant security presence. The strengths and weaknesses of the Cairo Film Festival, which wrapped on Nov 20, and the Carthage Film Festival, which ended Nov 28, are more indicative of the political situations in Egypt and Tunisia than the state of film production or consumption in each country, with both fests struggling to organize events that appeal to locals as well as the offshore industry. Yet with the two nations fighting to counter the perception of terrorist danger, exacerbated by the Tunis attack several blocks from the festival center on Nov 23 that targeted the presidential guard and left 13 people dead, it's increasingly clear that wooing an international presence is a challenge unlikely to get easier anytime soon.

In many ways Cairo as a festival, and Egypt as a country, is having the more problematic time of it. By the first decade of the 21st century, the festival had lost its relevance, pathetically insisting on its A-list qualification from the Intl. Federation of Film Producers Assn. (FIAPF), even though everyone knew that sub-par projection, often uninspired programming and unhealthy ties to the Ministry of Culture exacerbated a cronyism all-too common during Hosni Mubarak's regime. Hopes for fresh air were strong following the 2011 Arab Spring, yet frequent government and ministry changes created institutional confusion, and security concerns meant the 2013 festival was cancelled altogether.

Public perception

A completely new team under the presidency of veteran film critic Samir Farid took up the reins in 2014 (full disclosure: I was hired as a consultant for that edition), and for the first time a sense of real change was felt around the Opera House campus where screenings take place. Projection was significantly improved, the selection was dynamic, and the public perception, especially among younger generations of Egyptians hungry for art house fare, was that Cairo was finally getting a relatively independent film festival in tune with international standards. There were plenty of organizational screw-ups, yet cinemas were packed, and everyone remarked on the palpable buzz.

However, while the strong arm of the Ministry of Culture remained relatively hidden to those outside the organization, the oppressive, often arbitrary behavior of the Opera House security guards led many to believe that someone connected to the new government of President Abdel Fattah Sisi was working against the festival. The day after the closing ceremony last year, then Minister of Culture Gaber Asfour called into question the festival's loyalty as well as its management, and Farid's team all stepped down, although the subsequent investigation revealed no impropriety.

Monumental challenges

As the current festival president Magda Wassef writes in the

catalog, "I hesitated a lot before accepting this assignment." Everyone entering the political and bureaucratic minefield of Cairo's cultural initiatives knows they will be faced with monumental challenges not limited to concerns over artistic independence and security issues. One of the greatest obstacles to overcome is the general malaise that has blanketed audiences who would normally turn out for the festival: the culturally aware, socially conscious young men and women whose heady sense of empowerment during the 2011 revolution has been straightjacketed by Sisi's repressive government.

Locals did come out for the festival this year, though the numbers were smaller than during the last edition. Official security - compared to the very present yet polite guards at the Carthage festival - were even more ubiquitous (this time the soldiers guarding the festival periphery wore ski masks), and whereas in 2014 there was a sense that heightened security played into the government's desire to foster a sense of fear in order to reinforce their unyielding narrative, this time, following the Sharm El-Sheikh bomb and concurrent with the Paris attacks, the security measures felt more warranted.—Reuters



In this Jan 21, 2015 file photo, a model wears a creation by designer Valentino during his men's fall-winter 2015/2016 fashion collection presented in Paris, France.



In this Feb 18, 2015 file photo, The DelPoza Fall 2015 collection is modeled during Fashion Week in New York.



In this Nov 22, 2015 file photo, Nicki Minaj wears a pink gown as she presents the award for favorite duo or group - pop/rock at the American Music Awards in Los Angeles.



In this Feb 8, 2015 file photo, Eden xo arrives at The 57th Annual Grammy Awards - Universal Music Group Grammy After Party in Los Angeles.



This color swatch image released by Pantone shows a shade of blue, called Serenity.



This color swatch image released by Pantone shows a shade of pink, called Rose Quartz.

Pantone's color of the year grows to 2 colors

Serenity now, people, with some Rose Quartz mixed in. The experts at the Pantone Color Institute have chosen not one but two colors of the year - named thusly - in a complementary pairing that spans fashion, media, packaging, housewares and a desire for more tranquility and calm in actual life. Or so they say - they being color analysts, who span the globe in search of trends. Rose Quartz is a pale pink and Serenity is close but not quite what once was referred to as baby blue.

In fact, Pantone believes the blend reflects a gender neutrality that has strengthened over the last year or so and is sure to carry through to 2016 and beyond, said Laurie Pressman, vice president of the institute, based in Carlstadt, New Jersey. It's the first time Pantone has picked two colors of the year since it debuted the designation in 1999.

"This is a fusion of two shades," Pressman said in a recent interview. "Rose Quartz is a warm and embracing gentle rose tone that conveys compassion and a sense of composure. Serenity reflects a mindset of inner peace." Those things, she said, are in short supply. "Our lives are stressful, and what we're seeing is consumers trying to cut out that noise by balancing the fast pace, their fractured lives, their hurried lives, with some downtime and some calm, and the opportunity to just switch off," Pressman said.

But there's more to the pairing than a desire for emotional nourishment, more quiet and more relaxation. "There's a calmness, but there's also a happiness to it," Pressman said. In travels to home and interior design shows around the world, Pantone came up with examples of the two colors in lighting, kitchen wares and home accents such

as throw pillows for the living room and sets of bedding.

Nowhere are the two colors stronger than in fashion - as seen on the streets, on the backs of celebrities and on catwalks around the globe, she said. Chanel put the two together in its haute couture collection for fall 2015. Prada did the same for spring/summer, as did Fendi. Thom Browne put the color merge front and center for his 2016 resort collection for women, while Richard James and Roberto Cavalli used the two together for men on spring 2016 runways.

Blurring gender lines on catwalks had Valentino showing pale pink athletic-inspired shoes for men with a band of Serenity blue, along with leather backpacks showing off geometric splashes of the same shades.

In fashion, women have borrowed from men in suiting, color and silhouette for years. And they still do. "But the real news is that men are exploring, and they're experimenting with their other side," Pressman said. Pink for girls and blue for boys hasn't always been the norm: In 1927, Time magazine printed a chart showing gender-appropriate colors for girls and boys as reflected in the wares of major US retailers, but even then opinions differed, Pressman said. Filene's in Boston suggested parents dress boys in pink, as did Best & Co. in New York, Halle's in Cleveland and Marshall Field in Chicago.

After World War II, with the return women back into their homes, pink rose to ultra-feminine levels. Today, retailers are promoting collections intended to be worn by both men and women. "People want choices. They don't want to be pushed into a spe-

cific direction," Pressman said. "They want to make that choice on their own. Today's genderless styling is definitely a more modern approach than we've seen in the past, and it's not necessarily trying to make a man look like a woman or a woman look like a man. It's about creating a canvas." — AP



This image released by Harper's Bazaar shows the September 2015 issue of Harper's Bazaar, designed in shades of blue and pink. — AP photos



Host Arsenio Hall addresses the crowd during EBONY magazine's 30th Annual Power 100 Gala at the Beverly Hilton on Wednesday. — AP photos



Actor/activist and honoree Jesse Williams.

Clinton, Hill make Ebony magazine gala musical

Ebony magazine's annual Power 100 list highlights black leaders in business, politics, arts and academia, but the gala celebrating the honorees was a mostly musical affair. Arsenio Hall hosted the private ceremony Wednesday at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, where rapper-singer Jidenna, singer-songwriter Judith Hill, and '70s funk pioneers George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic provided the tunes.

With more than a dozen musicians on stage, Clinton and his band capped off the evening with more than 45 minutes of music - a rollicking set of hits including "Atomic Dog," "Flash Light" and "Give Up the Funk." Clinton traded his rainbow 'do and colorful garb for a natty black fedora and a white dinner jacket for the occasion. At times, the 74-year-old sat back and let his talented ensemble lead the groove. Hill, whose Prince-produced debut album was released earlier this year, was accompanied by her parents for her performance - literally. The 31-year-old singer's mom and dad played in her band Wednesday: Dad on bass, mom on keys. Prince is on Ebony's Power 100 list this year, but he didn't attend the ceremony.

Jidenna, a new artist and emerging style icon with his slicked hair and slim suit, performed his debut single, "Classic Man."



Jidenna performs during EBONY magazine's 30th Annual Power 100 Gala.



Judith Hill performs during EBONY magazine's 30th Annual Power 100 Gala.

Other entertainers on the magazine's list include Jada Pinkett Smith, Kendrick Lamar, John Legend, Drake, Janet Jackson, Viola Davis, Wendy Williams, Regina King, Janelle Monae and "Daily Show" host Trevor Noah. Actors Zendaya and Jesse Williams, both also on the list, appeared onstage during the gala. Zendaya, 19, said she planned to harness the power of social media to wield influence in the world. Williams, 34, said art can be "a tool for social uplift and black power."

Among the other leaders on the Power 100 chart are US attorney general Loretta Lynch, California attorney general Kamala Harris, Coca-Cola chief financial officer Kathy N Waller, Kaiser Permanente chairman Bernard Tyson and nuclear physicist Njema J Frazier. Wednesday's event also celebrated Ebony magazine's 70th anniversary. Editor-in-Chief Kierna Mayo said the Power 100 list is part of the magazine's mission toward progress and presenting thoughtful perspectives on black life. "We mean to be progressive and provocative," she said. The complete Power 100 list is available online and in the magazine's December-January issue. — AP

Lenny Kravitz turns camera on paparazzi in photo exhibit

Legendary rocker Lenny Kravitz's photo exhibit was never meant to turn out the way it did. While shooting photos on his days off from touring, Kravitz set out hoping to capture soulful photographs and people in their everyday environments. But each time he stepped out with his camera, fans followed and paparazzi flocked. "It started out being a real nuisance because I wanted to shoot. I wanted time to do my thing and be anonymous," Kravitz told The Associated Press during a personal tour of his exhibit Wednesday. The black and white collection titled "Flash" runs through Dec. 6 as part of Art Basel Miami Beach.

He blames the social media craze for people forgetting basic manners and respect for one another. "It's really weird that people feel they have a right to invade your space in any kind of way." After several frustrating encounters, the rocker turned the camera on the crowds and started clicking - almost a joke at first. But then something changed. "Life and art is about accepting and taking what you're organically given ... this is what life is bringing me at this moment, don't be pissed off about it."

As he developed the photos, he found himself no longer categorizing the people, but sensing their individual stories in their eyes, expressions and moods. "I just began to really look into the people" and found "curiosity, happiness, pain, intrigue ... frustration, love, everything, just people, human emotions." Kravitz is among dozens of celebs, including Hilary Swank, Sylvester Stallone, Eva Longoria and Katie Holmes, who are in town for the prestigious art fair, which is an extension of the annual contemporary art fair in Basel, Switzerland. The fair officially opens Thursday, but many independent fairs and star-studded parties are already underway.

Kravitz, who has lived in Miami on and off for decades, said the exhibit also speaks to the culture's obsession with documenting everything from food to nail art, yet often don't realize the human connections they're giving up in return. "It shows me how lonely and empty and hurt and unloved people feel," he said, looking every bit a rock star in a suede leopard jacket, blue paisley button down and characteristic sunglasses.

"Sometimes people will say to me, 'Can I have a picture?' And I'll say, 'Look, I can't right now,' but I'll say, 'It's so nice to meet you' and I'll take my glasses off and look them in the eye ... and I'll give them a hug and they'll say, 'No, no, no, I want the picture' ... and I'm like, 'We just had a moment.'" The rocker is releasing an album in 2016, but declined to give any details on the upcoming project, which he said he hoped to finish in the next two or three months. — AP



Musician Lenny Kravitz stands in front of one of his photos from his exhibit 'Flash', which is running in conjunction with Art Basel in Miami Beach, Wednesday. — AP

New 'Batman v Superman' trailer debuts on 'Jimmy Kimmel Live'

A new trailer for "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" debuted Wednesday night, courtesy of Ben Affleck and "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" Affleck stopped by the late-night show to share the new clip, which features the superheroes' alter egos interacting. "I just have a bad history with freaks dressed like clowns," Ben Affleck intones as Bruce Wayne. A new "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" teaser trailer had debuted Monday during Fox's "Gotham," showing a powerful confrontation

between Affleck's Dark Knight and Henry Cavill's Man of Steel. The first full "Batman v Superman" trailer debuted in April after being leaked online.

"Batman v Superman" also stars Jesse Eisenberg (Lex Luthor), Amy Adams (Lois Lane), Laurence Fishburne (Perry White), Jeremy Irons (Alfred Pennyworth), Diane Lane (Martha Kent), and Holly Hunter, and will feature the bigscreen debut of Gal Gadot's Wonder Woman and Jason Momoa's Aquaman ahead of the characters'

standalone films, as well as two planned "Justice League" films, which will bring all of DC Comics' most iconic heroes together. Other Justice League solo movies already planned include "The Flash," starring Ezra Miller; "Shazam," with Dwayne Johnson appearing as antagonist Black Adam; and "Cyborg," starring Ray Fisher. Snyder directed "Batman v Superman" from Chris Terrio's script, based on a story by Snyder and David S Goyer. — Reuters



Quick and easy lunch ideas for **diabetics**

Lunch can be tricky, especially if you are at work or school during the day. But the traditional PB & J is not your only option when packing lunch.

Stock Your Kitchen

If you want to make packing lunch a quick and easy task, stock your kitchen with healthy options like those listed below. Pick a few foods that you like and keep them on hand. Also - keep some storage containers, plastic sandwich bags, a thermos and an insulated lunch bag or cooler to transport and store your lunch.

Vegetables

- Fresh vegetables - baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, snap peas

and precut vegetables are quick to pack

- You can also buy whole vegetables like broccoli, bell peppers and celery; chop them up when you get home to use throughout the week on sandwiches, wraps or salads
- Fresh mixed greens or spinach - pile onto sandwiches, wraps or use in salads
- Frozen vegetables - try those you can steam in the package; a great idea if you've got a microwave available to you during the day

Fruit

- Whole fruit like apples, bananas, oranges, clementines, pears, nectarines, grapes or peaches - these are easy to grab and go

- Canned fruit (canned in juice, not syrup) - try individual serving cups or cans of mandarin oranges, peaches or fruit cocktail

Whole Grains

- 100% whole wheat bread, pitas, and/or wraps - if you're trying to cut back on carbohydrate, consider a low-carb version
- Quinoa or quick-cooking barley

Protein Foods

- Canned tuna
- Reduced-sodium canned beans
- Reduced-sodium lean deli meat - try roasted turkey, chicken or roast beef
- Rotisserie chicken - buy a whole chicken and use it throughout the week
- Eggs - hard boil these ahead of time
- Unsalted nuts/nut mix

Dairy

- Skim or 1% milk - soymilk or almond milk are also good options, especially for those with a lactose intolerance
- Light yogurt or non-fat Greek yogurt - plain is best, flavored varieties will have more carbohydrate
- Cottage cheese - try 1% or 2% low-fat cottage cheese to cut back on the calories

Some Extras for Flavor

- Hot sauce
- Hummus
- Light salad dressing
- Mustard
- Salsa
- Balsamic vinegar
- Olive oil
- Lime and/or lemon juice

It takes a little planning, but bringing a homemade lunch to work or school is an easy step toward a healthier lifestyle.



Diabetes-friendly dinners

Speedy and Spicy **Shrimp Stir-fry**

Prep Time: <5 minutes

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe (about 2/3 cup stir-fry + 1/2 cup quinoa or brown rice)

- Calories 220
- Carbohydrate 30 g
- Protein 16 g
- Fat 2.5 g
- Saturated Fat 0.5 g
- Dietary Fiber 4 g
- Cholesterol 100 mg
- Sodium 585 mg

This Recipe Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup gluten-free low sodium chicken broth
- 2 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 tablespoon gluten-free light soy sauce

- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- Cooking spray
- 16 ounce bag frozen stir-fry vegetables
- 1 pound peeled and deveined shrimp
- 3 cups cooked quinoa or brown rice

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, whisk together chicken broth and corn starch, until corn starch dissolves. Whisk in soy sauce and red pepper flakes.
2. In a large nonstick skillet or wok, heat cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add frozen vegetables and cook for about 4 minutes.
3. Add chicken broth mixture to pan and bring to a simmer. Add shrimp and cook for 4 minutes or until shrimp is cooked through.
4. Serve over quinoa or brown rice.





Asparagus Shepherd's Pie Recipe

Ingredients

- 6 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of asparagus soup, undiluted
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed
- 1 teaspoon rubbed sage
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- Paprika

Directions

1. In a saucepan, cover potatoes with water; cook until very tender. Meanwhile, in a skillet, cook beef, onion and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in soup and pepper; pour into a greased 2-qt. baking dish.
2. Cook asparagus in a small amount of water until crisp-tender, about 3-4 minutes; drain and place over beef mixture.
3. Drain potatoes; mash with milk, butter, sage and salt. Spread over the asparagus. Sprinkle with cheese and paprika. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20 minutes. Yield: 6-8 servings.

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 20 min.

Makes 6-8 servings

Dark Chocolate Mint Bites

Ingredients

* Nonstick cooking spray

- 1 cup quick-cooking rolled oats
- 1/2 cup dark or semisweet chocolate pieces
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 cup finely crushed chocolate wafers (about 19 wafers), or bear-shape chocolate graham snack cookies (1-1/2 cups)
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon fat-free milk
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon shortening
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 2 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese (Neufchatel), softened (1/4 cup)
- 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
- Snipped fresh mint (optional)

Directions

1. Lightly coat an 8x8x2-inch baking pan with cooking spray.* Set aside.
2. For crust, place oats in a food processor; cover and pulse with several on/off turns until finely ground. In a medium saucepan combine 1/4 cup of the chocolate



pieces and the butter; heat and stir over low heat until melted. Stir in oats, crushed wafers, cocoa powder, milk, and salt. Press crust mixture into prepared pan. Chill for 15 minutes.

3. In the same saucepan combine the remaining 1/4 cup chocolate pieces and the shortening. Heat and stir over low heat until melted. Set aside.
4. In a medium bowl combine powdered sugar, cream cheese, and peppermint extract; stir until smooth. Spread evenly over crust. Drizzle with the melted chocolate mixture.
5. Chill about 1 hour or until chocolate drizzle is set (cream cheese layer will remain soft). If desired, sprinkle with fresh mint. Cut into 24 bars.

10 tips for eating healthy when you have **Diabetes**

Be picky. Choose the right foods to keep your diabetes in check. Try to cook at home instead of going out. It's easier to keep track of what you eat when you make your own meals.

Use these ideas as motivation for cooking delicious, good-for-you meals. Keep these strategies in mind when you dine out too.

1. Think whole

Use brown rice and whole wheat pasta. Look for 100% whole wheat flour and breads as well as other whole grains such as oats and barley.

Make the switch simple. For instance, if you are short on time, pop a packet of pre-cooked frozen brown rice into the microwave.

2. Fill up!

Aim for at least 8 grams of fiber per meal, especially when you eat carbohydrate-rich foods. It will help manage your blood sugar, keep you feeling full, and be good for your heart health. That's extra important because diabetes makes heart disease more likely.

Try:

- * Peas
- * Beans
- * Oats
- * Barley
- * Fruits like apples, pears, berries, and citrus fruit
- * Vegetables like sweet potatoes, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, carrots, and beets

3. Replace some carbs with good fat

Monounsaturated fats — nuts, avocados, olive oil, and canola oil — can help lower your blood sugar. Just avoid huge portions so you don't take in too many calories.

Add nuts and avocado to salads and entrees. Look for salad dressings, marinades, and sauces made with canola or olive oil. You can also cook with these two oils.

4. Eat foods that won't spike blood sugar

Foods that aren't likely to cause a big rise in blood sugar include meat, poultry, fish, avocados, salad vegetables, eggs, and cheese. Adding these items to your plate will help balance the foods you eat that contain carbs.

5. Go lean

Choose recipes with less saturated fat. Maybe skip that cream sauce and look for lean cuts of meat, skim or low-fat dairy, and vegetable sources of protein like beans, lentils, or nuts.

6. Check the fine print

Does your recipe spell out what the calories, carbs, fiber, and fat are? That info comes in handy. Then all you have to do is stick to the suggested serving size and you'll know exactly what you get.



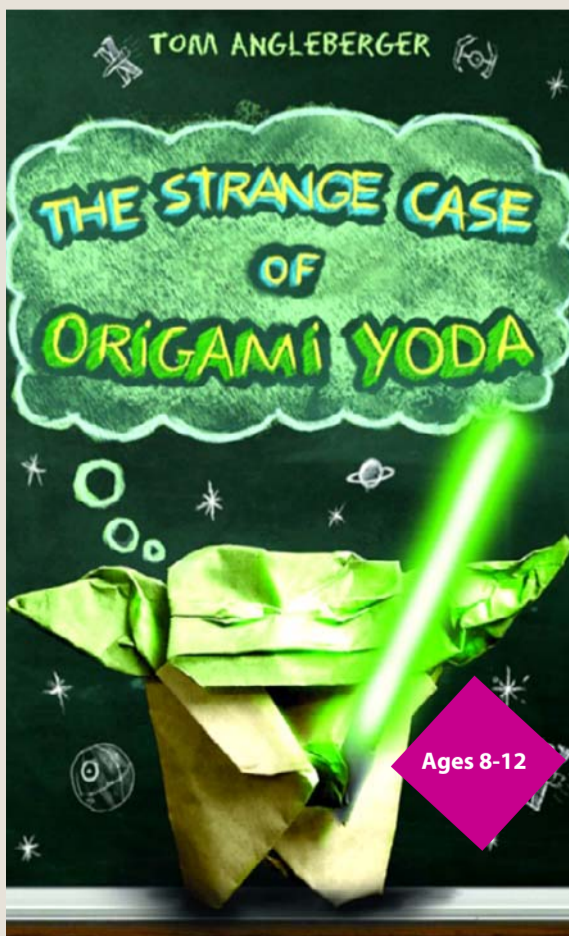
7 books for kids who hate to read

Most kids nowadays would rather play with their iPad than pick up a book. If you have a child who says they 'hate to read' here are some great titles to try and help them overcome their fear of the written word.

The Strange Case of Origami Yoda

By Tom Angleberger

Tommy and his classmates attempt to determine whether school weirdo Dwight can, in fact, communicate with his origami Yoda finger puppet (yes, that would be the Yoda of Star Wars fame). If the premise sounds loopy, that's because it is—delightfully so. Young readers will adore Origami Yoda's surprisingly sage advice on everything from pop quizzes to what to do if you accidentally wet your pants. Several follow-up novels offer even more laughs and wisdom.



Ages 8-12



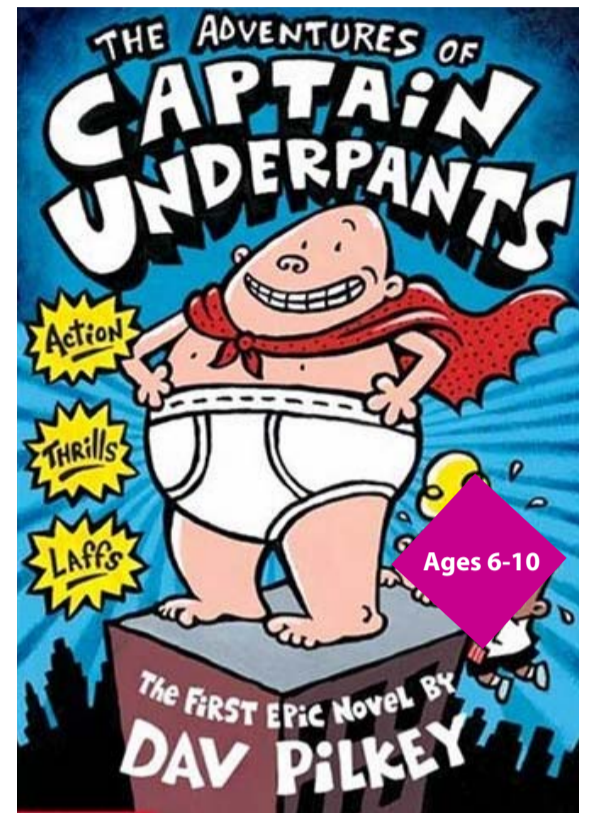
Ages 10+

A Tale Dark and Grimm

By Adam Gidwitz

This isn't your grandma's Hansel and Gretel story—more like your great-great-great-grandma's. In a surprisingly funny throwback to the original tellings of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales, Gidwitz doesn't shy away from blood, gore, and yes, even beheadings. The novel weaves together several Grimm stories, some more obscure and grisly than others, and does so with a wink and a smile that child readers, so often coddled, will appreciate. Two follow-ups delve even deeper into the world of Grimm.

The Adventures of Captain Underpants



By Dav Pilkey

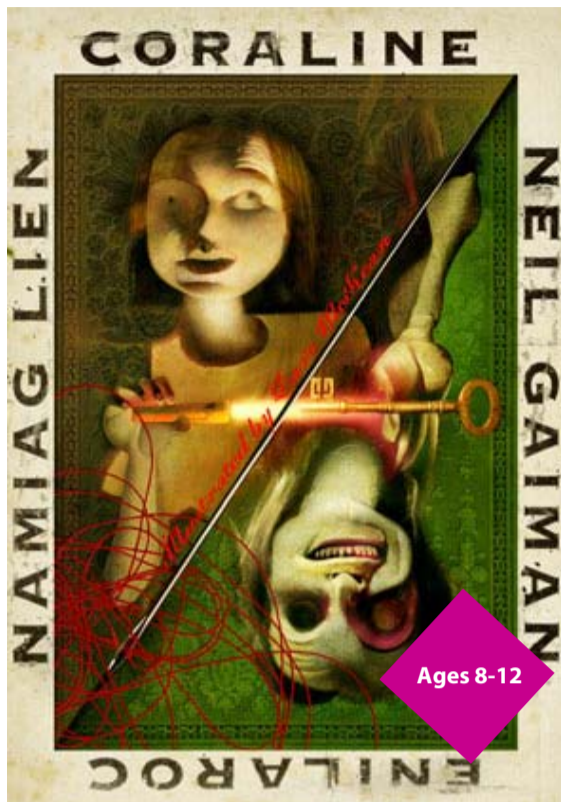
Troublemakers George and Harold accidentally hypnotize their principal, turning him into a crime-fighting superhero named Captain Underpants, who wears (appropriately enough) little more than underpants. With lots to giggle at in both the text and illustrations, this stupendously silly book has garnered legions of fans. Best of all, there's a whole series to satisfy kids once they've caught the reading bug.

Hamster and Cheese: Guinea Pig, Pet Shop Private Eye



By Colleen AF Venable;
illustrated by Stephanie Yue

The first in a series, this graphic novel for the younger set stars Sasspants, a guinea pig detective, who attempts to crack the case of a stolen sandwich, with the help of her fellow residents at Mr. Venezi's pet shop. A healthy dose of mystery, silliness, and fun animal facts squeezed into a short, easy-to-digest package.



Ages 8-12

Coraline

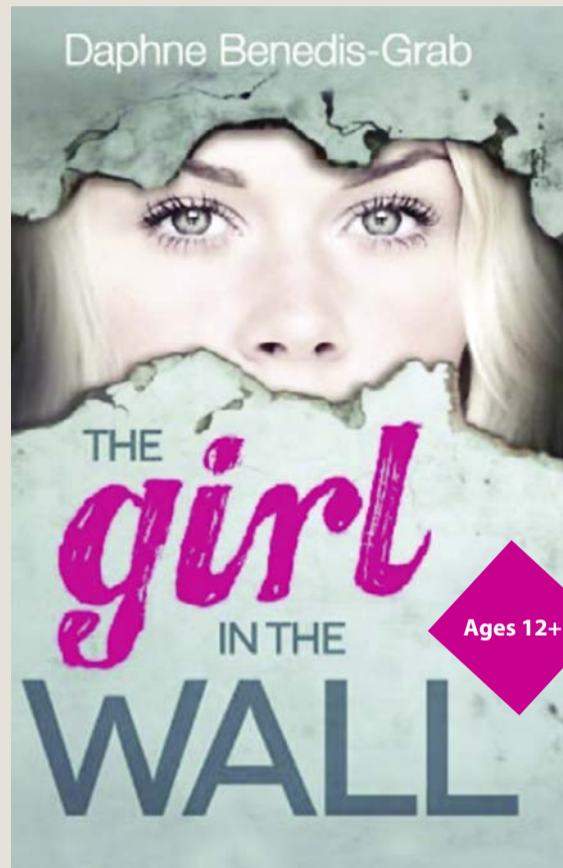
By Neil Gaiman

If your kid is up for something really creepy, look no further than this thin gem of a novel (adapted into an excellent stop-motion movie in 2009). When young Coraline travels through a secret doorway in her family's new house, she discovers a home exactly like hers--except that her "Other Mother" and "Other Father" have buttons for eyes, and, oh yeah, they're incredibly spooky and want to trap Coraline in their world forever. A read-in-a-single-breathless-sitting-with-all-the-lights-on sort of book.

The Girl in the Wall

By Daphne Benedis-Grab

After Ariel's blowout birthday party at the family mansion turns into a literal hostage crisis, Ariel retreats into the secret passageways in the walls while her ex-best friend, Sera, must use her wits to keep herself and her classmates alive. Told in alternating points of view, this action-packed thriller pulls no punches, keeping readers on the edges of their seats until the very end.



Ages 12+



Ages 14+

The 5th Wave

By Rick Yancey

One of the few humans left on Earth after an alien invasion, sixteen-year-old Cassie fights for her life in a post-apocalyptic world where basic resources are scarce, and no one can be trusted. It's kill or be killed in this nonstop ride of a novel that will have your teen up way past bedtime.

Do you stop your kids from reading

Lots of parents don't even realize they are the reason for their kids don't read. Reading has been proven to be one of the key indicators of academic success and yet parents either do not encourage their children directly - or indirectly - discourage them from reading. Here are the things you might be doing to turn your kids off books.

1. Having the Wrong Books

If you only have boring adult books as reading options, your kids will be discouraged from reading. It's highly unlikely your children will read unless they have access to books at their reading level and books about things in which they are interested. Get your dog lovers books about dogs and your Lego fans books about Legos.

2. Having Limited Access to Books

Books encourage kids to read. No books = no reading. Borrow lots of books from the library, take your kids to the bookshop. Flood your house with books. Then leave them in different rooms and piles so they're easily accessible.

3. Only Reading Aloud to Our Littles

We sometimes forget that our older kids need us to read aloud to them as well. As you probably already know, research shows that reading aloud to kids is the best thing

you can do to improve their literacy skills, not to mention that it motivates them to read on their own. Plus, you'll get the opportunity to read amazing chapter books that can inspire discussion and bonding.

4. Not Letting Them Choose Their Books

Kids want to read books that they get to pick out themselves. That's not to say you can't advise on picking a good book, show them how to pick a just-right book, or even model reading the back cover or jacket flap of a book - but being able to actually choose the book themselves predisposes them to want to read that book. Let kids pick from a selection if that works best for you, but let them be in charge of the final decision. As Maya Angelou said, "Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him."

5. Offering Nonsense Easy Reader Books

Many early readers are asked to read easy

phonics books that are mind-numbingly boring. Boring because these books have no plot thread whatsoever. So the kid sits and strings words together, missing the whole point of reading: the narrative and exposition. Not only that, the child becomes uninterested and frustrated. So try to find easy readers that actually make sense. Tug the Pup and Bob Books are two good book series that have both decodable text and narrative meaning.

6. Making Reading Punitive

If you subscribe to the Love and Logic parenting method, we're not supposed to punish ("You didn't read, you don't get screen time.") or bribe ("I'll give you screen time IF you read.") but rather reward for positive behavior ("Wow, you spent so much time reading, I'd like to treat you to 30 minutes of screen time."). I think this is hard and tricky and it totally makes my head want to explode, but I bring it up so

you can think about it. We don't want reading to become something dreadful or punitive. We want reading to be lovely and fun and rainbows and unicorns. Consider how you can reward for reading, not punish.

7. Not Reading Yourself

Your kids are watching your every move. Plus they copy you. So they need to see you reading regularly. The experts say this is good modeling. In other words, shut off the TV and put down your mobile and pick up a book.

8. Not Having Any Time to Read

If our kids are too scheduled with activities, they'll have no time to read. I know this makes sense, but it's something we need to think about carefully. What is your daily schedule like? Do you have time for reading? It's critical that kids have unscheduled time every day for reading as well as relaxing.

Friday Times

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015

Travel

Santiago
de Cuba



Exploring **Cuba's** 500-year anniversary cities



Soon after arriving in Cuba in 1511, conquistador Diego Velizquez de Cuellar set about founding seven pioneering villas (towns) in the new colony with the aim of subjugating the restless Taino natives. Four of Velizquez's villas - Trinidad, Sancti Spiritus, Camagey, and Santiago de Cuba - were given major facelifts over the past couple of years to coincide with their quincentennials. Revitalized and ready for visitors, each city offers travelers a unique opportunity to experience a bit of Cuban history.

Brunet Palace and San Francisco Church on the Plaza Mayor in Trinidad, Cuba.



Santiago de Cuba

Anyone planning to visit Cuba in 2015 or 2016 should contemplate braving the itchy eastern heat and decamping to Santiago de Cuba, the country's second largest city, which was founded on 25th July 1515 and named after St. James the Apostle. Improvements to Santiago's infrastructure, part of the initiatives to prepare the city for its 500th anniversary festivities, have focused on two main areas. Central Parque Cespedes has undergone a much-needed makeover following damage done by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, and the exterior of the imposing cathedral designed by Carlos Segrera in 1922 has been given new life with substantial work carried out on its dome and handsome bell-towers. Across the square, similar architectural precision is being applied

to another Segrera creation, the magnificently eclectic Club San Carlos, which will soon to be relaunched as a decorative arts museum. Slightly behind schedule is the Hotel Imperial, a radical rethink of a grandiose but long disused hotel; its renovated facade already sparkles, and rooms probably should be ready in the new year. The hotel sits on Santiago's main shopping street, Calle Saco, currently being made into a proper pedestrianized boulevard.

The second part of Santiago's 500 project involves the renovation of the neglected harbor. The city's waterfront has long been a semi-abandoned dead zone grossly unbecoming of a metropolis of its size. Fighting bureaucracy and building delays, planners are pushing through an urban renaissance spearheaded by an ele-

gant malecn (pier) beautified with palm trees, restaurants, a playground and a new park. There is even talk of re-establishing the city's tram line, unused since the 1950s.

Trinidad

One of the best-preserved Spanish colonial settlements in the Americas, Trinidad feels as if it slipped into a deep slumber in 1860 and has only just woken up. Recent renovation efforts in conjunction with the city's 500th anniversary in 2014, along with Cuba's ongoing economic reforms, have given visitors to this Unesco World Heritage Site plenty of reasons to stay awake, particularly on the gastronomic front.

Before 2011, Trinidad sported just three private restaurants. Today, there are over ninety, many housed in the opulent colonial mansions

for which the city is famous. Among the front-runners are Sol Ananda, which stands out for its exquisite furnishings and adventurous international cuisine, and Vista Gourmet, memorable for its romantic rooftop terrace where you can enjoy surf and turf dishes with a fine accompanying buffet.

Trinidad is experiencing a surge of new casas particulares (private homestays) and is anxiously awaiting the end of two slow but meticulous hotel-building projects. One aims to incorporate the ruins of an old hilltop chapel (La Popa) into a boutique five-star accommodation. Another, a block from the main square, will convert the magnificent but long mildewed Palacio Iznaga into a hotel befitting of the sugar baron who once lived there. The centrepiece of Trinidad's 2014



Sol Ananda Restaurant



Santiago de Cuba



Calle Independencia Street

anniversary celebrations was the opening of the beautifully restored Casa Frias, a cultural center that exhibits an incredibly detailed scale-model of Trinidad's historic core on its ground floor.

Sancti Spiritus

Sancti Spiritus is Cuba's underdog city, the least known and least visited of Velizquez's seven founding villas. Gritty and light on tourists, its grid of hard-bitten streets were given a comprehensive makeover in 2014. A brief walkabout will reveal scrubbed cobbled lanes and colonial edifices repainted in a rainbow of brilliant Caribbean colors. The centerpiece of the renovations is Calle Independencia, the city's boulevard (pedestrianized shopping street) freshly embellished with potted palms, benches and

statues of local personalities, and capped with an attractive new boutique hotel, Don Florencio, that occupies restored colonial digs.

With the explosive growth of Cuba's private sector, new state-run restaurants tend to get short shrift, but exceptions can be made for Taberna La Ribera Yayabo. Enjoying a pretty riverside location overlooking Sancti Spiritus' emblematic humpbacked bridge, this retro bodega serves Cuban food with a Spanish influence cooked on an open grill in full view of the dining room.

Meals are complemented by fine wines plucked from one of Cuba's best wine cellars (in a cavernous room downstairs) and recommended by a resident sommelier, an endangered species in Cuba until recently.

Nearby you can detour to the Casa de la

Guayabera, a mini-museum that revives the long-held belief that Sancti Spiritus is the birthplace of the pleated guayabera 'wedding shirt'. To add validity to the claim, a small onsite museum displays glass cases of erstwhile guayaberas worn by the likes of Fidel Castro and Gabriel Garcia Marquez, while a workshop next door demonstrates the skill involved in making them.

Camaguey

Founded as Santa Maria del Puerto del Principe in February 1514, Camaguey has long been a regional contrarian counterbalancing the confidence of Havana with the brooding sedition of Santiago. The city's modern renaissance began in 2008 when the old colonial centre, notable for its unusual labyrinthine

street layout and generous slew of baroque churches, was listed as a Unesco World Heritage site. With a 500th birthday to celebrate, Camaguey's rehabilitation rocketed.

Since 2013 the city has opened several elegant restaurants, the quirky Bar Yesterday dedicated to The Beatles, and four new colonial-style hotels, from the regal Hotel Santa Maria to the railway-themed Hotel Camino de Hierro. However, perhaps the most inspired of its 500 anniversary creations is the 'Calle de los Cines', a stretch of arterial Calle Agramonte that has been given over to a movie theme. Camaguey's key role in Cuban cinema history is catalogued with a multiplex cinema, a video-art gallery, a film studies center, a restaurant with movie director seating, and a bar themed for the film Casablanca. www.lonelyplanet.com



Serafin Sanchez Park in Sancti Spiritus.



Camaguey

WORD SEARCH

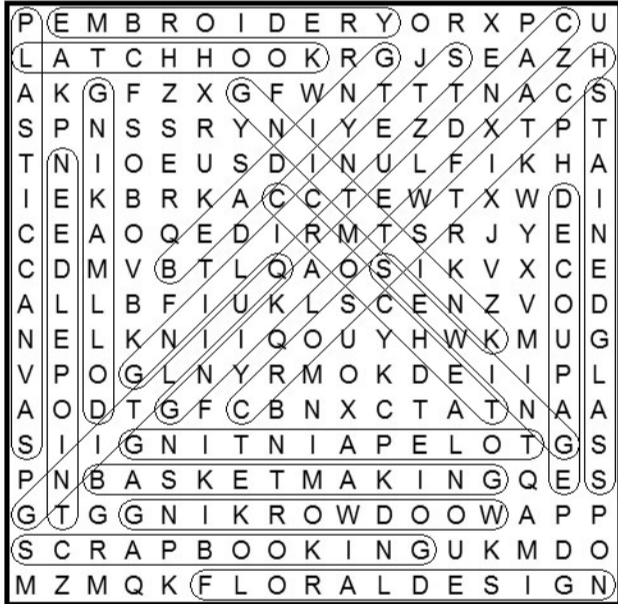
COUNTRY MUSIC STARS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



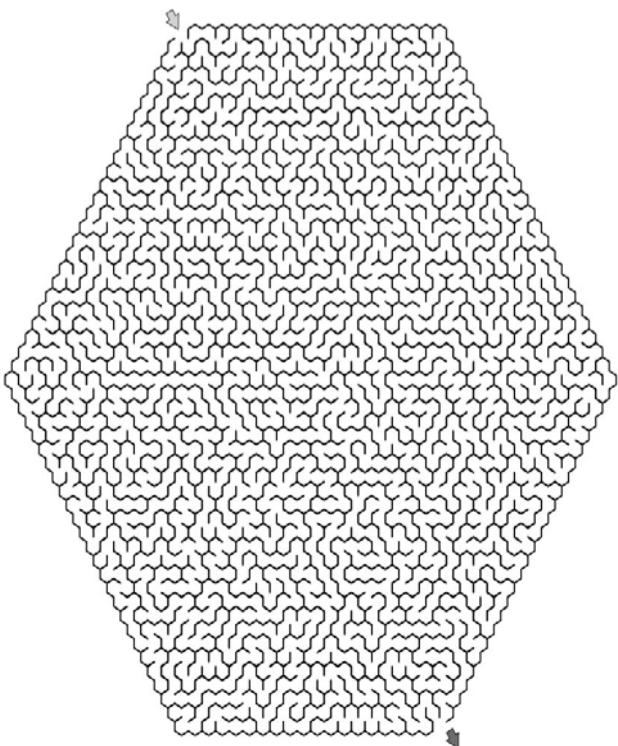
- ALAN JACKSON
- BLAKE SHELTON
- BRAD PAISLEY
- CARRIE UNDERWOOD
- CLINT BLACK
- FAITH HILL
- GARTH BROOKS
- GEORGE STRAIT
- KEITH URBAN
- KENNY CHESNEY
- LITTLE BIG TOWN
- MARTINA MCBRIDE
- MIRANDA LAMBERT
- RASCAL FLATTS
- REBA MCENTIRE
- SUGARLAND
- TAYLOR SWIFT
- TIM MCGRAW
- TOBY KEITH
- TRACE ADKINS

Yesterday's Solution

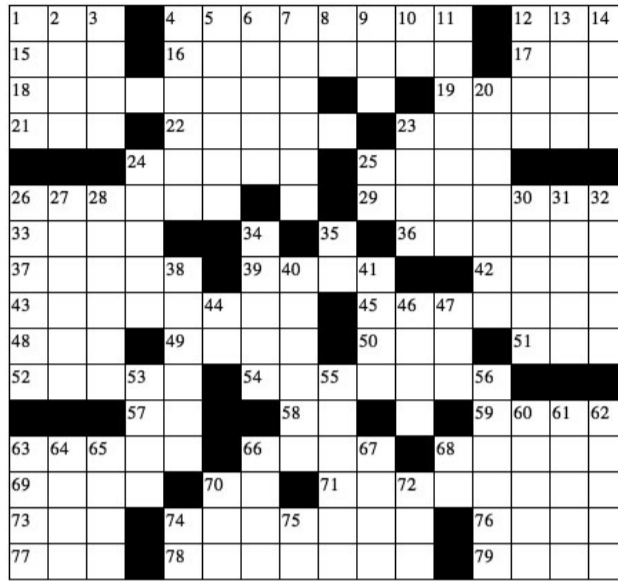
SOLUTION TO ARTS AND CRAFTS PUZZLE



CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1099



ACROSS

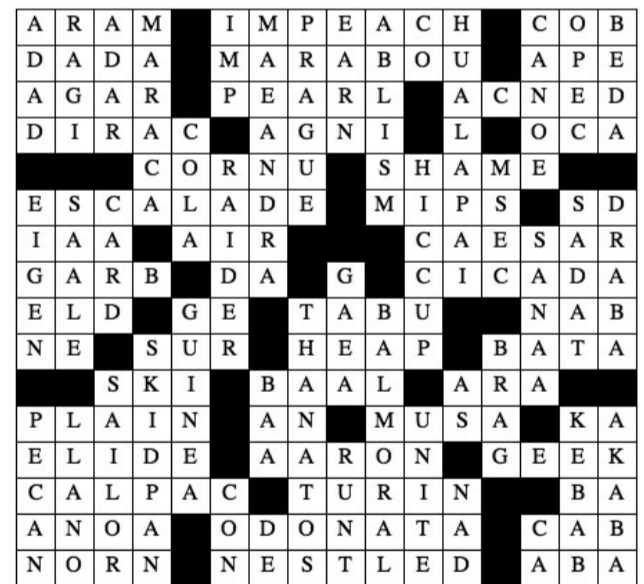
1. Animal reproductive body consisting of an ovum or embryo together with nutritive and protective envelopes.
4. A small volcanic island in Indonesia between Java and Sumatra.
12. The bill in a restaurant.
15. The 19th letter of the Greek alphabet.
16. Kindle anew, as of a fire.
17. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
18. A member of the Samoyedic people living on the Taimyr peninsula in Siberia.
19. The capital of Morocco.
21. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
22. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
26. Spot, stain, or pollutant.
29. An island republic on the island of Iceland.
33. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
36. Someone who admires a young woman.
37. Status with respect to the relations between people or groups.
39. The (prehensile) extremity of the superior limb.
42. The elasticity of something that can be stretched and returns to its original length.
43. A native or inhabitant of Armenia.
45. Type genus of the family Aplysiidae.
48. How long something has existed.
49. Armor plate that protects the chest.
50. The cry made by sheep.
51. Electronic warfare undertaken under direct control of an operational commander to locate sources of radiated electromagnetic energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition.
52. Any bundle of nerve fibers running to various organs and tissues of the body.
54. A town in southwestern British Columbia on Vancouver Island west of Vancouver.
57. The azimuth of a celestial body is the angle between the vertical plane containing it and the plane of the meridian.
58. A state in midwestern United States.
59. A river in northwestern Russia flowing generally west into the Gulf of Finland.
63. Tall perennial herb of tropical Asia with dark green leaves.
69. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
71. Combination of lenses at the viewing end of optical instruments.
73. One million periods per second.
76. Flowing in drops.
77. Something that remunerates.
78. A Dravidian language spoken in southern India.
79. An Indian nursemaid who looks after children.

DOWN

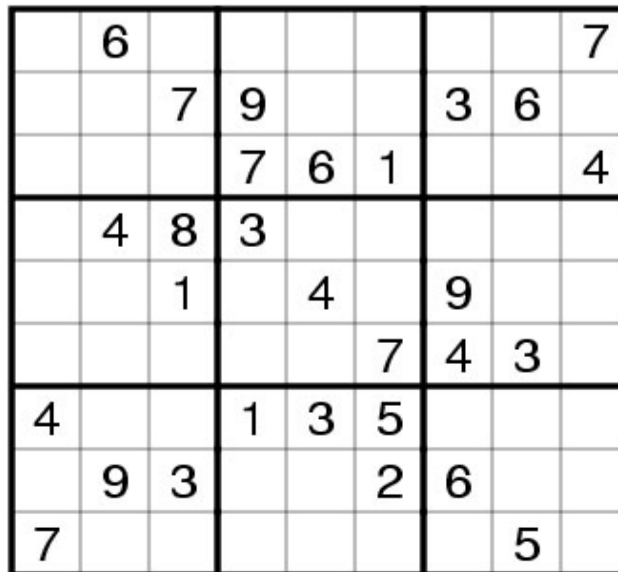
1. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
2. Mentally or physically infirm with age.
3. Drought-tolerant herb grown for forage and for its seed which yield a gum used as a thickening agent or sizing material.

4. An industrial city in southern Poland on the Vistula.
5. Sell (something) again after having bought it.
6. Jordan's port.
7. An enzyme that catalyzes the conversion of a proenzyme to an active enzyme.
8. An associate degree in nursing.
9. (astronomy) A measure of time defined by Earth's orbital motion.
10. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
11. The magnetic field strength 1 cm from a unit magnetic pole.
12. A sock with a separation for the big toe.
13. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
14. Moderate or restrain.
20. An expression of regret at having caused trouble for someone.
23. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
24. German mystic and theosophist who founded modern theosophy.
25. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
27. Come out into view, as from concealment.
28. A person who operates a farm.
30. Come into existence.
31. One of the islands of Saint Christopher-Nevis.
32. A series of mental images and emotions occurring during sleep.
34. A series of things depending on each other as if linked together.
35. A colorless explosive liquid that is volatile and poisonous and foul-smelling.
38. A symptom consisting of the involuntary expulsion of air from the nose.
40. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Ansaid) that is administered only orally.
41. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
44. A class of proteins produced in lymph tissue in vertebrates and that function as antibodies in the immune response.
46. Marked by the reception of pay.
47. A rapid escape (as by criminals).
53. Characteristic of false pride.
55. Small genus of Asian evergreen trees having columnar crowns and distinguished by leaves lacking a midrib.
56. A member of the Iroquoian people formerly living east of Lake Ontario.
60. (used of count nouns) Each and all of the members of a group considered singly and without exception.
61. Widely distributed genus of annual or perennial and often climbing herbs.
62. The 1st letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
64. A Loloish language.
65. Resembling a labyrinth in form or complexity.
66. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
67. Having an eye or eyes or eyelike feature especially as specified.
68. A person forced to flee from home or country.
70. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
72. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
74. A radioactive transuranic element.
75. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.

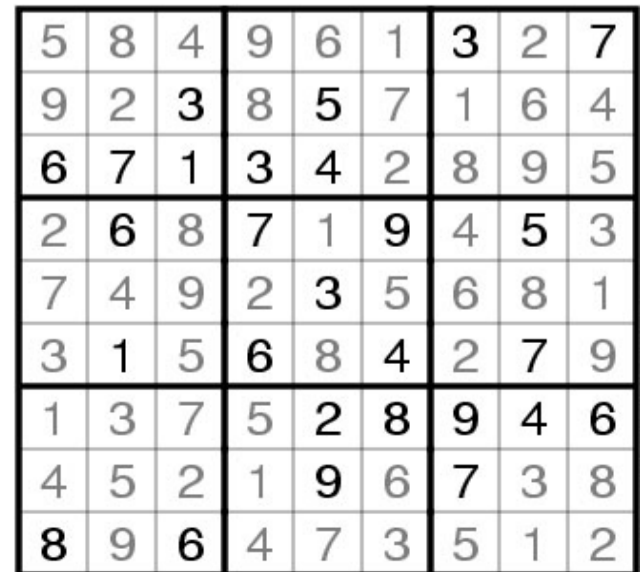
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





00:20 Fast N' Loud
 01:10 Sean Conway - Running Britain
 02:00 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theater
 02:50 Amish Mafia
 03:40 Auction Hunters
 04:05 Property Wars
 04:30 Storage Hunters UK
 05:00 Americarna
 05:30 How It's Made
 06:00 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
 06:50 Mythbusters
 07:40 The Carbonaro Effect
 08:05 The Carbonaro Effect
 08:30 You Have Been Warned
 09:20 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 10:10 Dual Survival
 11:00 Sean Conway - Running Britain
 11:50 Cuban Chrome
 12:40 Cuban Chrome
 13:30 Misfit Garage
 14:20 Wheeler Dealers
 15:10 Ice Lake Rebels
 16:00 Ice Lake Rebels
 16:50 Ice Lake Rebels
 17:40 Ice Lake Rebels
 18:30 Ice Lake Rebels
 19:20 Ice Lake Rebels
 20:10 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
 21:00 Misfit Garage
 21:50 Wheeler Dealers
 22:40 Cuban Chrome
 23:30 Outlaw Empires



00:35 Mythbusters
 01:20 How It's Made
 01:44 How It's Made
 02:08 How The Universe Works
 02:55 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 03:42 How The Universe Works
 04:29 Mythbusters
 05:16 How The Universe Works
 06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 06:50 Building The Biggest
 07:37 How It's Made
 08:00 How It's Made
 08:23 Mythbusters
 09:08 How The Universe Works
 09:53 Building The Biggest
 10:38 How It's Made
 11:00 How It's Made
 11:23 The Supernaturalist
 12:08 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 12:53 Building The Biggest
 13:38 Mythbusters
 14:23 How It's Made
 14:46 How It's Made
 15:10 How The Universe Works
 15:57 The Supernaturalist
 16:44 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 17:31 Building The Biggest
 18:18 How The Universe Works
 19:05 Mythbusters
 19:50 Mighty Ships
 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 Mighty Ships
 23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?



00:00 Violetta
 00:45 The Hive
 00:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 01:15 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 01:40 Wolfblood
 02:05 Wolfblood
 02:30 Violetta
 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 Lolirock
 06:25 Hank Zipzer
 06:50 Girl Meets World
 07:15 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 Mickey, Donald, Goofy In The Three Musketeers
 11:45 Hank Zipzer
 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 Chefs
 15:20 Shake It Up
 15:45 Shake It Up
 16:10 Violetta
 17:00 I Love Violetta
 17:10 Frozen In Time
 18:00 Miraculous: Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
 18:25 Frozen Fever
 18:40 First Class Chefs
 19:05 H2O: Just Add Water
 19:30 Violetta
 20:20 I Love Violetta
 20:30 The Princess Diaries
 22:25 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 22:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 23:10 Wolfblood
 23:35 Wolfblood



00:00 Nina Needs To Go
 00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
 00:20 Calimero
 00:35 Zou
 00:50 Loopdidoo
 01:05 Art Attack
 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
 01:45 Calimero
 02:00 Zou
 02:15 Loopdidoo
 02:30 Art Attack
 02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
 03:05 Calimero
 03:20 Zou
 03:30 Loopdidoo
 03:45 Art Attack
 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster

04:20 Calimero
 04:35 Zou
 04:45 Loopdidoo
 05:00 Art Attack
 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
 05:35 Calimero
 05:50 Zou
 06:00 Loopdidoo
 06:15 Art Attack
 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
 06:50 Calimero
 07:00 Zou
 07:20 Loopdidoo
 07:35 Art Attack
 08:00 Calimero
 08:10 Zou
 08:25 Limon And Oli
 08:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
 09:05 Sofia The First
 09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 10:25 Minnie's Bow-Toons
 10:30 Doc McStuffins
 11:00 Sofia The First
 11:30 Captain Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 11:55 Miles From Tomorrow
 12:25 Henry Hugglemonster
 12:55 Loopdidoo
 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



00:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
 00:55 The Grace Helbig Show

01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 02:20 E! News
 03:15 Giuliana & Bill
 04:10 The E! True Hollywood Story
 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 E! News
 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
 10:15 Giuliana & Bill
 11:10 The Grace Helbig Show
 11:35 The Grace Helbig Show
 12:05 E! News
 13:05 Christina Milian Turned Up
 14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 09:15 Dash Dolls
 17:00 Dash Dolls
 18:00 E! News
 19:00 Hollywood Cycle
 20:00 WAGs
 21:00 Fashion Bloggers
 21:30 Fashion Bloggers
 22:00 E! News
 23:00 House Of DVF



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
 01:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
 01:30 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
 02:00 Siba's Table
 02:30 Siba's Table
 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 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
 07:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
 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 Jenny Morris Cooks The Riviera
 21:30 Jenny Morris Cooks The Riviera
 22:00 Bite This With Nadia G
 22:30 Bite This With Nadia G
 23:00 Girl Eat World
 23:30 Girl Eat World



01:05 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 02:00 Emmerdale
 02:25 Coronation Street
 03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 04:45 Come Date With Me Australia
 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia
 06:10 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 07:05 Coronation Street
 07:55 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 09:20 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
 10:10 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 11:05 Lucan
 12:30 Come Date With Me Australia
 13:25 Emmerdale
 13:50 Emmerdale
 14:20 Coronation Street
 14:45 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
 15:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
 16:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 17:50 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia
 18:45 Come Date With Me Australia
 19:10 Coronation Street
 19:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
 20:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 21:50 Coach Trip
 22:20 Coronation Street
 22:50 Emmerdale
 23:15 Emmerdale
 23:40 Lucan



00:10 Ultimate Airport Dubai
 01:00 China's Grand Canal: Photographer's Journey
 02:00 Spirit Talk
 02:55 Ufos: The Untold Stories

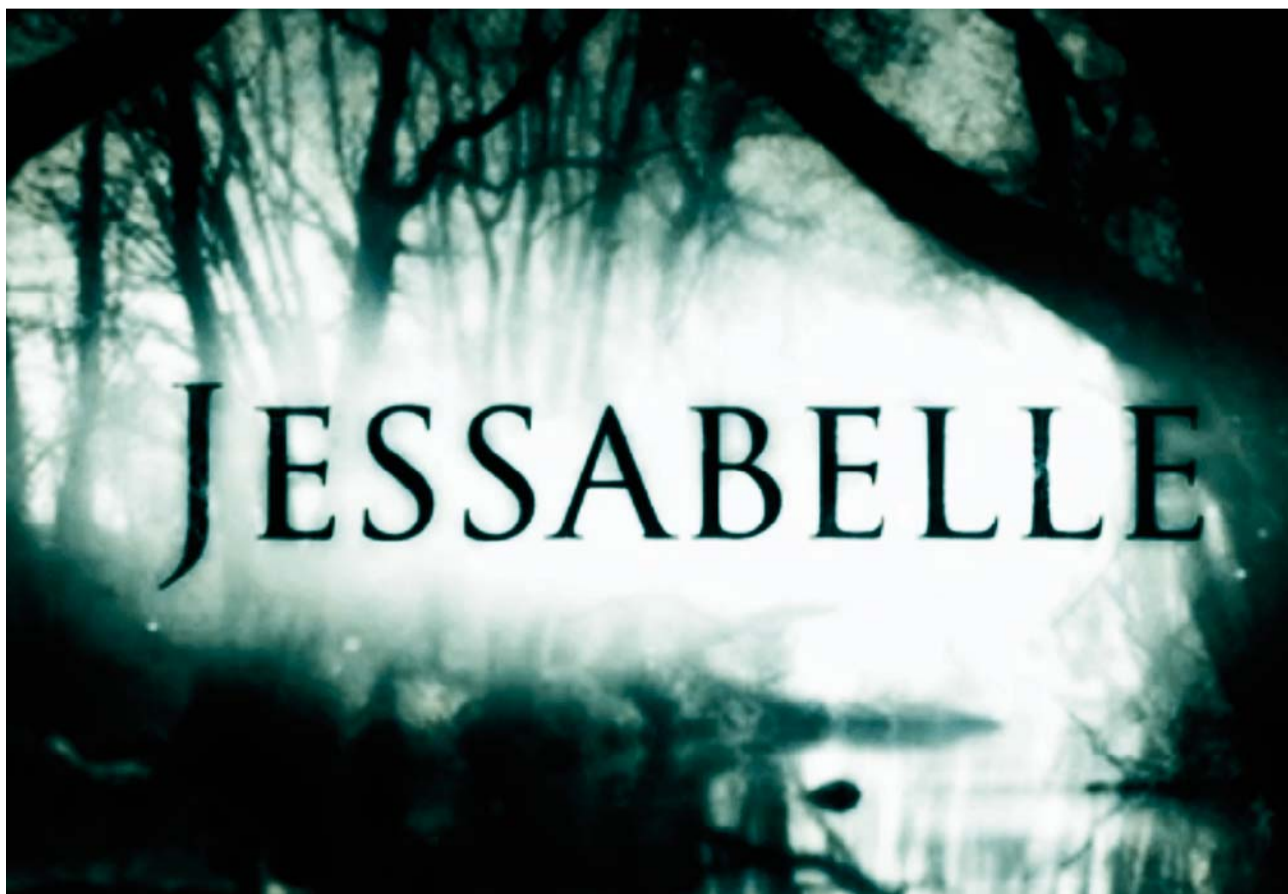
03:50 Ultimate Airport Dubai
 04:45 Man V. Viral
 05:40 Hard Time
 06:35 Inside Cocaine Wars
 07:30 Air Crash Investigation
 08:25 Dead Or Alive
 09:20 Man V. Viral
 10:15 Locked Up Abroad
 11:10 Ancient X-Files
 12:05 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey
 13:00 Inside Combat Rescue
 14:00 Dog Whisperer
 15:00 Inside Cocaine Wars
 16:00 Locked Up Abroad
 17:00 Ancient X-Files
 18:00 Taboo USA
 19:00 Inside Cocaine Wars
 20:00 Locked Up Abroad
 20:50 Ancient X-Files
 21:40 Taboo USA
 22:30 Inside Cocaine Wars
 23:20 Hard Time



00:10 The Food Files
 00:35 A Marriage Of Flavours
 01:00 Street Food Around The World
 01:25 The Food Files
 01:50 Food School
 02:15 The Food Files
 02:40 International Open House
 03:05 International Open House
 03:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
 03:55 Get Stuffed
 04:20 Hotel India
 05:10 Dream Cruises
 06:00 Exploring The Vine
 06:25 The Food Files
 06:50 Street Food Around The World
 07:15 The Food Files
 07:40 Food School
 08:05 The Food Files
 08:30 International Open House
 08:55 International Open House
 09:20 Tales From The Bush Larder
 09:45 Get Stuffed
 10:10 Hotel India
 11:00 Dream Cruises
 11:50 Exploring The Vine
 12:15 The Food Files
 12:40 Hook It, Cook It
 13:05 Hook It, Cook It
 13:35 Food School
 14:00 The Food Files
 14:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
 14:55 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
 15:25 Tales From The Bush Larder
 15:50 Eat Street
 16:20 Hotel India
 17:15 Dream Cruises
 18:10 Food School
 18:35 The Food Files
 19:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
 19:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
 20:00 Eat Street
 20:25 Hotel India
 21:15 Dream Cruises
 22:05 Food School
 22:30 Hook It, Cook It
 22:55 The Food Files
 23:20 Hook It, Cook It
 23:45 Food School



00:20 Africa's Deadliest
 01:10 Ultimate Animal Countdown
 02:00 Animal Fight Club
 02:50 Outback Wrangler
 03:45 The Incredible Dr. Po
 04:40 Africa's Deadliest
 05:35 Animal Fight Club
 06:30 Outback Wrangler
 07:25 The Incredible Dr. Po
 08:20 Amazonia
 09:15 Hidden Worlds
 10:10 Wild Thailand (2015)
 11:05 Ultimate Animals
 12:00 Invasion Of The Killer Whales
 12:55 Game Of Lions
 13:50 Built For The Kill
 14:45 The Incredible Dr. Po
 15:40 World's Wildest Encounters
 16:35 Wild Russia
 17:30 Wild Cambodia
 18:25 Ultimate Animal Countdown
 19:20 The Incredible Dr. Po
 20:10 World's Wildest Encounters
 21:00 Wild Russia
 21:50 Wild Cambodia
 22:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
 23:30 Invasion Of The Killer Whales



JESSABELLE ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

- 00:30 Hot In Cleveland
- 01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
- 01:30 Bad Judge
- 02:00 The League
- 02:30 Getting On
- 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 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
- 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 New Girl
- 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 New Girl
- 15:30 Hot In Cleveland
- 16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
- 16:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 Fresh Off The Boat
- 18:30 Black-ish
- 19:00 About A Boy
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Hot In Cleveland
- 21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
- 22:00 Bad Judge
- 22:30 Comedians
- 23:00 Getting On
- 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



LAST PASSENGER ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

OSN FIRST HD

- 00:00 Legends
- 01:00 Blindspot
- 02:00 Empire
- 03:00 Secrets And Lies
- 04:00 Suits
- 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 06:00 Backstrom
- 07:00 Suits
- 08:00 Graceland
- 09:00 Secrets And Lies
- 10:00 Backstrom
- 11:00 Suits
- 12:00 Emmerdale
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Graceland
- 15:00 Backstrom
- 16:00 Emmerdale
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Graceland
- 19:00 C.S.I. Cyber
- 20:00 Blindspot
- 21:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 22:00 Survivor: Cambodia
- 23:00 The Strain

OSN FIRST HD MORE

- 00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 01:00 Good Morning America
- 03:00 Tyrant
- 04:00 Better Call Saul
- 05:00 Good Morning America
- 07:00 Emmerdale
- 08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 09:00 Royal Pains
- 10:00 Emmerdale
- 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 Helix

OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:15 Hitman
- 02:00 Jessabelle
- 03:45 The River Wild
- 05:45 King Arthur
- 08:00 Special ID
- 10:00 Rage
- 12:00 The Outsider
- 13:45 King Arthur
- 16:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power
- 18:00 The Italian Job (2003)
- 20:00 Last Passenger
- 21:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:00 Jessabelle-18
- 01:45 The River Wild-PG15
- 03:45 King Arthur-PG15
- 06:00 Special ID-PG15
- 08:00 Rage-PG15
- 10:00 The Outsider-PG15
- 11:45 King Arthur-PG15
- 14:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power-PG15
- 16:00 The Italian Job (2003)-PG15
- 18:00 Last Passenger-PG15
- 19:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds-PG15
- 22:00 Freezer-PG15

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:00 High Road
- 02:00 When In Rome
- 04:00 Mr. Wonderful
- 06:00 Foodfight!
- 08:00 The Little Rascals Save The Day
- 10:00 Mr. Wonderful
- 12:00 When In Rome
- 14:00 Planes, Trains And Automobiles
- 16:00 The Little Rascals Save The Day
- 18:00 Zoolander
- 20:00 Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues
- 22:00 Mad Dog And Glory

OSN MOVIES DRAMA

- 01:30 Wrath-PG15
- 03:15 Nightcrawler-PG15

- 05:15 Jack Strong-PG15
- 07:30 Return To Nim's Island-PG
- 09:00 A Promise-PG15
- 10:45 Jack Strong-PG15
- 13:00 Still Mine-PG15
- 15:00 One Chance-PG15
- 17:00 A Promise-PG15

- 19:00 A Walk Among The Tombstones-PG15
- 21:00 Tracks-PG15
- 23:00 Joe-18

- 20:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend
- 22:00 Worms
- 23:30 Zarafa

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 01:30 Rust And Bone
- 03:30 Vanity Fair
- 06:00 Serial (Bad) Weddings
- 07:45 Rushmore
- 09:30 The Magic Of Belle Isle
- 11:30 Serial (Bad) Weddings
- 13:15 Tea With Mussolini
- 15:15 1911
- 17:00 The Magic Of Belle Isle
- 19:00 The Double
- 21:00 A Mighty Heart
- 23:00 25th Hour

OSN MOVIES HD PREMIERE

- 00:00 A Single Shot-18
- 02:00 Red Sky-PG15
- 04:00 Horizon-PG15
- 06:00 Mr. Peabody & Sherman-FAM
- 08:00 The Gabby Douglas Story-PG
- 10:00 Forget And Forgive-PG15
- 12:00 Rio 2-FAM
- 14:00 A Common Man-PG15
- 16:00 The Gabby Douglas Story-PG
- 18:00 Sabotage-PG15
- 20:00 St. Vincent-PG15
- 22:00 A Million Ways To Die In The West-18

She went looking for a little love but found a lot of trouble!



TRISTAR PICTURES presents a SONY PICTURES production a MARK STEVEN JOHNSON film "WHEN IN ROME" KRISTEN BELL JOSH DUHAMEL WEL MONTY JON HERRER BAL SHEPARD with DANNY DAVID and ANALECA HUSTON -- JESSICA JORDAN -- "CHRISTOPHER YOUNG JESSICA SARAH EDWARDS -- JACOB ANDREW HANCOCK BRIAN TOLLEY -- "SUSANNA MA PETRUSCELLI -- JESSICA JOHN BAILEY A.C. -- JACQUELYNNE FARRELL STEVEN HOFFER LISA SWEETHELM -- "DAVID BARKINDA & DAVID WELSHMAN -- "CAPT FOSTER MARK STEVEN JOHNSON ANDREW FRANK -- "MARK STEVEN JOHNSON

WHEN IN ROME ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD

OSN MOVIES HD

- 01:00 Breakout-PG15
- 03:00 The Fault In Our Stars-PG15
- 05:15 Almost Christmas-PG15
- 07:15 Free Birds-PG
- 09:00 Won't Back Down-PG15
- 11:00 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast-FAM
- 12:45 Khumba-PG
- 14:30 Testament Of Youth-PG15
- 16:45 Won't Back Down-PG15
- 19:00 The Lego Movie-PG
- 21:00 Penguins Of Madagascar-PG
- 23:00 If I Stay-PG15

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 01:00 Delhi Safari
- 02:45 Memory Loss
- 04:30 Bolts And Blip
- 06:00 Beethoven's Treasure Tail
- 08:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
- 10:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
- 12:00 Garfield's Fun Fest
- 13:30 Memory Loss
- 15:00 Worms
- 16:30 Zarafa
- 18:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory

OSN NEWS

- 01:00 Live MSNBC Mtp Daily
- 02:00 Live MSNBC News
- 03:00 Live NBC Nightly News
- 03:30 ABC World News With David Muir
- 04:00 Live MSNBC All In With Chris Hayes
- 05:00 Live MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 06:00 Live MSNBC The Last Word W/ Lawrence O'Donnell
- 07:00 NBC Nightly News
- 07:30 ABC World News With David Muir
- 07:57 NBC Nightly News
- 08:18 ABC World News With David Muir
- 08:39 Live ABC Nightline
- 09:06 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 10:00 MSNBC The Last Word W/ Lawrence O'Donnell
- 11:00 Live ABC World News Now
- 12:00 Live NBC Early Today
- 12:30 Live ABC America This Morning
- 14:30 MSNBC First Look
- 15:00 Live NBC Today Show
- 18:57 MSNBC Hardball W/ Chris Matthews
- 19:38 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
- 20:19 MSNBC The Last Word W/ Lawrence O'Donnell



Aries (March 21-April 19)

It's a super day to get things accomplished. Good hand-eye coordination makes almost any task run well-especially with your determination to see things through to the end. There could be a window in time that opens now, making insights possible this afternoon-take a look. Something that you thought was above your understanding seems to be quite simple. Also, this is a very lucky day. You may feel like exercising or getting mobile this afternoon. A loved one is encouraged by your words and by your attention. A bicycle ride or walk together is a wonderful way to devote some focused time. This evening is for building family memories-you will not want to wander too far from home, no matter what the temptation.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may wake up to the fact of just how much beauty you have in your life and in those around you. Similarly, everything could take on value and importance. There could be a lot of temptation to overspend or indulge too much. Just remember that you must pay to play and the bills still come due. Enjoy this time, but be realistic. Things are definitely happening in your vocation or path and will depend upon your own ambition and effort, which are strong now. Being in a position to use your good wisdom helps you to feel the trends and to make the right moves. It's a time to get ahead by taking action. Let your intuition be your guide. This evening is about money and resources, what you personally bring to the table and what you share.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

It's not hard to see what you value and care about. Your sense of appreciation is sharpened and in high focus. Being able to talk with superiors and describe what you see is a big plus in your favor. This is a good day for practical job-related thoughts and ideas. You are able to make good decisions and may decide this is the time to appraise your holdings. Understanding those around you almost assures you of a special time with special people. Great feelings and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time. You may find a kind of romantic sentimentality characterizing your approach to life now. Possibly you are longing for a soul mate or yearning to save the world; it could mean carrying a torch, as well. All you need is love.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find it easy to bring together a group of people with your words or ideas that move others. Your mental focus is strengthened and you feel more disciplined. This is a time of accolades and awards, whether you are giving them out or you are receiving them. In any case, you may need to give a speech. The speech will have your prompt attention and when the time comes for you to give the speech; you will be pleased with the result. After this workday has ended, you may take on a more introverted approach to your life. You may feel more like sharing some time with your lover or with close friends. This may not be a time when you feel like being very outgoing or wanting to present yourself to the world. A movie would be fun this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A group meeting first thing this morning finds you expressive. Your self-expression is at a high-you naturally find expressions for your particular ideas and thoughts. You could be most convincing with others and powerful in your communications. There is an abundance of energy behind what you say and think. You can make quick and sharp decisions. You communicate with feeling and strength. It's a great time to think about your own situation, exactly how you feel about yourself and where you want your life to go. Your emotions in particular-or the feelings of those around you-may be very clear. You attach more importance to friendships now and enjoy taking part in group activities that center on visionary goals.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

There is a nagging feeling that you have forgotten something this day. At this time you need to tend to any unfinished business-there is a tendency to forget your place in a past project. Establishing a sound program of organization might be your first consideration. A list will help you gain a focus. Your ambition is high at this time. Those around you truly appreciate your ability to make commonsense decisions and may interrupt you from time to time today in order to gain your advice. You will find plenty of opportunities to exert your problem-solving abilities today-for others and for yourself. A romantic involvement seems less tense at this time. Perhaps you have grown more comfortable with each other. Enjoy the giving and receiving of hugs.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

One thing comes to an end and another begins. A burdensome business partnership or situation lets up now. Listen carefully to advice from a third person. There is insight for moving forward in a new adventure. Finances are about to increase! You have many needs but also sense the needs of those around you. You encourage a friend to seek help in caring for an ill or elderly person. Mentally, you are very perceptive, your analytical abilities are at a high point and that could find you engaged in some very in-depth discussions and exploratory conversations. Being able to communicate and get your message across to others is at a pique. Your timing should be just about as good as it can get. You can indulge in a personal whim this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Working with others in a team-effort sort of atmosphere should be quite pleasurable. Someone in charge of a special task could be seeking you out to take on the responsibility of managing and directing the project. Your management abilities are in high focus. Push too long and too hard and you could blow a fuse. You and the project will be fine if you pace yourself by setting up reasonable schedules. Other people's money and resources are readily available for the work you will be doing today. Everything, including you, has a positive beginning-you will definitely see successful endings. You may have to rearrange your priorities this evening. A young person wants to involve you with a ball game or some other activity.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your focus may be on your career this week. You earn the respect of your peers through your ability to accomplish much-regardless of what happens around you each day. You attract loyal, brainy and practical people in your life-even in the workplace. You promote yourself, your ideas and your willingness to attend to the management and details of an entrepreneur type of project. You have all the ingredients to live up to your own expectations for success. Professional situations have a green light today and the energies available will be helpful in creating successful outcomes. You enjoy a fun evening this evening with friends and family; there is talk about old times, and plans are made for new experiences.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find that it is difficult to concentrate on work issues this day. A young person in your family may have a performance or some other member of your family may be in front of an audience or jury-your thoughts are in the positive mode and will help encourage them. It is possible that both your personal growth and your career depend on how you handle some very sensitive psychological material. You will benefit from perceptive insights and getting to the center of the matter. An estate sale this afternoon gains your attention. Attractive antiques could be worth more than they are advertised. Appreciating things of value and even the idea of value itself could be the order of the day. Material things will be important to you at this time.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You feel close to others-even those you do not know. The lines of communication are wide open. You have the right words when you need them and possibly a few too many words when you do not need them. Be wise in your criticisms. It is a time when you can expect some kind of extra support or recognition from those around you. You appreciate what is true and sincere and have a special abhorrence of what is secret, intense and private. Mental concentration should come easily to you just now, so put your mind to work and take care of any details that you may have. Problems and obstacles should find some easy explanations under your keen examination. This evening has many relaxing possibilities; look around and enjoy the fun stuff!



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You could feel that you are left out of the loop when it comes to something important in the workplace today-consider yourself blessed! Higher-ups may think there is not enough work. Changes are imminent and the less you lend to the situation the better. Patience is required and patience you have; smile. A love song comes into your mind and the rest of your day is spent in trying to keep the sound of your humming low. An after-work meeting with friends or family may create an opportunity to enjoy the evening meal away from home. You will be wishing for anything that is new, different and unique to come into your life this evening. This may just come through simple pleasures. Do you see the stars this evening?

COUNTRY CODES

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|-----------------------|--------|
| Afghanistan | 0093 | Kuwait | 00965 |
| Albania | 00355 | Kyrgyzstan | 00996 |
| Algeria | 00213 | Laos | 00856 |
| Andorra | 00376 | Latvia | 00371 |
| Angola | 00244 | Lebanon | 00961 |
| Anguilla | 001264 | Liberia | 00231 |
| Antigua | 001268 | Libya | 00218 |
| Argentina | 0054 | Lithuania | 00370 |
| Armenia | 00374 | Luxembourg | 00352 |
| Australia | 0061 | Macau | 00853 |
| Austria | 0043 | Macedonia | 00389 |
| Bahamas | 001242 | Madagascar | 00261 |
| Bahrain | 00973 | Majorca | 0034 |
| Bangladesh | 00880 | Malawi | 00265 |
| Barbados | 001246 | Malaysia | 0060 |
| Belarus | 00375 | Maldives | 00960 |
| Belgium | 0032 | Mali | 00223 |
| Belize | 00501 | Malta | 00356 |
| Benin | 00229 | Marshall Islands | 00692 |
| Bermuda | 001441 | Martinique | 00596 |
| Bhutan | 00975 | Mauritania | 00222 |
| Bolivia | 00591 | Mauritius | 00230 |
| Bosnia | 00387 | Mayotte | 00269 |
| Botswana | 00267 | Mexico | 0052 |
| Brazil | 0055 | Micronesia | 00691 |
| Brunei | 00673 | Moldova | 00373 |
| Bulgaria | 00359 | Monaco | 00377 |
| Burkina | 00226 | Mongolia | 00976 |
| Burundi | 00257 | Montserrat | 001664 |
| Cambodia | 00855 | Morocco | 00212 |
| Cameroon | 00237 | Mozambique | 00258 |
| Canada | 001 | Myanmar (Burma) | 0095 |
| Cape Verde | 00238 | Namibia | 00264 |
| Cayman Islands | 001345 | Nepal | 00977 |
| Central African Republic | 00236 | Netherlands (Holland) | 0031 |
| Chad | 00235 | Netherlands Antilles | 00599 |
| Chile | 0056 | New Caledonia | 00687 |
| China | 0086 | New Zealand | 0064 |
| Colombia | 0057 | Nicaragua | 00505 |
| Comoros | 00269 | Nigar | 00227 |
| Congo | 00242 | Nigeria | 00234 |
| Cook Islands | 00682 | Niue | 00683 |
| Costa Rica | 00506 | Norfolk Island | 00672 |
| Croatia | 00385 | Northern Ireland (UK) | 0044 |
| Cuba | 0053 | North Korea | 00850 |
| Cyprus | 00357 | Norway | 0047 |
| Cyprus (Northern) | 0090392 | Oman | 00968 |
| Czech Republic | 00420 | Pakistan | 0092 |
| Denmark | 0045 | Palau | 00680 |
| Diego Garcia | 00246 | Panama | 00507 |
| Djibouti | 00253 | Papua New Guinea | 00675 |
| Dominica | 001767 | Paraguay | 00595 |
| Dominican Republic | 001809 | Peru | 0051 |
| Ecuador | 00593 | Philippines | 0063 |
| Egypt | 0020 | Poland | 0048 |
| El Salvador | 00503 | Portugal | 00351 |
| England (UK) | 0044 | Puerto Rico | 001787 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 00240 | Qatar | 00974 |
| Eritrea | 00291 | Romania | 0040 |
| Estonia | 00372 | Russian Federation | 007 |
| Ethiopia | 00251 | Rwanda | 00250 |
| Falkland Islands | 00500 | Saint Helena | 00290 |
| Faroe Islands | 00298 | Saint Kitts | 001869 |
| Fiji | 00679 | Saint Lucia | 001758 |
| Finland | 00358 | Saint Pierre | 00508 |
| France | 0033 | Saint Vincent | 001784 |
| French Guiana | 00594 | Samoa US | 00684 |
| French Polynesia | 00689 | Samoa West | 00685 |
| Gabon | 00241 | San Marino | 00378 |
| Gambia | 00220 | Sao Tome | 00239 |
| Georgia | 00995 | Saudi Arabia | 00966 |
| Germany | 0049 | Scotland (UK) | 0044 |
| Ghana | 00233 | Senegal | 00221 |
| Gibraltar | 00350 | Seychelles | 00284 |
| Greece | 0030 | Sierra Leone | 00232 |
| Greenland | 00299 | Singapore | 0065 |
| Grenada | 001473 | Slovakia | 00421 |
| Guadeloupe | 00590 | Slovenia | 00386 |
| Guam | 001671 | Solomon Islands | 00677 |
| Guatemala | 00502 | Somalia | 00252 |
| Guinea | 00224 | South Africa | 0027 |
| Guyana | 00592 | South Korea | 0082 |
| Haiti | 00509 | Spain | 0034 |
| Holland (Netherlands) | 0031 | Sri Lanka | 0094 |
| Honduras | 00504 | Sudan | 00249 |
| Hong Kong | 00852 | Suriname | 00597 |
| Hungary | 0036 | Swaziland | 00268 |
| Ibiza (Spain) | 0034 | Sweden | 0046 |
| Iceland | 00354 | Switzerland | 0041 |
| India | 0091 | Syria | 00963 |
| Indian Ocean | 00873 | Taiwan | 00886 |
| Indonesia | 0062 | Tanzania | 00255 |
| Iran | 0098 | Thailand | 0066 |
| Iraq | 00964 | Toga | 00228 |
| Ireland | 00353 | Tonga | 00676 |
| Italy | 0039 | Tokelau | 00690 |
| Ivory Coast | 00225 | Trinidad | 001868 |
| Jamaica | 001876 | Tunisia | 00216 |
| Japan | 0081 | Turkey | 0090 |
| Jordan | 00962 | Tuvalu | 00688 |
| Kazakhstan | 007 | Uganda | 00256 |
| Kenya | 00254 | Ukraine | 00380 |
| Kiribati | 00686 | United Arab Emirates | 00976 |

INDIA TO BAN OLD TRUCKS AS CITIES CHOKE ON DIRTY AIR

TRUCKS OVER 15 YEARS OLD TO BE FORCED OFF ROADS

NEW DELHI: India will force all commercial trucks more than 15 years old off the road from April and is reviewing how it checks vehicle emissions, a senior transport official said, as the government tries to curb soaring urban air pollution. The World Health Organization said last year that India had 13 of the 20 most polluted cities on the planet, including the worst offender, New Delhi.

Fumes spewed by a multiplying fleet of commercial vehicles, many of them old and badly maintained, are one of the biggest contributors to air pollution nationally: the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) think-tank estimates their share of vehicular emissions at 60 percent. "We are to make 15 years the end of the life for all commercial vehicles," Vijay Chhibber, the top bureaucrat in the transport ministry, told Reuters, saying the order, not previously reported, would be made public within 10 days and the ban enforced next April.

"It (air pollution) will get worse every year unless we do something." Hauliers complained such a move would unfairly single them out, while experts said the ban was only a part of the solution. "Taxes on cars and parking charges should be raised to curtail usage, and public transport should be expanded," said Vivek Chattopadhyay, a pollution expert at the CSE. "Emissions are not just related to age." Smog has blanketed the Indian capital this week as a global climate summit began in Paris, a reminder of how hard it will be for India to achieve economic growth and prosperity without pollution getting worse. Despite growing recognition of the problem, weak coordination and enforcement have hobbled action to clean



NEW DELHI, India : Indian pedestrians walk near smog enveloped government offices on Rajpath in New Delhi. — AFP

India's cities and tackle a health crisis that causes more than 600,000 premature deaths annually.

'Inhaler around the clock'

It was not clear how enforcement of the proposed ban would work, given faltering efforts to bar smoke-belching vehicles from the streets of New Delhi. "There is dust, pollution in the air and I have grave difficulty breathing," said 48-year-old asthmatic Abdul Razik Kamal, who sells tea from a roadside stall near one of New Delhi's main entry

points for commercial trucks. "There are many more cars in Delhi today than there were a few years ago and I have to use the inhaler around the clock."

China has declared a "war on pollution", with Beijing pledging billions to clean up its act, close coal-fired power plants and cut new car registrations. India said last week it would bring forward the date by which vehicles must comply with tighter emissions standards by three years to 2019, although the country is still behind emission norms followed in Europe and China. — Reuters

CAMBODIAN DOCTOR GUILTY OF INFECTING PATIENTS WITH HIV

PHNOM PENH: An unlicensed Cambodian doctor was sentenced to 25 years in prison yesterday after he was found guilty of infecting more than 200 people with HIV, including some who later died. The case has shone a spotlight on the chronically underfunded healthcare system in the impoverished nation where many have to rely on self-taught or unlicensed medics to receive treatment. Yem Chroem, 55, was facing the prospect of life in prison but his murder charge was reduced by the court to a lesser manslaughter offence, his defense lawyer said.

"My client still insists he is innocent," lawyer Em Sovann told AFP by telephone after the verdict was announced. "I will represent him if he wants to appeal this conviction," he added. The rural doctor was convicted of infecting locals in the remote village of Roka in western Battambang province by reusing dirty needles. For millions of Cambodians-especially the poor and those in isolated regions-unlicensed doctors are the only realistic healthcare option for everyday ailments. World Bank figures say Cambodia, one of Asia's poorest nations, has just 0.2 doctors for every 100,000 people, on a par with Afghanistan.

Similarly impoverished Myanmar has 0.4 per 100,000, while France boasts 3.2 per 100,000. Much of Cambodia's shortfall is made up by unlicensed practitioners, many of whom are self-taught. But the HIV infections in Roka shocked the country and saw the government vow to crack down on unlicensed healthcare providers. Some of those who were infected testified at the trial. Loeum Lorn, 52, said he and four of his family members had contracted HIV. "We are his (the doctor's) victims but it was only late on that we discovered we were infected," he told reporters last month outside the trial. He added that around 10 villagers who were infected, mostly elderly, had since died. During the trial, prosecutors accused the doctor of hiding the facts and changing his story. — AF

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (03/12/2015 TO 09/12/2015)

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| SHARQIA-1 V8-2 V8-2 KRAMPUS V8-2 V8-2 V8-2 V8-2 KRAMPUS | 11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:45 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:05 AM | BUS 657 | 12:45 AM | IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA | 4:45 PM 7:15 PM 9:45 PM 12:15 AM |
| SHARQIA-2 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA IN THE HEART OF THE SEA CREED IN THE HEART OF THE SEA | 11:30 AM 2:00 PM 4:30 PM 7:00 PM 9:30 PM 12:15 AM | MARINA-1 V8-2 KRAMPUS V8-2 V8-2 KRAMPUS KRAMPUS | 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM | AL-KOUT.2 V8-2 V8-2 V8-2 V8-2 THE LAST SURVIVORS THE LAST SURVIVORS | 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:05 AM |
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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shaik Abdulla son of Shaik Hussien Saab, holder of Indian Passport No. M6257412, hereby my name Sunkesula Abdulla son of Sunkesula Hussenaiah door -

5169 Gandhinagar Rajampeta, Kadapa, AP, India. **(C 5091)**
2-12-2015

LOST

It is notified for the information that my original examination certificates, secondary, senior secondary examination of year 2012-2014, for X roll No. 8105518 -**2-12-2015** for XII roll No. 9103978 issued by CBSE has been actually lost. Name of the candidate Sana Amjad. Tel: 66472691. **(C 5089)**
2-12-2015

Prayer timings

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Fajr: | 05:03 |
| Shorook | 06:27 |
| Duhr: | 11:38 |
| Asr: | 14:30 |
| Maghrib: | 16:49 |
| Isha: | 18:11 |

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 |

Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015



Yellen sees US economy ready for rate hike

EGYPT CONTINUES CLIMB ON FX HOPES, GULF DOWN

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VIENNA: Iran's Minister of Petroleum Bijan Namdar Zangeneh (left) and Saudi Arabia's Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Ali Ibrahim Naimi speaks to journalists at a hotel in Vienna prior to the OPEC oil ministers' meeting today. —AP

OPEC UNLIKELY TO BOOST PRICE AMID INFIGHTING

IRAN INSISTS ON 'RIGHT' TO RAISE OIL OUTPUT

VIENNA: Cheap oil that could get even cheaper: That's the challenge OPEC ministers face as they try to cut their losses at a time when supply is outstripping demand. But their hands appear tied.

Ahead of their meeting today, there is recognition that the 12-member Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries will be unable to nudge up prices, at least in the short term.

Non-OPEC countries like Russia and the US continue to challenge OPEC for customers. And within the cartel, Iran and Iraq want to start pumping more, even though regional rival Saudi Arabia appears unwilling to play along by reducing its own output.

The Saudis and other OPEC states are looking to maintain their market share at a time when low prices are already cutting into their revenues. The upshot is the meeting will likely decide to maintain the official OPEC level of 30 million barrels a day, urge members to cut back on overproduction and hope for better times next year. That means oil could get even cheaper.

Iran's comeback is tied to the looming end of sanctions imposed over its nuclear program. Embargoes on Iranian oil are to be lifted over the next few months once a nuclear deal it signed with six world powers goes into force.

Iran's comeback

Senior oil official Amir Hossein

Zamaninia said last week Iran hopes to bring an extra 500,000 barrels on the market by early next year. He said he hopes the extra output will be accommodated within OPEC's formal ceiling of 30 million barrels a day. Arriving for the meeting today, Iranian oil minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh said Iran is ready to discuss a ceiling for its production - but only after his country makes a "full return to the market."

Iran will not bow to pressure to avoid increasing its oil output following the lifting of sanctions despite slumping crude prices, its oil minister insisted here yesterday.

"We don't accept any discussion about the increase of Iranian production after lifting the sanctions," Zangeneh told reporters.

"It's our right" to pump out more crude, he added. Zangeneh said the aim was to first increase output by half a million barrels a day beginning early next year, eventually rising to one million barrels extra which will bring its daily total to around 3.8 million.

But Iran's hopes of a cutback from others for now are unlikely to be fulfilled. Ahead of the meeting, OPEC already was churning out well over than 31 million barrels a day and OPEC members are likely to continue producing more than their share as they push to compensate for low prices by increasing output.

Some of those extra barrels will likely come from Iraq. The world's fastest-grow-

ing source of crude this year, it was pumping more than 4 million barrels a day last month and was responsible for last month's biggest monthly rise in output among all OPEC countries. These trends mean that the pressure is on Saudi Arabia, which accounts for about a third of OPEC's output, to cut back.

Saudi opposition to a cut in OPEC output a year ago was calculated to put higher-cost outside competitors - such as US shale oil producers - out of business, in the hope that would eventually lead to a drop in supply and a rebound in prices. That strategy clearly hasn't worked, with benchmark US crude's value falling by more than 40 percent over the past year and now hovering around the \$40 mark per barrel.

Saudis unrelenting

But the Saudis appear in no mood to act unilaterally. Analysts at Energy Aspects say the kingdom is "only likely to cut once it can influence the market again" - a scenario that is unlikely before the second half of next year considering present plentiful supply.

That seems to leave only an increase of Middle East turmoil as a potential price driver, for now. Ed Cowart, of Eagle Asset Management, points out that uncertainty over global supply was the justification for \$100-per-barrel oil a couple of years ago. Noting there are at least three shooting wars within about 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) of about 30 percent of the world's

oil production in With oil prices falling heavily on Wednesday, having already slumped by more than 60 percent in around 18 months, Iran is facing pressure from within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and outside OPEC not to raise output.

"It's not acceptable, it's not fair," Zangeneh said yesterday. "It's not a matter of discussion with anyone to limit the level of production of Iran."

Despite a supply glut keeping crude prices around \$40-\$45 a barrel, Iran has consistently said it plans to up its output when nuclear-related sanctions are lifted under a deal agreed in July with world powers.

Analysts meanwhile expect OPEC-whose 12 member nations from the Middle East, Africa and Latin America pump out about one third of the world's oil-to leave its daily oil output ceiling at 30 million barrels at yesterday's meeting. Nevertheless, it may agree to trim excess production in a bid to support prices and in turn producers' revenues.

According to a survey by Bloomberg, OPEC production in November rose to 32.12 million barrels per day. "We have no responsibility for the situation that is in the market," Zangeneh said. "Iran has no responsibility in this (price) drop, this is the responsibility of the OPEC member producers and others who have produced more than the (OPEC) ceiling." —Agencies

EGYPT CONTINUES CLIMB ON FX HOPES, GULF DOWN

MIDEAST STOCK MARKET

DUBAI: Egypt's stock market rose early yesterday on hopes that the central bank would resolve the country's foreign exchange shortage, while Gulf markets fell back because of an overnight tumble of oil prices.

The Egyptian index, which jumped 3.5 percent on Wednesday, climbed a further 2.1 percent to 6,788 points. Its break of minor chart resistance on the late November peak triggered a double bottom formed by the November lows and pointing up to just below 7,000 points.

Egypt's central bank will inject US dollar liquidity into the market this month and plans an exceptional foreign exchange auction, the Egyptian presidency said late on Wednesday.

It remains unclear where Egypt will obtain the hard currency to increase dollar supplies, and many economists think a devaluation at some point remains inevitable. But investors are welcoming the more proactive approach to the problem of new central bank chief Tarek Amer. Investment bank EFG Hermes gained 3.0 percent and Commercial International Bank, a favourite of foreign

investors, rose 2.1 percent. Global Telecom added 1.1 percent. On Wednesday it had surged its 10 percent limit to 1.87 Egyptian pounds; in a brief statement, it said a newspaper, which it did not name, had published a story on rumors that European firm Vimpelcom had offered to buy out Global at a price of 2.30 pounds per share. Vimpelcom already owns about 52 percent of Global.

"The company does not respond to rumors and confirms that the company does not have any material events unannounced," Global said without elaborating. Contacted by Reuters in Amsterdam, Vimpelcom said: "As a matter of policy, we don't comment on market rumors and speculation." Meanwhile, the Saudi index fell 1.0 percent after Brent oil, hit by expectations that OPEC would keep its output ceiling unchanged at this week's meeting, sank more than 4 percent to below \$43 a barrel overnight - though it rebounded a little yesterday.

Petrochemical producer Saudi Basic Industries dropped 2.6 percent and oil shipper Bahri fell 1.5 percent. Kingdom Holding

gained 6.7 percent after jumping 8.5 percent on Wednesday in unusually heavy trade. Reuters data shows DB Platinum Advisors, a Luxembourg-based investment firm and subsidiary of Deutsche Bank, has been increasing its stake in the firm since March.

It held 40,000 shares as of the end of October, the data showed. That is a tiny fraction of the company's 3.7 billion shares, but the free float is much smaller - Prince Alwaleed bin Talal owns 95 percent - so such purchases may help to drive up the stock price. A phone call to DB's Luxembourg offices seeking comment was not answered.

Al-Tayyar Travel surged 6.7 percent after climbing 8.8 percent on Wednesday in heavy trade. Traders cited a rumor that a Saudi investment company would buy a stake in the firm; an Al-Tayyar official was not available to comment. In Doha, the Qatar stock index retreated 1.1 percent in thin trade. Blue chips were sold, even defensive stocks, with heavy-weight Qatar National Bank dropping 2.2 percent and telecommunications operator Ooredoo losing 5.8 percent. — Reuters



ATHENS: People walk in the empty central train station yesterday in Athens during a general strike against a planned social security overhaul that could enforce new pension cuts. — AFP

GENERAL STRIKE IN GREECE OVER PENSION REFORM

ATHENS: Greek unions paralyzed public services and transport yesterday with a general strike over a planned social security overhaul - the second walkout in less than a month. The action hit trains, shipping and ferry services to Greek islands while hospitals were operating with emergency staff only.

The strike piled more pressure on the left-wing government of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, already weakened by his decision in July to accept a third EU bailout with strict austerity conditions to avoid a Greek exit from the euro. Red flags fluttered in central Athens, signalling the first protest rally, organized by communist union Pame. A second major demonstration, called by private-sector union

GSEE and public-sector union Adedy, was to start at noon. The strike came as the labor ministry works on a new social security system under which state-guaranteed pensions will be reportedly cut by half-to a minimum of 384 euros - and the rest will depend on a person's income and years of social security payments.

Dogs howl

Lawyers and teachers are also participating in the walkout. Journalists went on a solidarity strike on Wednesday. A similar general strike was held on November 12 against the EU bailout and accompanying tax hikes. Over 20,000 people demonstrated in Athens at the time, and sporadic violence broke out

between police and hooded youths who vandalised public property. Tsipras finds himself in a precarious political position after his left-nationalist coalition in November saw its parliamentary majority whittled to 153 deputies in the 300-seat parliament after a divisive vote on home foreclosures - another measure demanded by international creditors. Despite his narrow parliamentary majority, Tsipras on Tuesday dismissed suggestions that his government is on its last legs.

"Dogs howl but the caravan goes on," Tsipras told his lawmakers. "We will endure and achieve our targets. The people will judge us at the end of our term...in the autumn of 2019," the 41-year-old PM said. — AFP

News

in brief

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 dropped to KD 0.322, as compared to Wednesday's rates, the Central Bank of Kuwait said. The sterling pound dropped to KD 0.454 and Swiss franc rose to KD 0.298 while the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002.

Egypt's forex auctions to assess currency moves

CAIRO: Egypt's central bank said its new mechanism for dollar auctions will allocate dollars based on banks' effectiveness in providing foreign currency to the local market, bankers told Reuters yesterday, stressing the priority on covering basic goods. The new mechanism will assess banks based on their ability to extend credit facilities in foreign currency to cover their clients' needs of foreign currency, bankers said, citing a statement from the central bank. The statement also cited as a factor, the breadth of banks' coverage of foreign currency to include a wider range of clients, especially smaller clients as well as the banks flexibility in meeting clients' demands within the framework allowed. It also cited that the priority should be to cover basic goods.

Egypt's FIHC gets offers in vegetable oils tender

CAIRO/ABU DHABI: The lowest offer for sunflower oil presented in Egypt's state-owned Food Industries Holding Company (FIHC) tender yesterday was at \$833 a ton cost and freight (C&F), traders said. The offer was made by Glencore for 10,000 tons for arrival March 1-20, they said. The lowest offer for soybean oil in the tender was made by ADM for 25,000 tons at \$732 a ton C&F for arrival March 1-20. No purchase has yet been made and a decision was expected later. FIHC is looking to buy at least 10,000 tons of sunflower oil, 25,000 tons of soybean oil and 5,400 tons of palm oil. The sunflower oil is being sought for arrival Feb. 2-29 or March 1-20, while the soybean oil is for arrival Feb. 1-20 and/or March 1-20.

OIL RISES ON REPORT OF SAUDI PROPOSAL TO BALANCE MARKET

LONDON: Oil prices rose from near-2015 lows yesterday after a report sourced to a senior OPEC delegate said Saudi Arabia would propose a deal to balance oil markets with non-OPEC help next year. Benchmark Brent crude futures were up 88 cents, more than 2 percent, at \$43.37 a barrel at 0955 GMT. US crude was trading 64 cents higher at \$40.58 a barrel after sinking below \$40 on Wednesday.

Saudi Arabia, which has so far resisted any market intervention to prop up oil prices, will propose the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cut output by 1 million barrels per day (bpd) next year, Energy Intelligence reported.

An OPEC production cut would only go ahead if non-members like Russia, Mexico, Oman and Kazakhstan commit to joint action, the senior delegate was cited as saying. OPEC ministers are gathering in Vienna for their Friday meeting. "Oil prices are rising because of the talk that Saudi Arabia will propose a global deal to balance the market," said Frank Klumpp, oil analyst at Stuttgart-based Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Iran's oil minister was quick to dismiss yesterday the possibility of limiting Tehran's production ramp up once Western sanctions are lifted. Iraq's oil minister said he was willing to have an open discussion on a Saudi proposal. OPEC sources and analysts said the Saudi proposal would be difficult to agree as Iraq is struggling to balance its budget even despite soaring output and Iran has long argued its market share was stolen by rivals during the years of sanctions. "It is very difficult to cut one million bpd collectively. The Saudis do not want to change their previous talk. No cut without cooperation," a Gulf OPEC source told Reuters.

Bjarne Schieldrop, chief commodities analyst at Oslo-based SEB, said he sees the chance for a unified cut agreed between OPEC and non-OPEC as very low. "The chance that the oil price crashes to very low levels in Q1-16 increases, potentially and eventually driving all parties to the table to act and bring the oil price away from catastrophic \$20-30/b levels," he said.

Oil market investors widely expected OPEC to maintain its strategy of keeping output high in an attempt to defend market share. — Reuters

WORLD FOOD PRICES FALL 1.6% IN NOVEMBER: FAO

ROME: World food prices fell in November for the first time in three months, pulled down by a strong dollar and ample supplies, the United Nations food agency said yesterday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index, which measures monthly changes for a basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar, averaged 156.7 points in November against a revised 159.3 points the month before. The 1.6 percent decrease follows two consecutive months of gains, although food on international markets in November remained 18 percent cheaper than one year ago, FAO said. The index has been sliding for most of the past 20 months, thanks partly to an abundant global supply, and is still less than two points above a six-year low hit in August.

A strengthening dollar, which is the benchmark currency for commodities, may drive prices lower in coming months, FAO senior economist Abdolreza Abbassian told Reuters.

"All the indications are for the (dollar) exchange rate to rise, especially if the Fed raises interest rates," Abbassian said. "Exchange rates have been driving the decline in prices. One cannot exclude further downward pressure on prices in coming months," he said. One exception may be sugar, he said.

Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen said on Wednesday she was "looking forward" to a US interest rate hike that will be seen as a testament to the economy's recovery from recession. Her comments drove the dollar to its highest level since March 2003. FAO cut its forecast for world cereal output in 2015-16 to 2.527 billion tons, from a previous estimate of 2.530 billion tons. It lowered its world wheat output forecast for 2015/16 to 734.5 million tons from 736.2 million tons previously. — Reuters



HONG KONG: A worker balances on a bamboo scaffolding in Hong Kong yesterday. Hong Kong's bamboo scaffolders have risen above predictions that their trade would disappear, remaining a common sight high above the streets of the city, scaling the sides of towering, ultra-modern steel and glass buildings on traditional bamboo poles linked through ancient design concepts. — AFP

BARCLAYS SELLS ITALIAN BRANCHES TO MEDIOBANCA AT A LOSS

MILAN/LONDON: Barclays is to sell its Italian bank branches to CheBanca!, the retail arm of Mediobanca, and take a 200 million pound (\$298.52 million) loss on the deal. Mediobanca said yesterday CheBanca! would buy 89 branches with 220,000 clients, residential mortgage loans worth 2.9 billion euros (\$3.1 billion) and 620 staff.

The sale marks part of plans by Britain's third biggest bank to shed continental European retail banking operations as part of its retreat from businesses that are unprofitable or lack scale.

Reuters reported on Wednesday the deal was imminent. Barclays is likely to be left with more than 10 billion pounds - or 14 billion euros - of Italian mortgages on its books, which it is trying to sell. It had 13.5 billion pounds of Italian residential mortgages at the start of the year.

The bank said last year it would sell most of its continental European retail banking operations. The Italian sale will reduce Barclays' risk-weighted assets by about 800 million pounds and result in a small decrease in its capital ratio. It will book the loss this quarter.

Barclays has already sold retail banking operations in Spain and Portugal and is seeking to sell in France. Other banks are also pulling back from Italy, including Deutsche Bank. The Italian business is estimated to have been loss-making and Barclays will refinance the business with 237 million euros before passing it to CheBanca!. The deal will have a 20-basis point negative impact on Mediobanca's capital, which the bank said would be gradually recovered from earnings. "The fact that (Barclays') management is comfortable agreeing to a capital dilutive disposal, combined with the group's recent success in passing the latest Bank of England stress testing exercise, suggests to us that market concerns about the bank's current capitalization and the potential need to issue fresh equity to bolster this are very much overdone," Gary Greenwood, analyst at Shore Capital, said. Barclays shares were up 0.6 percent and Mediobanca shares were up 0.7 percent by 0850 GMT.

Barclays said it would continue to operate investment banking and corporate banking services in Italy, and continue to manage its remaining retail mortgage portfolio. It is attempting to parcel those loans up and sell them to investors, including private equity firms. "This transaction is further evidence of the re-shaping of Barclays group to focus on our core businesses," Jes Staley, who started as Barclays chief executive on Tuesday, said. — Reuters

AFGHANS STRUGGLE TO WEAN THEMSELVES OFF FOREIGN AID

COMPANIES SEE ACTIVITY SLUMP AS NATO TROOPS WITHDRAW

KABUL: The Omid Gardizi construction company on the outskirts of Kabul is at the sharp end of a painful transformation Afghanistan faces, as billions of dollars in foreign spending come to an end and Taliban violence undermines a stuttering economy. Standing in a yard crammed with 50 pieces of hulking machinery, company owner Sayed Dilagha Mossavi said for years his work depended on NATO-led forces. Now most of them have gone.

"If they're not here, no one will use this," he said of his fleet of cranes, diggers, graders and rollers, which he estimated cost \$5 million and is now gathering dust.

"The work has finished." The company employed 25 people in 2012, the year after NATO forces in Afghanistan peaked at about 140,000 troops. Today it has just three people on the payroll. About 13,000 foreign soldiers remain, leaving Afghan government forces to battle the Taliban largely on their own.

The government does not have an estimate for the drop in off-budget military spending and aid in 2015 from levels a few years ago, but says it is billions of dollars. The country secured a \$16 billion, four-year aid program from donors in 2012. In an economy that generated less than \$21 billion in annual output in 2014, according to World Bank data, the loss of billions of dollars in foreign aid and military spending has had a dramatic impact.

Reconstruction funding from the United States, Afghanistan's biggest foreign donor, has fallen from a peak of \$16.7 billion in 2010 to \$6.3 billion,

according to the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, an oversight body.

"IT WILL TAKE TIME"

Security has worsened since NATO ended combat operations, with the insurgency spreading to a point where the Taliban briefly seized the northern city of Kunduz in September.

That seriously rattled confidence in an uneasy national unity government formed after disputed 2014 elections. Economic growth is expected to be 1.9 percent this year compared with an annual average of 9.2 percent from 2001 to 2011. Domestic revenues will be equivalent to just 9.8 percent of gross domestic product, the World Bank says.

Making matters worse, more than 150,000 Afghans have fled to Europe since the beginning of the year to escape rising unemployment and violence, while the rich have stashed billions of dollars overseas. The country is partly counting on big mining projects, including the giant, \$3 billion Mes Aynak copper deposit, which has stalled amid security threats and as Chinese investors and Kabul disagree over terms.

The government also has a plan for a self-sustaining economy based on 22 programs including infrastructure and agriculture, but officials concede it is underfunded and behind schedule. A senior Finance Ministry official said the assumed 10-year time frame for the transition to self-reliance was unrealistic.

"It's not an easy process, it will take time. Even after 10 years, we will only be less dependent on aid," said the official,

who declined to be identified.

BUBBLE ECONOMY

The finance ministry official acknowledged the need for more revenues, and said President Ashraf Ghani was tackling corruption and supporting the private sector. Some businessmen scoff, saying insecurity, along with graft, red tape and government inaction, are compounding the problems of those trying to break away from the aid economy.

"We have not seen a single effort or initiative towards economic development," said Shakib Noori, of the Afghanistan Holding Group, a management and investment consultancy that has provided services to donors and is now trying to re-focus on the domestic economy. He said Afghanistan should forget big projects for now, with security so poor, and focus on small- and medium-sized enterprises. "We've gone after big business and failed. We need to start small businesses for local consumption," he said.

Noori and some colleagues last month opened a food shop and bakery, catering to Afghans looking for a cheap, healthy lunch, with a \$20,000 investment, the first of five small projects they plan. "It's very painful to transform from an almost 100 percent donor-driven bubble economy to a real one," he said. "But there are other opportunities. I know it's difficult. The license will take you a month." Back at his yard, Mossavi said he hoped to off-load his machinery in the Gulf and Central Asia.

"Maybe I should have opened a supermarket." — Reuters

STRONGER UK SERVICES GROWTH BODES WELL FOR ECONOMY IN Q4

LONDON: Britain's economy looks likely to pick up speed towards the end of the year, propelled by services companies which are increasingly the sole driving force behind the country's upturn.

Activity in the sector - ranging from accountancy firms to hairdressers - expanded at the fastest rate in four months during November, according to yesterday's Markit/CIPS UK services purchasing managers' index (PMI).

The number is likely to catch the eye of Bank of England (BoE) policymakers who are weighing up domestic strength against risks from abroad after weaker-than-expected surveys of manufacturing and construction

this week. Sterling fell to 7-1/2-month lows against the dollar this week, dented in part by those surveys as well as growing signs that the Federal Reserve will raise US interest rates this month. The pound was little changed after yesterday's data.

Britain had the fastest-growing major world economy last year and is likely to be at the top of the pack again this year, although it has relied heavily on its services companies to drive growth, frustrating hopes for a more balanced recovery. The economy looks on track to expand 0.6 percent in the fourth quarter, picking up from growth of 0.5 percent in July through September, according to data company Markit.

"After the deterioration in the manufacturing and construction sectors ... it is clear that the economic recovery remains almost entirely dependent on the services sector," Capital Economics economist Ruth Miller said. The services PMI rose to 55.9 last month from 54.9 in October, comfortably beating the Reuters poll forecast for 55.0 and putting Britain second only to Spain in terms of service sector growth in Europe.

Eurozone business growth also accelerated in November, but the improvement will do little to alter expectations of further monetary easing by the European Central Bank later yesterday. Markit's UK composite PMI, which combines data from the manufactur-

ing, services and construction surveys, held steady in November at 55.7, its highest level since July. There were some signs in the services survey that price pressures were building, albeit from low levels. Input prices, which include wages, rose at the fastest pace in four months.

"For the BoE this is all confirmation that the pace of the economy is relatively robust and on balance is likely somewhat above trend, with a probable further tightening in the labor market ahead," UBS economist David Tinsley said. Economists polled by Reuters do not expect the BoE to raise interest rates from record low levels until the second quarter of next year. — Reuters



SHANGHAI: Clothes hang out to dry on a balcony at a residential building in the suburbs of Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

ADB: CHINA'S ECONOMY TO GROW SLIGHTLY FASTER THAN EXPECTED

GROWTH IN CONSUMPTION, SERVICES TO SUPPORT ECONOMY

MANILA: China's economy will grow slightly faster than expected this year at 6.9 percent and its shift to fostering services and private consumption is helping to support regional growth, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday.

An ADB report said Asia's developing economies remain resilient to economic weakness in industrialized countries and are on track to grow 5.8 percent in 2015 and 6 percent in 2016.

It said Asia's growth is supported by vibrant private consumption and services in China. Expanded industrial production in India and other countries also buttressed the regional economy even as countries reliant on commodities were hurt by the global slump in prices, a slow US recovery and Japan's contraction. "Although we have seen some softening in a number of economies, the broader regional outlook is for continued steady growth," said ADB Chief Economist

Shang-Jin Wei. The ADB in September forecast China's economy to grow 6.8 percent this year and 6.7 percent next year. Yesterday's report maintains the forecast for 2016, saying further growth in consumption and services will support the economy despite a housing overhang and excess industrial capacity.

Central bank and government measures to stabilize the economy and to bolster small and medium-sized enterprises also provide some comfort, it said.

Chinese growth has slowed steadily over the past five years as the ruling party tried to steer the economy to a more sustainable expansion based on domestic consumption instead of trade and investment. East Asia's growth forecast is maintained at 6.0 percent for both 2015 and 2016. Southeast Asia's growth prospects were also unchanged from September's forecasts of 4.4 percent for 2015 and 4.9 percent for 2016. But a slight softening is

seen for Indonesia, the largest economy in the sub-region, due to lower-than-expected budgetary disbursements and weakness in exports.

The report said South Asia is on track to meet previous growth projections of 6.9 percent in 2015 and 7.3 percent in 2016. Continued strength in India supported by growth in industrial production, public capital expenditure, and retail sales are helping to offset slowdowns in Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal.

Forecast growth for India was maintained at 7.4 percent in 2015 and 7.8 percent next year. The outlook for Central Asia was downgraded to 3.2 percent in 2015 from the earlier forecast of 3.3 percent, while the projection for 2016 is down to 3.3 percent from 4.2 percent. Low commodity prices, particularly oil and gas, and the slow recovery in the Russian Federation continue to drag down the region's economy. — AP

BANK OF CHINA APPEALS DISCLOSURE ORDER IN COUNTERFEIT CASE

SHANGHAI: The Bank of China is appealing a decision by a New York court to fine it \$50,000 a day for withholding information about counterfeiters' bank accounts in China.

The appeal, filed Tuesday, is the latest twist in a five-year legal saga that pits one of China's largest state banks against Western luxury brands seeking new, more powerful tools to fight rampant counterfeiting. Bank of China says it is fighting to maintain client privacy as a matter of national sovereignty. Gucci, along with other Kering Group brands, is seeking \$12 million from the bank to cover damages inflicted by a counterfeiting ring it says sold fake handbags and wallets to US consumers. Using records provided by JPMorganChase, Gucci traced \$530,000 in transfers from US-based counterfeiters to Bank of China accounts in China. The Bank of China has repeatedly refused to provide information about those accounts or freeze the counterfeiters' funds for Gucci. Instead it secretly froze over \$890,000 of the accused counterfeiters' money to cover its own legal costs in the fight with Gucci, Chinese court documents show.

The case highlights the incompatibility between the Chinese and US legal systems and could have far-reaching implications for the ability of US courts to extract information from Chinese banks operating in America. That legal firewall has helped Chinese banks serve as safe havens for counterfeiters, who use them to process credit card payments for fakes, often sold online, and move their money around the globe.

The Bank of China, and other Chinese banks embroiled in similar litigation in the US, argue that complying with US court orders to disclose client information would violate Chinese bank secrecy laws and subject them to civil and criminal penalties in China. They have so far failed to provide undisputed evidence that those penalties are, in practice, significant.

Gucci could have obtained information about the counterfeiters' accounts in Chinese court or through the Hague convention, said Bank of China lawyer Jane Jiang, a partner at Allen & Overy in Beijing. The Hague convention allows for government-mediated evidence sharing, but critics say China does not comply with such requests in a timely or consistent manner.

"The bank is especially concerned by the court's actions given that other countries disallow disclosure of bank account information to a foreign government without permission from the domestic authorities of the bank's home country, particularly when other international legal channels exist to obtain such documents," Jiang said in an email.

On Sept 29, New York District Court Judge Richard Sullivan ruled that the US has jurisdiction over the Bank of China, which has four US branches. He ordered the Bank of China to comply with subpoenas for documents related to the accused counterfeiters' bank accounts, even though the accounts are in China. The bank refused, and Sullivan said if the bank did not provide the records by Dec. 7, he would begin imposing a \$50,000-a-day contempt fine.

The court "will not tolerate any further attempt by BOC to delay these proceedings and thwart Plaintiff's efforts to access account information that is essential to the prosecution of Plaintiff's claims against rampant counterfeiters who have consciously used BOC to facilitate their illegal schemes," Sullivan wrote in a Nov. 30 order. — AP

EUROZONE NOV GROWTH PICK-UP UNLIKELY TO STOP ECB EASING FIRMS CUT PRICES FASTER THAN IN OCTOBER

LONDON: Eurozone business growth accelerated slightly in November, but with firms cutting prices again the improvement will do little to alter expectations of further monetary easing by the European Central Bank later yesterday.

So far, the ECB has failed to push inflation anywhere near its 2 percent target ceiling and businesses across the currency bloc cut prices at a steeper rate last month than in October, Markit's Purchasing Managers' Index showed.

"Inflationary pressures remain weak," said Ben May at Oxford Economics. "It would be a massive communications error if the ECB turns around today and says 'actually we decided to do nothing.'"

European stocks were 0.4 percent higher and the euro was hovering near a 7-1/2-year low on Thursday amid confidence of further easing by the ECB.

Inflation in the euro zone held steady at just 0.1 percent last month, data showed on Wednesday, and with the Bank promising to do what it must to

boost inflation "as quickly as possible", it has all but committed to action. Markit's composite output price index for November slipped to 49.5 from 49.6, however, falling further below the 50 mark that separates increases from contraction for a second month.

In a separate report, retail sales fell 0.1 percent in October, official data showed, confounding expectations for a 0.2 percent rise. "Later today, the ECB will likely decide on a significant second round of monetary easing this year and this release of retail trade data will just make the case for that more compelling," said Bert Colijn at ING.

BUYING BONDS

The ECB has been buying 60 billion euros a month of mostly government bonds since March and a Reuters poll last week suggested the bank would say yesterday that it will expand and extend its buying program.

It is also highly likely to cut the

deposit rate further into negative territory, effectively increasing the amount banks have to pay to park money overnight. However, price-cutting in the private sector helped to generate orders. Markit's final composite PMI rose to 54.4 from October's 53.9, although that was shy of an earlier flash estimate of 54.4.

Markit said the headline index, seen as a good guide to growth, pointed to a fourth-quarter economic expansion of 0.4 percent, in line with a Reuters poll.

A new orders sub-index rose to a 4-1/2 year high of 54.8 from 53.6, also boosted by a weaker euro making the bloc's goods and services cheaper and therefore more attractive abroad.

The PMI for the bloc's dominant service industry nudged up to 54.2 from October's 54.1. That was also shy of the flash 54.6 but in one sign of optimism, firms increased headcount at the fastest rate in six months. Coming in at 52.4 last month the employment sub-index was just ahead of October's 52.3. — Reuters

YELLEN SEES US ECONOMY READY FOR RATE HIKE

WASHINGTON: Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen stoked expectations of a looming rise in the benchmark federal funds rate Wednesday, saying she expects the US economy will continue to grow strongly. In a Washington speech, Yellen described conditions as nearly ripe for the first rate increase in nine years and said that domestic and international threats to US economic growth had diminished.

Moreover, she warned, after having locked the rate near zero for seven years, waiting too long could pose big risks to the economy and financial markets.

Yellen made no comment on whether the Fed will raise its benchmark federal funds rate at its next meeting on December 15-16. But in a sign that she is ready for the momentous step, she told the Economic Club of Washington that, after many months of the buildup to a rate increase, when it does happen, it is a day she is "looking forward to."

Yellen said she still sees slack in the US jobs market and that inflation remains weak, both issues that have prevented the US central bank from tightening monetary policy throughout this year.

But she believes that a sustained pace of growth over the next few years will take the jobs market toward full employment and spur an eventual uptick in prices, she said.

"I anticipate continued economic growth at a moderate pace that will be sufficient to generate additional increases in employment, further reductions in the remaining margins of labor market slack, and a rise in inflation to our two percent objective," she said.

At the same time, even if those goals are not likely to be quickly attained, Yellen warned that putting off a rate raise much longer has its own risks. If the Fed waits too long, she said, "we would likely end up having to tighten policy relatively abruptly to



WASHINGTON: Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen speaks at the Economic Club of Washington in Washington. The Federal Reserve says the US economy grew at a modest pace this fall, lifted by higher consumer spending and more home sales and construction. — AP

keep the economy from significantly overshooting both of our goals." "Such an abrupt tightening would risk disrupting financial markets and perhaps even inadvertently push the economy into recession."

Long-awaited move

Yellen's comments immediately heightened expectations that the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), the Fed's policy board which she leads, will decide in its coming meeting to hike the fed funds rate. The rate has sat at 0-0.25 percent since December 2008, in an extraordinary effort to bring the US economy back from the Great Recession of 2008-2009. "Chair Yellen made it pretty clear in her speech... that she believes the conditions for action have been met," said

Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics.

"Yellen supports raising rates in December, and implies support among her FOMC colleagues as long as data do not reveal significant new weakness in the next two weeks," said Chris Low of FTN Financial.

Analysts, though, cautioned that coming economic data, if poorer than expected, could change the mood in the FOMC. On Tuesday the ISM index for the manufacturing sector showed a contraction in November, the first such setback in three years.

On the other hand, the Fed's Beige Book regional economic survey, released after Yellen spoke, supported her picture of a mostly healthy economy progressing steadily. — AFP



BRASILIA: Latin America's largest economy has shrunk even more than expected, increasing fears about the well-being of a nation hammered by falling commodity prices and a massive corruption scandal. President Dilma Rousseff pressed leaders of the House and the Senate to push through unpopular austerity measures to bring some relief to the nation. — AP

FARMERS, INDIGENOUS TRIBES SUFFER IN BRAZIL LAND CLASHES

DOURADOS, Brazil: Brazilian farmer Rui Escobar waves a yellow piece of paper in frustration: It's his title to land that local indigenous tribes argue has belonged to them for far, far longer.

"This farm has belonged to my family for more than 100 years. But I can't farm there because the Indians have moved in. I had to go with the army just to harvest my corn," the 55-year-old farmer in Dourados, western Brazil, said. In a land struggle fueled by massive production of soybeans, corn and livestock, Brazil's farmers are often cast as the villains, robbing indigenous people of ancestral rights—and sometimes using lethal violence. They don't only have the finances and firepower, but also huge political muscle in Congress where the farm lobby is one of the most powerful. Even so, the reality is more complex, with farmers like Escobar saying they're also victims. The roots of the struggle go at least as far back as the 19th century when the state handed lands along the frontier with Paraguay to non-native settlers. Guarani tribespeople were expelled and pushed into reserves, which turned into miserable centers of ill health and alcoholism.

Then from the 1970s, the government began defining ancestral Guarani lands and the native people saw their chance to move back. For some, this was relatively simple. But often complex legal disputes started, leaving the status of valuable land—mostly flat terrain of cleared forests taken over by cattle, corn and soybeans—uncertain. Many Guarani people became impatient with endless delays and moved in anyway, claiming their rights. The turbulence sent land prices falling and put a hole in the market for farm equipment. "Who's going to buy equipment or land if they could wind up getting invaded tomorrow?" asked Escobar. His family's farm had a turnover of about \$1.9 million, but now he says he faces ruin.

Bloodshed

What the indigenous people call "reoccupations" often end up with blood spilled, usually native. For example, in late August, Guarani from Marangatu village, west of Dourados, settled on territory that was technically recognized as theirs, but whose final status had been up in the air since 2005. Confronting them were dozens of farmers in support of the farmer claiming the land and during clashes, a 24-year-old Guarani, Simeao Vilhalva, was shot in the head. His body is buried here.

More than 40 indigenous tribe members were murdered in 2014, according to latest figures from Cimi, a group defending their cause. Escobar says his "family was against the violence, although others were less scrupulous." However the farmer was himself charged with two murders in 2011 and his trial has not yet come to a conclusion. Some farmers have hired armed security guards, adding to the sense of menace in the disputed zones.

"If someone comes in, we are authorized to immobilize him," said one such guard, armed with a pistol, behind a gate at the Ouro Verde, or Green Gold, farm in Paranhos, southwest of Dourados. Some settlers have gone further, paying for security companies to expel what they consider native squatters. "If the police or army kills an Indian, it would create problems. — AFP

SPIETH DEFENDS WORLD CHALLENGE TITLE

NASSAU: Jordan Spieth had good memories and a strong vibe when he showed up at the Hero World Challenge last year. It was held at Isleworth, where Spieth recorded an eight-shot victory for his first college title as a freshman at Texas. When he arrived at Albany Golf Club on Tuesday for his title defense, he was a little lost. "It's different than I thought," Spieth said. "I thought there would be ocean views. We're on an island." The Ernie Els design is located on the tip of New Providence, though it is built just enough inland that the ocean can't be seen from the golf course. It's a beautiful place, with fairways framed by sand dunes and native bushes. This is the first year the Hero World Challenge is being held in The Bahamas, which would seem to make it a mystery to most of the 18-man field. But that wouldn't include Adam Scott and Justin Rose, because they live here. Rose is a full-time resident,

having moving his family from Lake Nona in Orlando, Florida. Scott stays in the Bahamas about 15 weeks out of the year. The rest of his time is spent either in Australia, Switzerland or on the road playing golf. Here's what to look for when the Hero World Challenge begins:

SCORING

Scott holds the course record with a 65, which doesn't seem terribly low for a Masters champion and former No. 1 player in the world. Most of the greens are on the small side and elevated. Missing the fairway could lead to some breaks - good and bad - depending on whether the ball winds up in the bushes. But it could always be worse. Scott says Albany hosts a "Tough Day" in which the pins are put in impossible spots on the green and the tees are all the way back. "There have been some big numbers. I think

(lan) Poulter might have gone 90-something on one of those days," Scott said. "Justin has played in the 'Tough Day.' I think a few over par usually wins."

NO TIGER

Tournament host Tiger Woods is missing his World Challenge for the first time since 2009, when he was coping with the crisis in his personal life that led to divorce. He played last year at Isleworth and tied for last with chipping problems, which was a precursor to his 2015 season. Never has he been this uncertain about his future, however.

Woods said earlier this week he has no idea when his back will allow him to start rehab, or when he can even swing a club again. That led to some reminiscing by a few of the players about just how much Woods has achieved. Scott noted that players like Spieth, 22, never competed against the play-

er who won 14 majors in 12 years. "It's hard to explain to Jordan coming out now how he was just so much better than everyone at that point," Scott said. "We're all quick to forget that sometimes." Spieth has a decent idea. He was asked what he would consider a good record with at least a share of the 54-hole lead. "I would say 50 percent would be pretty spectacular," he said. Woods was at a 93 percent clip on the PGA Tour - 54-4.

LAST CHANCE

The 18-man field consists only of players who are among the top 50 in the world ranking, so it was surprising to realize that five players have gone all year without winning. This is their last chance. On that dubious list are Adam Scott, Matt Kuchar, Hideki Matsuyama, Paul Casey and Billy Horschel. Scott has not had a winless year since his first year as a pro in 2000. — AP



PRETORIA: Oscar Pistorius (center) arrives outside the court in Pretoria, South Africa in this file photo. — AP

PISTORIUS RISKS 15 YEARS IN JAIL AFTER A MURDER CONVICTION

BLOEMFONTEIN: Oscar Pistorius was found guilty of murder yesterday after South Africa's Supreme Court of Appeal threw out a manslaughter conviction for killing his girlfriend, and he now faces a 15-year prison term. The judge described the Paralympian's testimony over the 2013 shooting of Reeva Steenkamp as "untruthful" and delivered a damning indictment of the original verdict. The double-amputee athlete known as the "Blade Runner" was released on parole in October after serving one year of his five-year prison sentence for the lesser charge of culpable homicide.

He killed Steenkamp, a model and law graduate, in the early hours of Valentine's Day two years ago, saying he mistook her for an intruder when he shot four times through the locked door of his bedroom toilet. "Guilty of murder, with the accused having criminal intent," judge Eric Leach told the court in South Africa's judicial capital Bloemfontein in a dramatic legal reversal. "The matter is referred back to the trial court to consider an appropriate sentence." The Paralympic gold medalist, who was not present in court, now faces a minimum 15-year sentence for murder-although he could be released earlier on parole. "It is inconceivable that a rational per-

son thought he was entitled to fire at this person with a heavy-duty firearm," said Leach, who described Pistorius's testimony as "vacillating and untruthful." "He ought to have been convicted not of culpable homicide... but of culpable murder," Leach added in a damning rejection of Pistorius's evidence and the original trial judge's ruling.

The National Prosecuting Authority confirmed that Pistorius will remain on parole under house arrest at his uncle's mansion in the capital Pretoria until he is re-sentenced. "I'm satisfied with everything now," Reeva's father Barry Steenkamp told reporters shortly after the unanimous ruling by five appeal court judges. Her mother June, who was in court, sat quietly with a somber expression as the ruling was announced, and made no immediate comment afterwards.

Trial judge 'wrong'

At the crux of the case was how trial judge Thokozile Masipa interpreted the principle of "dolus eventualis"-awareness of the likely outcome of an action-under which she acquitted Pistorius of murder. "This was expected. Judge Masipa legally got the whole issue completely wrong," William Booth, a defence lawyer based in Cape Town,

told AFP. "Four shots into a tiny toilet when you know somebody is on the other side that person shooting knows he is going to hit the person. "He faces a minimum of 15 years. My feeling is that he's done a year, so looking at all the factors, maybe nine, 10 years in prison." The trial of Pistorius, who became a global icon as the first double amputee to compete at the Olympics in 2012, attracted worldwide attention. He denied killing Steenkamp in a rage after the couple had gone to bed, sobbing and occasionally vomiting in the dock as details of his lover's death were examined in excruciating detail.

"I was overcome with fear," he said during his trial last year, describing how he thought he heard an intruder in the bathroom. He grabbed his gun, and rushed without his prostheses to the bathroom. "Before I knew it, I'd fired four shots at the door," he said, adding that he ran back to the bed only to find that Steenkamp was not there. Pistorius killed Steenkamp at the peak of his fame, and has since lost his glittering sports career, lucrative contracts and status as a global role model for the disabled. Last month he made his first appearance in public since leaving jail, looking gaunt when he reported for community service at a Pretoria police station. — AFP

ANTI-DOPING CHIEF SAYS TOKYO GAMES WON'T BE 'SABOTAGED'

TOKYO: Japan's anti-doping chief said that Russia's athletes should be kicked out of the Rio Olympics-and vowed round-the-clock work to make sure the Tokyo Games won't be "sabotaged" by drugs cheats. Track and field's world governing body the IAAF last month voted to suspend Russia's athletics federation after the publication of a World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) report that alleged "state-sponsored" drug use.

The country faces exclusion from Rio if not declared compliant but the Japan Anti-Doping Agency's chief executive officer Shin Asakawa believes the IAAF needs to take a harder line as a deterrent and declared that JADA would work overtime to help ensure a clean Tokyo Olympics in 2020. "I think we need to be very tough on Russia," Asakawa said in an interview at the Tokyo headquarters of JADA, which operates on an annual budget of some \$10 million. "Nobody wants to see an Olympics where everyone is suspicious of the results," Asakawa said. "The purpose of the anti-doping movement is to catch cheats but also to demonstrate that performances are real.

"British newspapers ran headlines saying the London Olympics were sabotaged by Russia, and you can understand those sentiments. "We have five years and many sleepless nights to make sure that doesn't happen," he added. "We are confident of a clean Tokyo 2020. But if we can't promise athletes we can banish these doping scandals then we've lost before the starting gun goes off." He said there was too little time left for Russian athletics to prove it had put its house in order over doping. "Can people who were working against the system turn back and pull in the same direction in time (for Rio)? I think it's very difficult. "From an anti-doping perspective I don't think Russian athletes should take part in Rio," he added.

IAAF dilemma

"But it's hard to ignore calls from Russian athletes protesting their innocence, such as (Yelena) Isinbayeva. That poses a dilemma for (IAAF president) Sebastian Coe." With Tokyo hosting the 2020 Olympics, JADA's role in fighting the drug cheats is set to come under increasing scrutiny and Asakawa warned much work still needed to be done, a point underlined earlier this week when Kenyan athletics chief Isaiah Kiplagat and two subordinates were suspended.

The IAAF, already reeling from a doping scandal which overshadowed August's world championships in Beijing, is investigating allegations the Kenyan officials subverted anti-doping protocols, in addition to the "improper diversion" of funds received from Nike. "You can't deny there could be another country that emerges after Russia," said Asakawa, referring to the potential for further cases of systematic doping. "The peculiarity of Russia's case is that people who were supposed to protect the athletes were covering for them in a deceitful way, for ill profit. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day in the fourth and final Test between India and South Africa yesterday in Delhi, India.

India 1st innings

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| M. Vijay c Amla b Piedt | 12 |
| S. Dhawan lwb b Piedt | 33 |
| C. Pujara b Abbott | 14 |
| V. Kohli c Vilas b Piedt | 44 |
| A. Rahane not out | 89 |
| Ro. Sharma c Tahir b Piedt | 1 |
| W. Saha b Abbott | 1 |
| R. Jadeja c Elgar b Abbott | 24 |
| R. Ashwin not out | 6 |
| Extras (b-4 nb-3) | 7 |
| Total (for 7 wickets, 84 overs) | 231 |

Fall of wickets: 1-30 M. Vijay, 2-62 S. Dhawan, 3-66 C. Pujara, 4-136 V. Kohli, 5-138 Ro. Sharma, 6-139 W.Saha, 7-198 R. Jadeja.

To bat: U. Yadav, I. Sharma

Bowling: M. Morkel 17-5-40-0(nb-1), K. Abbott 17-6-23-3(nb-1), D. Piedt 34-5-101-4(nb-1), I. Tahir 7-1-36-0, D. Elgar 5-0-15-0, J. Duminy 4-0-12-0.

GRITTY RAHANE RESCUES INDIA AFTER PIEDT SHINES

NEW DELHI: Ajinkya Rahane rescued India with a gutsy unbeaten 89, guiding the hosts to 231 for seven after off-spinner Dane Piedt made a memorable return to the South African test side on the opening day of the fourth and final test yesterday. India were reeling at 66-3 and then at 139-6 but Rahane, often unnoticed in the crowd of flashy strokeplayers around him, featured in two fifty-plus stands to help India post the highest total in the low-scoring four-match series. Ravichandran Ashwin was giving him company on six at stumps.

For South Africa, Piedt claimed four wickets while paceman Kyle Abbot (3-23) also justified his recall for the final test against India, who have taken an unassailable 2-0 lead. "I think the game is still even, if we strike with the new ball tomorrow morning, under-250 should be a good enough score," Piedt told reporters. "It (pitch) is two-paced, the odd one is skidding and bouncing as well. It's been a good wicket for everyone today." Of all the tracks used in the four-match series, the hard 22-yard strip at the Ferozeshah Kotla stadium offered the least turn but Piedt conjured up a performance that left many wondering why the 25-year-old was not played before.

Home captain Virat Kohli won his fourth successive toss in the series and opted to bat on a track which wore cracks but looked hard, unlike the rank turners used in previous tests. Morne Morkel and Abbott bowled with a lot of discipline, allowing only 14 runs in the first 10 overs but it was Piedt who drew first blood by dismissing opener Murali Vijay (12). The spinner also struck early in the second session, trapping the set Shikhar Dhawan (33) leg before while Abbott bowled out Cheteshwar Pujara (14) in the next over to peg back the hosts.

Kohli (44) and Rahane did not look perturbed though, and boundaries started flowing as they negated the South African bowlers with consummate ease. The duo had raised 70 runs in 17 overs when Kohli fell to Piedt, sweeping the spinner straight into the body of Temba Bavuma at short leg. The ball ballooned up after hitting the evading fielder on his thigh and wicketkeeper Dane Vilas sprinted from behind the stumps before diving full stretch to take the catch. Rohit Sharma got a reprieve when Amla dropped him at slip but the batsman could not add to that scratchy single and hoicked the first ball of the next over from Piedt to Imran Tahir at long on.

Abbott breached Wriddhiman Saha's defense at the stroke of tea but Rahane and Ravindra Jadeja (24) added 59 runs for the seventh wicket to take India close to the 200-run mark. Abbott dismissed Jadeja for his third wicket but Rahane stood firm after a cultured 155-ball knock that included nine boundaries and two sixes. "If we can bat one more session tomorrow morning, I think it would be a good effort," India batting coach Sanjay Bangar told reporters. "The lower order has contributed regularly, which used to be an issue in the past. The way they have batted in Sri Lanka and also in this series, it's a positive for us."—Reuters



NEW YORK: New York Islanders center Casey Cizikas (53) embraces Islanders goalie Jaroslav Halak (41) as New York Rangers defenseman Dan Boyle (22) skates away after Halak made a save on Boyle's shot in a shootout in overtime of an NHL hockey game at the Barclays Center in New York on Wednesday, Dec 2, 2015. —AP

OKPOSO'S SHOOTOUT GOAL LIFTS ISLANDERS

NEW YORK: Kyle Okposo scored the only goal in the shootout to lift the New York Islanders to a 2-1 victory over the crosstown-rival New York Rangers on Wednesday night. John Tavares scored in regulation and Jaroslav Halak had 33 saves through overtime and then stopped all three Rangers attempts in the shootout to give the Islanders their fourth win in five games (4-0-1). Viktor Stalberg scored the tying goal in the second period, and Henrik Lundqvist had 36 saves for the Rangers, who lost for the fourth time in five games (1-3-1). Tavares gave the Islanders the lead with a 5-on-3 power-play with 7:38 to go in the second period. Stalberg redirected Marc Staal's shot past Halak to tie it with 1:23 remaining in the period.

OILERS 3, BRUINS 2, SO

Jordan Eberle scored in the shootout as Edmonton snapped Boston's five-game winning streak. Mark Letestu and Matt Hendricks scored in regulation for the Oilers, who improved to 2-3-1 in their last six - with both wins coming in shootouts. Anders Nilsson had 38 saves

through overtime and stopped all three Boston attempts in the tiebreaker. Torey Krug and Zdeno Chara scored for the Bruins, and Tuukka Rask finished with 34 saves. Letestu's short-handed goal on a 2-on-1 give-and-go with Hendricks put the Oilers ahead 1-0 with about 9 1/2 minutes to go in the second. Krug's point shot caromed in off Edmonton defenseman Andrej Sekera to tie it with 1:33 left in the period. Hendricks tipped Letestu's shot past Rask at 9:22 of the third, and Chara tied it again a little more than 7 minutes later.

LIGHTNING 2, DUCKS 1

Jonathan Drouin had a goal and an assist in his return from a six-game injury absence, and Ben Bishop made 32 saves to lead Tampa Bay past Anaheim. Jonathan Marchessault scored the tiebreaking power-play goal late in the second period for the Lightning, who opened a three-game California road trip with their fourth win in six games. Bishop was solid throughout a defense-dominated game, and

the Lightning beat the Ducks for the fourth straight time and the second time in two weeks, following a 5-0 win in Tampa. Corey Perry scored and John Gibson stopped 20 shots for the Ducks, who have lost three of four. Anaheim lost in regulation at home for just the second time in 11 games.

JETS 6, MAPLE LEAFS 1

Drew Stafford scored twice and Connor Hellebuyck stopped 32 shots to lead the Winnipeg Jets to a 6-1 victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Wednesday night. Mark Scheifele had a goal and two assists, and Andrew Ladd, Bryan Little and Anthony Peluso also scored for the Jets. Mathieu Perrault also had two assists. Hellebuyck, playing in his second NHL game, had a strong follow-up to a 3-1 victory against Minnesota on last Friday in his debut. Michael Grabner scored his first goal of the season for Toronto, and rookie Garret Sparks - also playing his second pro game - finished with 29 saves. He led Toronto to a 3-0 win over Edmonton in his NHL debut Monday.—AP

WORLD'S BEST PLAYERS TO PLAY WITH KUWAIT TEAM

KUWAIT: The Higher Organizing Committee of the Jaber International Stadium activities has revealed the names of the first six star legends who will play with Kuwait soccer stars Dec 18th. The committee said in a press statement that Brazilian Ronaldinho De Assis Moreira, Spanish Carles Puyol, UK's Paul Scholes, Italy's Andrea Pirlo, Gianluca Zambrotta and France's Robert Pires will be present at the event.

Meanwhile, Ronaldinho, Puyol and Pires have confirmed that they will be participate in the Jaber Stadium activities on social media. The committee said it is keen on getting the most known and popular soccer stars around the world - especially those who won championships - be it World Cup or the European Champions League. The rest of the names will be announced in the coming days. There will be 15 world stars available. They will be managed by Italy's Carlo Ancelotti - and expert referee Pierluigi Collina will also be present.



Carles Puyol

The organizing committee said the world stars will give the event a special flavor and make fans happy, as they wait for the great challenge between Kuwait stars and the world legends. The committee is racing with time to complete the preparations, particularly in regards to agreements with world stars, as contacts with them began two weeks ago which is relatively a short time.



Ronaldinho De Assis Moreira



Andrea Pirlo

Meanwhile, huge fans are participating in the voting process to select Kuwait's team from 39 players.

Most names received large number of votes which means the decision will not be made until the last day of voting on Dec 7th. Al-Qadisiya's Bader Al-Mutawaa lead the votes so far,

while competition for goal-keeping is so hot as Khalid Al-Rashidi and Suleiman Abdelghafour to the list. Defenders Musaed Nada and Fahad Al-Hajiri are on the lead for defence while Fahad Al-Enezi and Mohammad Jrag lead in the mid-field position.



Paul Scholes



LOS ANGELES: Indiana Pacers forward Lavoy Allen (left) and Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin reach for a rebound during the first half of an NBA basketball game on Wednesday, Dec 2, 2015. — AP

WARRIORS OVERPOWER HORNETS 116-99

CHARLOTTE: Stephen Curry scored 40 points in three quarters and the Golden State Warriors defeated the Charlotte Hornets 116-99 on Wednesday night to extend the best start in NBA history to 20-0. On a night when the Hornets honored Curry's father, Dell, the franchise's career scoring leader, it was his oldest son who stole the spotlight by hitting 14 of 18 shots from the field and going 8 for 11 from 3-point range. Stephen Curry, who grew up in Charlotte and starred at nearby Davidson College, scored 28 points in the pivotal third quarter, including his team's final 24. He hit 10 of 11 shots from the field, including all five 3s, to help the Warriors build a 21-point cushion. The reigning MVP sat out the entire fourth quarter due to the big lead. Klay Thompson had 15 of his 21 points in the first quarter as the Warriors bolted to an early 15-point lead. Nicolas Batum led Charlotte with 17 points and eight rebounds.

LAKERS 108, WIZARDS 104

Kobe Bryant scored 12 of his season-high 31 points in the fourth quarter of his final game in Washington to help Los Angeles beat the Wizards. Julius Randle had 15 points and a career-best 19 rebounds for the Lakers (3-15), who snapped a seven-game losing streak. Jordan Clarkson added 18 points as Los Angeles finished a stretch of four games in five days. Bryant played 36 minutes in his second game since announcing his plans to retire after this season, his 20th in the NBA. He left the Verizon Center floor to thunderous applause from what remained from a crowd of 20,356, Washington's third sellout of the season. John Wall had 34 points and 11 assists for Washington, which lost a day after beating LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers on the road. The Wizards have dropped four of five despite erasing an early 19-point deficit.

HAWKS 96, RAPTORS 86

Kyle Lowry scored 22 of his season-high 31 points in the fourth quarter, DeMar DeRozan added 17 and Toronto rallied from 17 down in the third to beat Atlanta. Lowry overcame flu-like symptoms that forced him from the game in the second period. He returned to begin the third, but didn't build momentum until the fourth when Toronto outscored the Hawks 39-20. The Raptors, who have won five of six, scored just 32 points in the first half. Lowry's 3-pointer made it 80-75

and he hit a fast-break layup to make it 82-75 with 4:54 remaining. Paul Millsap scored 14 points for the Hawks.

PACERS 103, CLIPPERS 91

Paul George had 31 points and 10 rebounds, and the streaking Indiana Pacers broke open a close game early in the fourth quarter to beat injury-depleted Los Angeles for their sixth consecutive victory. Rodney Stuckey scored 18 points and Jordan Hill had 13 points and eight rebounds for the Pacers, who have won 12 of 14 after opening the season with three straight defeats. Their only losses during that stretch were by four points at Cleveland and one at Chicago. The victory was the 2,000th in Pacers history, spanning 40 seasons in the NBA and nine in the ABA. Blake Griffin and Lance Stephenson each scored 19 points to lead the Clippers, who had won three in a row. They shot 38 percent, their second-lowest mark of the season. Los Angeles played without All-Star point guard Chris Paul, a late scratch due to a strained rib muscle. Paul is expected to miss more than one game, according to coach Doc Rivers. Clippers guard JJ Redick sprained his right ankle on the first possession of the game. He made two free throws but was soon removed and did not return.

SPURS 95, BUCKS 70

Tim Duncan had 16 points and 10 rebounds in 19 minutes, and San Antonio remained undefeated at home by beating Milwaukee. The Bucks set season lows for points and field goal percentage (33.8) in falling to 2-8 on the road. San Antonio (15-4) improved to 10-0 at home while extending its overall winning streak against the Bucks to seven games. Patty Mills had 13 points and Kawhi Leonard also scored 13 on 3-of-12 shooting for the Spurs. Khris Middleton had 16 points for the Bucks.

ROCKETS 108, PELICANS 101

James Harden scored 24 points and Houston overcame a double-digit deficit against New Orleans. Anthony Davis had 29 points and 13 rebounds for the Pelicans, who dropped their fourth straight. They led by 14 early, but the Rockets whittled down the lead by halftime and led by two after three quarters. New Orleans led by one after a 3-pointer by Toney Douglas with about 9 minutes left. Houston then used a 10-0 run, with

the first five points from Harden, to make it 96-87 just 4 minutes later. The Pelicans had three turnovers and missed eight shots to help the Rockets pull away. Harden's 3-pointer made it 99-92 with 3:13 left.

BULLS 99, NUGGETS 90

Pau Gasol had 26 points and 19 rebounds to lead Chicago over struggling Denver. Gasol shot 12 for 19 from the field and had his fifth consecutive double-double for the Bulls, who won for the third time in four games and improved to 7-1 at home. Jimmy Butler, playing through a lingering right heel contusion, scored 19 points in 39 minutes. Derrick Rose finished with 12 points on 3-for-17 shooting. Will Barton scored 16 points and Kenneth Faried had 14 points and nine rebounds as Denver lost its eighth straight. The Nuggets, who shot 39 percent from the field, led 72-68 heading into the fourth quarter.

PISTONS 127, SUNS 122, OT

Reggie Jackson scored 24 of his 34 points after halftime, and Detroit rallied from 16 down in the fourth quarter to beat Phoenix. Andre Drummond, the worst free throw shooter in NBA history, hit a pair from the line with 14.3 seconds left to tie the game at 112, and Eric Bledsoe missed an off-balance jumper at the buzzer. The Pistons started overtime with an 8-1 run, but Phoenix narrowed the gap to 122-120 with 1:27 to play. The Suns had chances to tie it in the last 35 seconds, but P.J. Tucker was called for an offensive foul and TJ Warren missed a contested layup. Brandon Knight missed a 3-pointer that would have tied it. Phoenix played without Tyson Chandler (hamstring) and Markieff Morris (bruised knee).

KNICKS 99, 76ERS 87

Kristaps Porzingis had 17 points and 10 rebounds to lead New York over the Philadelphia 76ers, who played without suspended rookie Jahlil Okafor. A night after winning for the first time this season, the 76ers suspended their leading scorer after the release of a second video provided details of his fight in Boston he hadn't revealed to them. Arron Afflalo added 13 points for the Knicks, who snapped a four-game skid. Carmelo Anthony, back after missing a game with an illness, scored 12 points and shot 5 for 16. Philadelphia was 9 for 30 on 3-pointers.—AP

MORE FIFA OFFICIALS ARRESTED AS SCANDAL WIDENS

ZURICH: The unprecedented corruption scandal engulfing FIFA widened yesterday with the arrests of two more top officials in another dramatic dawn raid at a luxury hotel in Zurich. Swiss authorities again acted on a request from the US justice department, a repeat of the sweeping arrests in May that set off the scandal which has shaken world football's governing body to its core. A source inside FIFA, who requested anonymity said that the two officials targeted were South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL) president Juan Angel Napout, and Alfredo Hawit, head of the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF).

Both are suspected of taking millions of dollars in bribes in return for selling marketing rights for major regional tournaments in Latin America and World Cup qualifying matches, the Swiss Justice ministry said in a statement. The arrests were carried out at the five-star Baur au Lac hotel, a favorite of FIFA's officials,

and the same spot where seven top football executives were arrested in May on suspicion of involvement in tens of millions of dollars of corruption dating back decades. The New York Times, which broke the news of the fresh arrests, said Swiss authorities descended on the hotel at around 6:00 am (0500 GMT).

Swiss officials have not confirmed the identities of the newest suspects, but said they would do so by day's end. The arrests were the latest in a series of actions targeting FIFA's senior leadership. The body's long-time president Sepp Blatter, the subject of criminal investigation in Switzerland, has been suspended for 90-days and is facing tougher punishment by FIFA's internal ethics watchdog. The man who had been tipped to succeed him at a special election in February, European football chief Michel Platini, has also been suspended and could be hit with a lifetime ban from football by the end of the month.

As the latest suspects were taken into custody, FIFA's remaining leadership was set for a

second day of crucial meetings on approving a reform package aimed at repairing world football's tainted global image. FIFA said it would press ahead with that meeting. In a statement, FIFA also said it was "aware of the actions taken today by the US Department of Justice." It vowed to "continue to cooperate fully with the US investigation as permitted by Swiss law as well as with the investigation being led by the Swiss Office of the Attorney General." The Times cited several law enforcement officials speaking on condition of anonymity as saying that the US Justice Department would unseal indictments in the case later.

Millions in bribes

The Swiss Federal Office of Justice (FOJ), as the ministry is known, said it had ordered Zurich police to detain the two individuals "based on arrest requests submitted by the United States Department of Justice on 29 November 2015." The US Attorney's Office for

the Eastern District of New York, suspects the two "of accepting bribes of millions of dollars," the FOJ statement said. "Some of the offences were agreed and prepared in the USA. Payments were also processed via US banks," the FOJ further said. If confirmed that they are the ones being held, Napout of Paraguay and Hawit, a native of Honduras, will both be facing extradition to the US, which could be approved "immediately" if neither suspect challenges the transfer, the FOJ said.

Reform discussions underway

The arrests, and the meeting on reforms, come on the fifth anniversary of the 2010 vote that controversially awarded the 2018 World Cup to Russia and the 2022 tournament to Qatar. That decision set off a cascade of allegations of corruption and skulduggery. Before his suspension, Blatter appointed prominent sporting official Francois Carrard to come up with a set of changes aimed at overhauling FIFA's management structure.—AFP

GERMAN LEAGUE PREVIEW

GLADBACH SET FOR BAYERN CHALLENGE

BERLIN: Unbeaten in the Bundesliga and enjoying a record start to the season, champions Bayern Munich are faced with their toughest domestic challenge yet when they take on in-form Borussia Moenchengladbach tomorrow. The Bavarians, having won 13 out of 14 league matches so far for the best start of a season, are already eight points clear at the top of the table and are on track for a record-breaking fourth consecutive Bundesliga title.

They have scored a staggering 42 goals so far despite missing several players through injury and have let in just five in 14 matches, three times less than the second-best defensive team that is VfL Wolfsburg. But Saturday's game could prove tricky with Gladbach enjoying a sensational run under coach Andre Schubert.

The 44-year-old took over after the team's opening five-game losing run and oversaw their sharp climb up the table from 18th to fourth with seven wins and two draws from their nine games under the new coach, just two points less than Bayern earned over the same period. Their sparkling attacking game has seen them beat Bundesliga heavyweights Wolfsburg and Schalke 04 among others as well as drawing twice with Juventus and also scoring their first Champions League victory over Sevilla. "If you want to earn a point or even beat Bayern Munich then you have to defend in a smart way," Gladbach defender Havard Nordtveit said.

"A lot of teams try to do that by playing very defensively but that does not always work because Bayern will eventually find their space." "We will most certainly not only focus on defence and we will play up front. We should be operating like we have been doing in the past games, play with risk but also with brains," said the versatile defender, who has also been deployed in midfield as Schubert shuffled positions. Scoring goals is not a problem for Gladbach these days with Schubert's team netting 17 times in their past six league games alone.

Bayern may not have fit-again winger Franck Ribery back in time for the game even though the Frenchman returned to team training this week after an eight-month injury absence. But Pep Guardiola will have an otherwise full squad to pick from as they look to secure top spot for the winter break later this month with at least a point from the game. "Securing the autumn title would be a nice side effect if we win," said Bayern's Thomas Mueller, who has scored 13 goals. "For me personally the autumn title is not that important. What is important is that we are at the top in May."—Reuters



MONACO: Caen's French goalkeeper Remy Vercoutre jumps to stop a ball during the French L1 football match between Monaco and Caen on December 2, 2015 at the Louis II Stadium. —AFP

FRENCH LEAGUE ROUNDUP

CAEN HOLD MONACO AS SAINT-ETIENNE SLIP UP

PARIS: Monaco missed an opportunity to edge closer towards the Champions League places on Wednesday after they were held to a 1-1 draw at home to second-placed Caen in Ligue 1. Argentine striker Guido Carrillo scored his first goal in the French top flight following his summer arrival from Estudiantes with a thumping 56th-minute header at the Stade Louis II. But Caen leveled four minutes from time through Ronny Rodelin as the gap between runaway leaders Paris Saint-Germain and the rest of the pack remained 13 points.

"As always, it's important to score for a striker. But the most important thing is the overall result and we're disappointed," said Carrillo, who ended an 857-minute wait to open his Ligue 1 account. Caen goalkeeper Remy Vercoutre praised his team's resolve as the Lower Normandy outfit, whose lone

European appearance was in the 1992-93 UEFA Cup, picked up a creditable point in the principality. "It's a good point to take here after falling behind. It's always difficult to find your rhythm at this ground but it shows our discipline, which is good," said Vercoutre.

Saint-Etienne saw their chance of cracking the top three pass them by after they were beaten 1-0 at Lille, a result that still left the home side a point from safety. Yassine Benzia's spectacular volley on the hour mark handed Lille their first win in seven attempts as new boss Frederic Antonetti marked his first home match in charge with three welcome points. Earlier, top-flight newcomers Gazelec Ajaccio continued on their remarkable upward path with a 2-0 victory at in-form Montpellier. Goals from Jacques Zoua and John Tshibumbu guided the islanders to a fifth win in six

matches and up to 13th place. Thierry Laurey's side have now picked up 16 points from a possible 18, this after collecting just three points from their first 10 matches.

Bastia piled further misery on fellow strugglers Bordeaux as Florian Raspentino's late strike condemned Willy Sagnol's side to a 1-0 defeat in Corsica. David Ngog netted a brace as Reims beat Guingamp 2-1 to put an end to their seven-game winless run, while Toulouse claimed a second straight victory as they eased past winless Troyes 3-0 in a battle of the league's bottom two. On Tuesday, PSG saw their nine-match winning streak snapped as they played out a 0-0 draw at third-placed Angers, the first time Laurent Blanc's men had failed to score in the league this season. Marseille round out the midweek fixtures on Thursday when they visit Rennes.—AFP



BARCELONA: Barcelona's forward Sandro Ramirez (left) and Barcelona's Belgian defender Thomas Vermaelen (center-up) vies with Villanovense's midfielder Pajuelo (center) and Villanovense's midfielder Anxo (right) during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) Round of 32 second leg football match FC Barcelona vs CF Villanovense at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on December 2, 2015. —AFP

REAL RED-FACED AFTER CUP FIASCO

BARCELONA BEATS 3RD-TIER VILLANOVENSE 6-1

MADRID: Under-fire Real Madrid coach Rafa Benitez must rally his players for the visit of Getafe with the possible elimination from the King's Cup for fielding an ineligible player just the latest setback in a turbulent first season. Real won 3-1 at third-tier Cadiz on Wednesday but fielded the suspended Denis Cheryshev. The winger faced a ban carried over from last season when on loan at Villarreal and elimination is the punishment for breaking Spanish federation rules.

"We found out at halftime and took him off then as we wanted to do the right thing," Real coach Rafa Benitez told a news conference. "The club didn't know anything beforehand. We weren't told by the federation or Villarreal." It comes only a few months since Real were also left red faced by the collapse of the David De Gea and Keylor Navas swap deal with Manchester United, as time ran out at the end of the transfer window.

It was always going to be a tough task for Benitez to win over the players and fans following the dismissal of the popular Carlo Ancelotti and the team has stuttered this season to provide the scintillating attacking football demanded by the Bernabeu faithful. The pressure on Benitez was increased by a humiliating 4-0 home defeat by Barcelona last month and now Real are down in third place in La Liga, six points behind the Catalan leaders. Benitez also has to contend with a heavily depleted defense against Getafe with Sergio Ramos, Raphael Varane and Marcelo in the treatment room.

Barcelona are going from strength to strength and take on a Valencia side in disarray on Saturday following the resignation of coach Nuno Espirito Santo. Former-Manchester United and England defender Gary Neville was the surprise choice to replace him but he will not take over the reins until Sunday and it will be interim coach Salvador Gonzalez in charge, assisted by Phil Neville. Deadly trident Lionel Messi, Neymar and Luis Suarez will be primed to build on the 125 goals they already have this calendar year having been rested in Barca's 6-1 rout of third tier Villanovense on Wednesday to book a place in the last 16 of the cup.—Reuters

WITH THE MAN CITY DEAL, 'CHINESE DREAM' MOVES CLOSER TO REALITY

BEIJING: A state-backed Chinese company's \$400 million stake in Premier League giants Manchester City underlines the nation's soaring ambitions in football—and how its investors are seeking profits as well as prestige, analysts said. The swoop by China Media Capital (CMC) marks China's first investment foray into the hugely popular English Premier League, and a step forward for a grand project spearheaded by President Xi Jinping.

Football is an important part of Xi's agenda as he seeks to "rejuvenate" the nation, building it into a world power that can compete across all domains from military and economics to sport. He has called for the country to host and win a World Cup, and in a visit by Britain's Prince William to Beijing this year said he wanted to see more Chinese players in the English Premier League.

The Manchester City group, which also brackets New York City and Melbourne City, isn't China's first investment in European football. A Chinese model car-maker last month said it was taking an 80 percent stake in Spain's Espanyol, and real estate powerhouse Dalian Wanda snapped up 20 percent of Atletico Madrid in January. But the latest deal—just weeks after Xi visited Manchester City—has by far

the highest profile and is expected to have wide-ranging benefits for both China and the Abu Dhabi-owned group.

'Sports powerhouse'

Academic Zhang Zirui, of the Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing, said the government's priorities are behind China's push into foreign sports. "During the last two years, the Chinese government has put forward policies to strongly promote the development of the sports industry," he said. That has made some Chinese companies, including newcomers to the industry, to take "notice of the domestic and international sports market", he added. So far, China's achievements in football have not kept pace with other indicators of its national rise. Despite becoming the world's second largest economy, it has made only one World Cup appearance, in 2002, and is struggling in the current round of qualifiers for Russia 2018.

Turning that trend around "is a must to build China into a sports powerhouse as part of the Chinese dream", state media cited a top Communist Party body as saying in March. CMC has backing from China's top state planning agency, while its chairman is a former Shanghai

government official. The firm's leaders have said the deal is a chance to learn how to build a winning football brand, and also boost China's domestic game. "A big aim is also to gather experience that the domestic sport industry can learn from," its chairman Li Ruigang told local media outlet The Paper this week.

Slowing economy

Industry analyst Zhang said that Chinese firms' "management and profit-making capabilities are inferior" to foreign competitors in sports. But their advantage is "large amounts of capital", he added. Buying shares in European clubs, he said, has the "strategic meaning" of bringing their know-how back to the home market. For Manchester City, the tie-up represents an opportunity to increase their appeal in one of the world's largest and still growing sports markets.

Meanwhile China's economy is slowing, spurring companies in many sectors to step up investment abroad in search of higher returns. Businesses are also expanding into China's consumer sector—including sports—as the country tries to rebalance its economy away from manufacturing.—AFP

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CADIZ: Real Madrid's Russian midfielder Denis Cheryshev (left) celebrates after scoring during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) football match Cadiz CF vs Real Madrid at the Ramon de Carranza in Cadiz on December 2, 2015. — AFP

Real 'red-faced' after Cup fiasco